



News Release

For Immediate Release

A Message From Outside

*New visual arts programme brings
inmates and elderly together for shared art experience*

Singapore, 26 December 2017 – Two communities who will probably never meet in their lifetime will be brought together vis-à-vis a new visual arts initiative this year. Titled *A Message from Outside*, the programme sees five inmates from Changi Prison and the nine residents from an elderly nursing home in Queenstown engaged in creating a painting for one another.

The programme is conceptualised by arts and cultural organisation Global Cultural Alliance in collaboration with the Yellow Ribbon Project and United Medicare Centre. *A Message from Outside* is facilitated by renowned sculptor and artist Sun Yu-li who has been involved in various mass participatory art projects and whose public art works can be seen throughout Singapore.

Says Phan Ming Yen, Director, Global Cultural Alliance, on the intent of the project and its aims: *"Inmates in a prison and the elderly in a nursing home are communities that we seldom give thought to or have regular interaction with. They are also not likely to meet each other. Yet their conditions are similar in that they both encounter a sense of isolation away from society and their daily lives are marked by a sense of time."*

"As such, the main goal for A Message from Outside is to see how art can serve as a catalyst to arouse empathy as well being an activity that enables an individual to discover or rediscover talents or skills and functions which he or she may have

forgotten. In this, art gives hope and also serves as a medium by which we can get to know another and empathise for the other."

The programme will see both inmates and the elderly share about their personal memories and hopes, with each responding by sending a message of hope for the other via a painting.

"A Message from Outside provides a platform for inmates to express their hopes and aspirations. Through art, we hope to facilitate deeper community understanding and acceptance of inmates and ex-offenders. Everyone can play a part to unlock the second prison and we appreciate the support of partners like Global Cultural Alliance in inspiring second chances," says Ms Koh Beng Hong, Director, CARE Network.

Says Ms Clemens Samonte, Senior Physiotherapist at United Medicare Centre: *"With the power of art, it allows our residents to have a quality of life by ensuring a healthy interaction with their peers and to help them feel part of the community. This also encourage and motivate residents to do activities they value."*

Adds Mr Phan: *"Through this programme, we hope to leverage on the transformative power of the arts in bringing peoples together for powerful shared experiences. In doing so, art has the ability to enrich lives of communities we often forget, and create artistic platforms for the public to re-connect with these communities."*

To date, two of four sessions have been completed and the third and fourth sessions for both inmates and elderly will be held on 3 and 10 January 2018. The artworks and sketches done by the participants will be displayed in an exhibition in the later part of 2018.

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About Global Cultural Alliance (GCA)

Global Cultural Alliance (GCA) is a Singapore-based not-for-profit creative enterprise that serves as a cultural catalyst between arts, culture and society. We create arts and culture-related platforms that enhances exchanges and dialogues between communities within and across countries. GCA is a wholly-owned subsidiary of The RICE Company Limited.

About Yellow Ribbon Project

Started in 2004, the Yellow Ribbon Project is a community initiative in Singapore that aims to create awareness of the need to give second chances to ex-offenders, generate acceptance of ex-offenders and their families in the community, and inspire community action to support the rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-offenders into society.

The Yellow Ribbon Project is managed by the Community Action for the Rehabilitation of Ex-Offenders (CARE) Network, which comprises Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Ministry of Social and Family Development (MSF), Singapore Prison Service (SPS), Singapore Corporation of Rehabilitative Enterprises (SCORE), National Council of Social Service (NCSS), Industrial & Services Co-operative Society Ltd (ISCOS), Singapore After-Care Association (SACA), Singapore Anti-Narcotics Association (SANA) and the Yellow Ribbon Fund (YRF).

About United Medicare Centre

United Medicare Centre (UMC) is a leading private nursing home operator in Singapore. We were the first purpose built private nursing home and currently operate three nursing care facilities in Singapore. Accredited by the Ministry of Health to offer the Portable Subsidy Scheme since 2003, UMC is privileged to help the elderly receive the care they deserve.