

For Review



*The Enchanting Lion City* explores the heritage of Singapore's multi-cultural diversity. The book captures the charm, dynamic streetscapes and unique character of this city-state through the interesting mix of traditions and businesses.

The charming illustrations are organised into sections for easy reference. These cover the familiar streetscapes associated with Singapore, the traditional businesses, our cultural legacy as well as our origins as a food paradise.



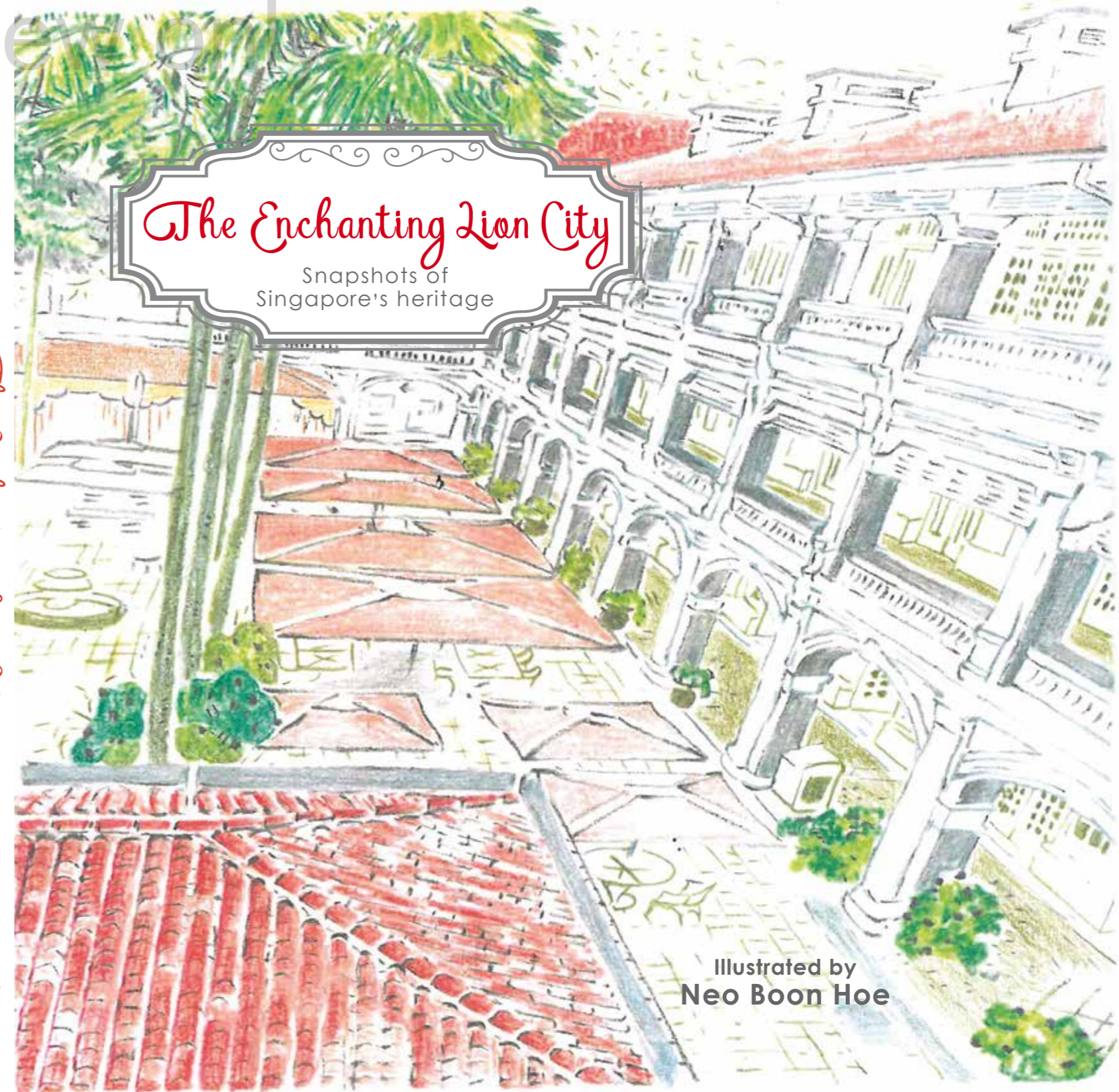
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Neo Boon Hoe

*The Enchanting Lion City*

Marshall Cavendish  
Editions **mc**



Illustrated by  
**Neo Boon Hoe**

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All illustrations by Neo Boon Hoe

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## Introduction

*The Enchanting Lion City* explores the heritage of Singapore's multi-cultural diversity through sensitively rendered illustrations using colour pencils. Captured here are the charm, lively streetscapes and unique character of this city-state played out through the interesting mix of traditions and businesses.

