



Public Lecture

CERAMICS AND THE "BLACK HOLE" OF SINGAPORE HISTORY, 1511-1819 by Kwa Chong Guan

Tuesday 28 April 2009 at 7 p.m.

The Lecture Room, The Peranakan Museum
39 Armenian Street, Singapore



The period before Sir Stamford Raffles arrived in Singapore in 1819 is widely regarded as a "Black Hole" in Singapore's past. The former Raffles Professor of History at the old University of Singapore, K.G. Tregonning is on record stating that nothing of significance happened on Singapore before 1819. This lecture will argue that, to the contrary, there were significant happenings in and around Singapore from 1511 to 1819. The ceramics that have been recovered along the Johor River since the 1950's together with the cartography and the reports that we are now finding in Dutch and Portuguese archives, all help to tell a story of Singapore.

About the Speaker:

Kwa Chong Guan was a student of William Willetts and watched him start up the collection of Southeast Asian ceramics in the old University of Singapore Art Museum. He has been a long standing member of the Southeast Asian Ceramic Society, and as the former Director of the old National Museum, supported the Society organize some of its exhibitions on its premises. He is currently serving on advisory committees of the Asian Civilisations Museum, the National University of Singapore Art Museum and the pro-term committee to start up an Nanyang Technology Art & Heritage Museum. He is also the Chairman of the National Archives of Singapore Advisory Committee, and in that capacity, sits on the National Heritage Board.