



## **Renowned Artist Benny Ong Partners Breast Cancer Foundation for *Women.Shoes.Freedom* Exhibition**

**3 March 2017** – Breast Cancer Foundation (BCF), a non-profit organisation with the mission to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease, has been chosen as a charity partner by renowned London-Singapore designer and contemporary artist - Benny Ong - for his latest exhibition, *Women.Shoes.Freedom*. The show will run from 8 March to 7 April at the UOB Art Gallery. The launch event will be held on 10 March, with BCF representatives sharing more on Healing Through the Arts programmes. In addition, proceeds from the sale of one of the art pieces will be donated to BCF to support the cause.

*Women.Shoes.Freedom* is a collection of new hand-woven art designed by Benny, exploring the traditional and modern role of women, using traditional weaving materials juxtaposed with modern imagery. The works build on Benny's ongoing passion for combining traditional weaving techniques of master Laotian weavers with bold, captivating contemporary art that invite viewers to build on narratives woven into each piece.

"This show is about exploring traditional views and the emancipation of the modern woman – and there was no shortage of inspiring narratives, from the recent US presidential elections to the Soong sisters," said Benny Ong. "In particular, one group that really resonated with the theme of this collection were breast cancer survivors. I found many pieces in this collection echoed the struggles and stigma of the disease, so intrinsically tied into womanhood."

"We are extremely honoured to work with such a renowned artist such as Benny," said Noor Quek, President of BCF. "His exploration of the modern woman parallels so many of the challenges that women diagnosed with breast cancer face. Through his expert craftsmanship, his works exemplify the power of art in driving greater conversations and awareness of important issues in our society."

In support of BCF's work to support those affected by Breast Cancer, proceeds from the sale of the piece – "*The Sisters Soong I*" – will be donated to BCF. Commissioned in memory of the emancipation of Chinese women bound by shoes since young, it represents their freedom from these shoes. This art piece seeks to pay homage to their strength and resilience, much like the breast cancer survivors of today.

To launch the show, an opening ceremony will be held on 10 March at 7:30pm. The event will feature opening remarks from Noor Quek, Benny Ong and UOB. UOB is the venue sponsor for this exhibition, which will be open to the public from 8 March to 7 April at the UOB Art Gallery – located at the lobby of UOB Plaza 1. Admission to the exhibition will be free to the public.

**END**

Sample artwork images can be downloaded here:

[https://www.dropbox.com/sh/s7wzpz6fn6p5oms/AAAo6OK3A3KEO\\_qPtRbIPI39a?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/sh/s7wzpz6fn6p5oms/AAAo6OK3A3KEO_qPtRbIPI39a?dl=0)

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### **About Breast Cancer Foundation**

Breast Cancer Foundation (BCF) is a non-profit organisation with the mission to eradicate breast cancer as a life-threatening disease. Set up in 1997, BCF is committed to raising awareness about breast cancer through talks, events and publications that advocate early detection through regular screening. BCF also supports survivors, caregivers and their families through various counselling, education, empowerment and 'Healing through the Arts' activities. One of the first advocacy groups in the world with a Men's Support League, BCF aims to encourage greater male participation in society's fight against this affliction. For more information, visit <http://www.bcf.org.sg>.

### **About Benny Ong**

Benny has always been in the forefront of things. In the 1970s, after graduating from Central Saint Martins, he was the first Singaporean fashion designer to establish himself in London. His remarkable acclaim in extremely respectable collections gave a face to his birth nation, Singapore. Over his long and illustrious career, Benny's client list included the late Diana, Princess of Wales, Her Royal Highness Duchess of Kent and Queen Noor of Jordan.

The early 2000s saw him on a new and exciting journey, experimenting with textile design, leading to a collaboration with a group of master weavers in Laos to create a series of stunning woven art work in silk. Benny recently held an exhibition in 2016, titled 'The Pioneering Spirit', which incorporates work by some of Laos' top weavers. His major series of works to date include "Abstract Dreams" at the Mori Museum, Tokyo, "Prince of Gowns" at the National Museum, "Peranakan" Studio Collection and "Rewoven" at Singapore Art Museum.

Benny is a recipient of the Singapore Design Golden Jubilee Award 2015 by DesignSingapore Council under the Ministry of Communications & Information for his many contributions to fashion, design, and now, his cross-disciplinary exploration of textile art.

### **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 and Thailand, 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.