This book is divided into four sections. Part One features familiar streetscapes often associated with Singapore such as the Raffles Hotel and bumboats along the Singapore River. Part Two looks at the heritage tapestry such as sundry shops, markets, street vendors and other traditional businesses that are fast disappearing. Part Three touches on our rich cultural legacy in our colonial buildings and ethnic enclaves. Finally, Part Four showcases Singapore's origin as a food paradise, presenting dishes and establishments that still favour the old-style way of preparation, handmade with pride and love.

Opposite:

Yong tau fu stall at People's Park Complex Food Centre. Tofu, eggplant, chilli and bitter gourd are stuffed with fish paste in this Hakka dish. Pick a selection and pass it to the hawker to be cooked. Yong tau fu comes with a choice of noodles. The dry version has sweet sauce and chilli sauce as a dressing. The sauces come as a dip in the soup option.

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Captivating Landscapes.  
Fascinating Streetscapes









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The courtyard of Raffles Hotel surrounded by its elegant Colonial-style buildings. Considered one of the earliest hotels in Singapore, the Raffles was built in 1887 by the Armenian Sarkies brothers. The grand dame underwent a major renovation from 1989 to 1991 to modernise it. This included the addition of a theatre and underground carpark. Raffles Hotel is synonymous with Singapore and until today, remains a mandatory stop for tourists who come by the busload for a glass of Singapore Sling and a souvenir photo.

Opposite:

The Gardens by the Bay is the realisation of a dream to build a park in the heart of Singapore's city centre. The 101-hectare site includes two cooled conservatories (the Flower Dome and the Cloud Forest) as well as 18 supertrees that dominate its landscape. These supertrees are vertical gardens equipped with cells to harvest solar energy and provide a framework for over 200 species and varieties of orchids, ferns and tropical flowering climbers. The 128-metre long OCBC Skyway linking two of the supertrees also provides breathtaking aerial views of the Gardens and Singapore skyline.





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Aerial view of conservation shophouses in Little India which was historically the area set aside for Tamil migrants by the early Colonial government. Today, Little India still is the go-to-place for all things Indian. The shophouses are filled with retailers offering everything from exquisite Indian fabrics and gold to household products, as well as restaurants and eateries selling delicious food and sweets. Add a handful of temples, lively Hindi music and the heady scent of jasmine garlands and spices to the mix and you have an irresistible draw for visitors from near and far.

Opposite:

Bumboats berthed at Clarke Quay along the Singapore River. The river was the focal point for the early settlers in Singapore. As the country developed as a trading port, goods were transported via bumboats along the river to ships located in deep water. Over the years, the activities grew and the river banks became a really busy place with squatters, hawkers and all manner of industries. The Singapore River became black and polluted, leading then Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew to announce a 10-year plan to clean it up in 1977. Today, the Singapore River is clean again and the bumboats and watercraft that ply it give tourists another perspective to the city-state.





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Families picnic on the lawn as musicians perform at the bandstand of the Singapore Botanic Gardens. The idea of a national garden was first mooted by Stamford Raffles, the founder of Singapore, in 1822 but the Gardens were only developed at its present site at Tanglin in 1859. Dating back more than 150 years, the 82-hectare Gardens has a unique and significant place in the history of Singapore and the region. Among its successes was the introduction of rubber planting and the development of an orchid hybridisation programme. Today, it continues to be relevant and plays a key role in Singapore's Garden City programme. The Gardens was inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2015.

Opposite:

Street vendors selling lotus flowers to devotees. This is a common sight outside the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple at Waterloo Street. This traditional Chinese temple dedicated to the Goddess Guan Yin is popular as it is believed to bring worshippers good luck and is also known for the accuracy of its divination interpretations. The lotus flower is associated with purity, spiritual awakening and faithfulness. The flowers come in white, red, pink, purple and blue but worshippers prefer pink lotuses as they are considered the supreme lotus.





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Opposite:  
Abdul Gafoor Mosque at Dunlop Street, within the Little India precinct, was constructed in 1907 as the area was an active business hub for Indian Muslim merchants. It also served the needs of others who worked in the vicinity. In 2003, a major restoration of the building was completed to restore its original architectural features and decorative elements which were damaged or had faded over time.

