

Embargoed till 9.30 pm

First World Stamp Champion Revealed



Singapore, 1 September 2004 – The first World Stamp Champion, was today selected by a panel of judges after five days of viewing and judging the exhibits displayed at the World Stamp Championship (WSC) held at Suntec. Mr Surajit Gongvatana from Thailand, won the championship for his exhibit on Siam, beating 24 other competitors in the championship class. Two Singaporean collectors were among the 25 competitors in the championship class.

At the awards ceremony, called Palmares, held at Suntec this evening, Mr Gongvatana received the coveted challenge trophy, specially created and donated by auction house Spink of London, from Dr Lee Boon Yang, Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts, who is also the Honorary President of the WSC Organising Committee.

Mr Gongvatana, who began collecting stamps at the age of eight, said: “This is one of the happiest days of my life. If anyone wants to consider a hobby, it should be stamps because at the end of the day, they are your great assets.”

Mr Koh Seow Chuan, President of the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP), the world philatelic body and Chairman of the WSC Executive Committee, said: “The judging process was both robust and vigorous and generated a great deal of exchange of views and comments on the exhibits. Forty-eight jurors voted by secret vote and were impressed by the excellent quality of the exhibits, the highest quality many have seen for a long time.”

The first and second runners-up in the championship were Mr Saverio Imperato from Italy and Mr Koichi Sato from Japan respectively. Mr Imperato’s exhibit was on Tuscany and Mr Sato’s exhibit was on Tasmania.

The WSC was attended by more than 100,000 visitors over the five days it was open to the public from 28 August to 1 September 2004. Like the Olympic Games, the World Stamp Championship brings to the world of philately the highest level of competition,

creating for passionate stamp collectors an opportunity to excel in this 'brain sport' and to bring recognition to themselves, to their countries and their hobby.

Recognising achievements in all fields of human endeavour, from sports, scientific breakthroughs and commercial successes, to flora and fauna, diversity in arts, culture and heritage, stamps make their way into offices and homes, bringing the ideas, values, heritage and attractions of countries of which they are mini-ambassadors.

Children's Art Competition

SingPost also organised an on-the-spot art competition for children on 28 and 29 August at the exhibition. Five winning designs were selected and printed on stamp sheets pre-printed with Ronald McDonald. The winners of the children's art competition are:

Yvonne Lim Fang Yu (Hong Wen School)
Natalie Ngar Qin Rou (CHIJ-Our Lady of Nativity)
Joanna Ong (CHIJ-Our Lady of Nativity)
Sherle Tan Yun Lin (CHIJ-Our Lady of Nativity)
Phoebe Yong (De La Salle School)

President's Challenge Charity Auction

SingPost and WSC 2004 donated S\$50,000 to the President's Challenge charities. At the special Charity Auction held on 28 August 2004 to raise funds for charities under the President's Challenge, items such as signed copies of stamps from the President of the Republic of Singapore, limited sets of SPECIMEN stamp sheets, signed copies of stamps by world renowned Polish engraver Czeslaw Slania and a painting were auctioned.

Mr Koh concluded: "We are delighted with the success of the World Stamp Championship, this first stamp olympics held in the world. The judges are very impressed with the extremely high quality of philately displayed at this championship. WSC has certainly advanced this 'brain sport' to a whole new level."

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About Association of Philatelists

The Association of Philatelists (ASP) was officially inaugurated on 26 October 1989. As a national body, the ASP has a challenging task of cultivating and nurturing this fine hobby of stamp collecting.

With a membership of 18, including four institutional members from Singapore Stamp Club, Zui You Philatelic Society, Singapore Philatelic Society and Kreta Ayer Stamp Society, the ASP is also a member of the Federation of Inter-Asian Philately (FIAP) and the Fédération Internationale de Philatélie (FIP).

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