

Citation for OSA 2012 - Mr Goh Yew Lin

Mr Goh Yew Lin has played a pivotal leadership role in the dramatic growth and success of NUS' Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music over the past decade. As Chairman of the Conservatory's Governing Board since 2002, he has translated the ideals that underpinned its creation, into a physical reality of extremely high international quality.

At the inception of the Conservatory, Yew Lin worked closely with the founding Director, Dr Steven Baxter, to develop a clear collective understanding of the *raison d'être* for the Conservatory's establishment. His active, steady and engaged leadership of the Board and Conservatory was crucial in bringing those ideals and goals into successful reality.

A keen pianist and music-lover himself, Yew Lin has been a member of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra's Board, where he is now Chair, since 1990. In the nineties he was also a regular music critic for the Straits Times, drawing on knowledge acquired as an enthusiastic attendee at music classes at the University of Pennsylvania, alongside his 'real' studies at the Wharton School. Before becoming involved with the Conservatory, he had already played an important role in shaping the arts in Singapore as a Board member of the National Arts Council and the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

An avid CD collector, the consequence of his constant musical listening has been that he is always aware of latest international trends and of emerging artists. Over the past three decades, his enthusiasm has also led him to come to know personally many of the world's most influential soloists and conductors. His passion, knowledge and contacts have been invaluable in informing his understanding of the Conservatory project.

Beyond his leadership of the Conservatory's Board, Yew Lin was also its most passionate and influential advocate. In the first phase, he was instrumental in helping the Conservatory secure adequate funding support from the government, as well as from corporate sponsors such as the Singapore Totalisator Board, Keppel Corporation, Singapore Airlines, SingTel, Singapore Technologies Pte Ltd and the National Arts Council.

The Yong Siew Toh Conservatory's success was also crucially enabled by the generous gifts from the Yong Loo Lin Trust, which led to the establishment of a \$100 million endowment. Yew Lin played an instrumental role in facilitating the deep and continuing relationships between the Conservatory and the members of the Yong Loo Lin Trust.

Yew Lin's advocacy for the partnership with the Peabody Institute, has resulted in a highly productive and mutually beneficial relationship. He has also helped define the Conservatory's role and position as a key part of the music and cultural landscape in Singapore.

Over the past few years, his work with the Conservatory has been augmented by also offering support to NUS as a member of the NUS Board of Trustees, thus enabling him to have an even clearer awareness of the Conservatory's positioning and potential in the NUS context. His involvement now as Chair of the SSO Board has ensured an ever closer relationship with the orchestra and that evolutions in both organisations are well-aligned. Beyond the relationships with the Music Director, key orchestral players and with SSO management, he has been also able to encourage interest in the Conservatory from such world renowned artists as Pierre Amoyal, Melvyn Tan and Stephen Hough, resulting in several extremely fruitful collaborations both in terms of direct involvement with the artists themselves and with people or organisations they became keen to introduce.

After more than two decades of institutional involvement in classical music, Yew Lin's reputation as a passionate, knowledgeable and articulate advocate for music in Singapore has now acquired an international dimension. It is quite common for first-time visiting artists to reflect on perceptions from other artists who have identified Yew Lin as someone unusually gifted in understanding the inside workings of music and of the profession. How he has found the time to develop such a comprehensive understanding and to have established opportunity for such intensive musical interaction is a mystery, given his 'real-world' roles beyond music as executive director of GK Goh Holdings, director of Temasek Holdings and

Boyer Allan Management Limited, and as Chair of the Censorship Review Committee.

The Yong Siew Toh Conservatory has been very fortunate to have had 10 years of his passionate involvement leading, listening, facilitating, advocating, understanding and supporting. Tonight we are delighted to recognise Mr Goh Yew Lin's pivotal contributions in shaping the growth and success of the Conservatory.