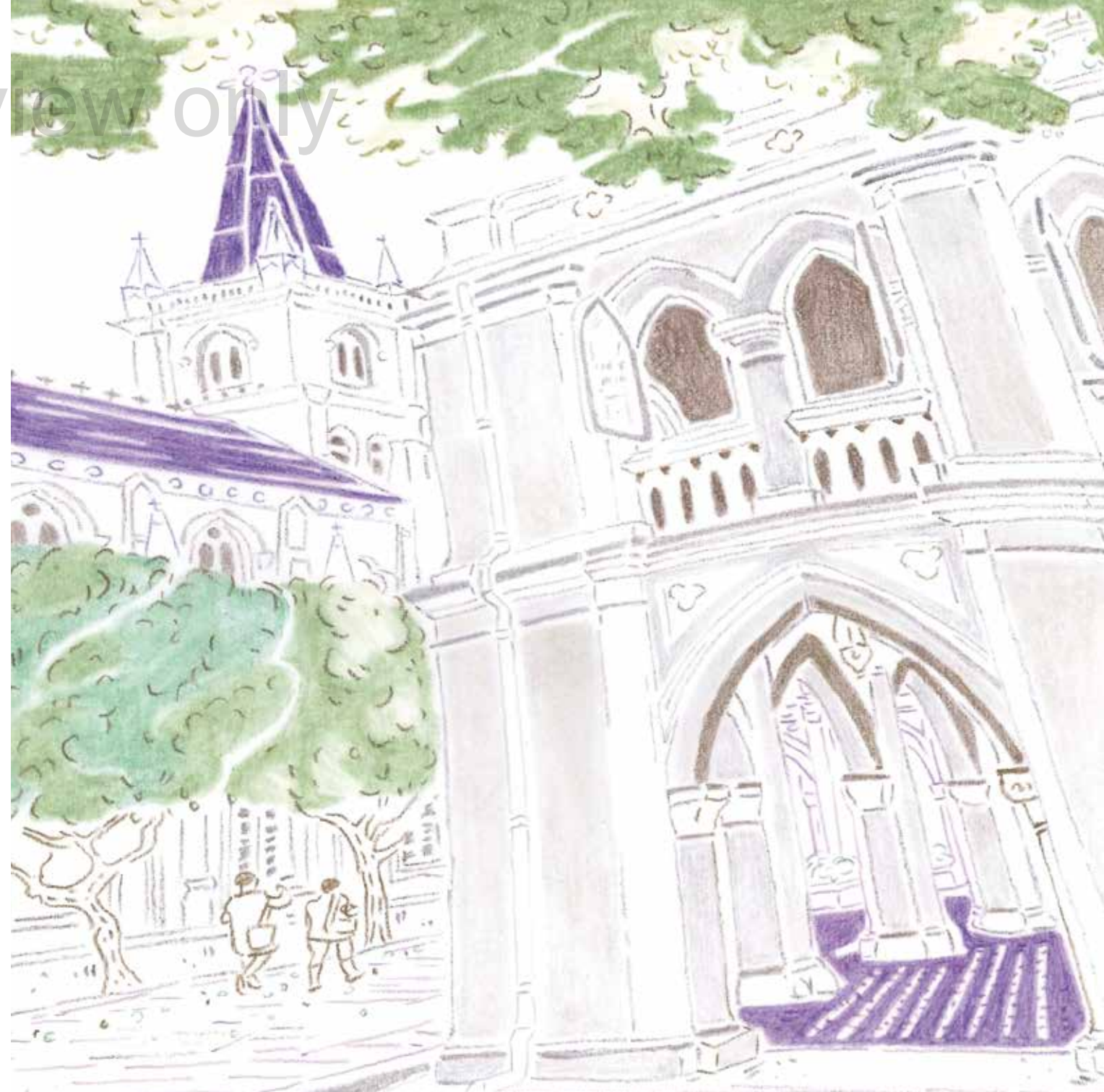




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Opposite:

The complex known as CHIJMES today was originally the Convent of the Holy Infant Jesus (CHIJ), a premier girls' school established in 1854 by an order of French Catholic nuns. After the school relocated from the city in 1983, the site was redeveloped. Some parts were demolished but the buildings that housed the orphanage, Caldwell House (the nuns' quarters) and the chapel were gazetted as national monuments in 1990 to preserve them. After extensive restoration, CHIJMES reopened in 1996 as a commercial space with shops, restaurants and bars. The new name incorporates the initials of the original school and reflects its rich history. The complex is well worth a visit for its architectural heritage. Designed by architect G. D. Coleman, the neoclassical style Caldwell House is Singapore's second-oldest building, built around 1841. The gothic style chapel is equally impressive, featuring 648 columns with unique, intricate carvings of tropical birds and plants. There are also delicate stained glass windows created by Jules Dobbelaere, considered to be the finest stained glass craftsman in Europe at that time.





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## About the Author

Neo Boon Hoe is an architect in private practice. Although he develops masterplans for cities and industrial parks in his professional life, he has a keen interest in heritage and conservation. He spends much of his free time exploring the nooks and crannies of Singapore.