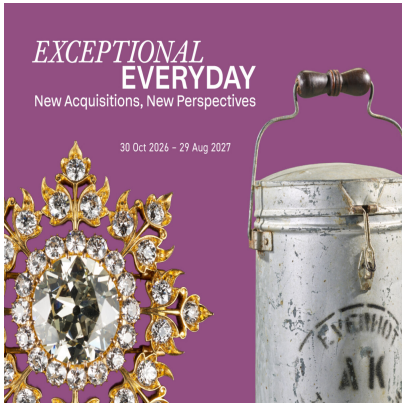




Peranakan Museum asks what makes an object Peranakan in a new show opening 30 October

Description

The Peranakan Museum opens a new exhibition on 30 October 2026, asking a deceptively simple question: what makes an object Peranakan? *Exceptional/Everyday: New Acquisitions, New Perspectives* brings together recent acquisitions, many on view for the first time, and runs until 29 August 2027.

EXCEPTIONAL EVERYDAY

New Acquisitions, New Perspectives

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30 Oct 2026 – 29 Aug 2027



Image: Peranakan Museum

What is in the exhibition

More than 150 objects across 14 stories fill the Special Exhibitions Gallery, from porcelain and furniture to clothing and jewellery. The works range from the everyday to the exceptional and from the mass-produced to the bespoke, and are organised around three themes: Identity, Buying and Creating.

The show begins with the first known Peranakan object to enter the National Collection, a coral-red kamcheng acquired by the National Museum in 1963. The Peranakan Museum's collection has since grown to some 12,000 objects.

Identity, Buying and Creating

Under Identity, portraits, photographs and garments show how Peranakans dressed and presented themselves in different settings. One highlight is a 1960s samfoo that belonged to Oei Seng Neo (1923 to 2001), who was born in Tanjung Pinang in the Riau Islands and later moved to Singapore.



Image: Peranakan Museum

Under Buying, the exhibition asks when a purchased item becomes Peranakan. An insulated tiffin carrier, or tengkat, was bought in Bangalore by Lim Yeok Quan and Ong Peng Hock before the Japanese invasion of Singapore and later used to carry offerings at Cheng Beng. A pair of kamchongs from the 1890s, decorated with phoenixes and peonies, appears to have been produced in multiples for export.

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Image: Peranakan Museum



Image: Peranakan Museum

Under Creating, a bridal handkerchief, or bim poh kemanteng, worn by Khoo Gek Choo in 1940 carries more than a hundred jewelled ornaments. The section also shows beadwork by Alice Choo Joo Kim (1926 to 2019), including a clutch purse with palm trees shading a camel and an elephant.



Image: Peranakan Museum



Image: Peranakan Museum

Hands-on activities for families

Discovery Corners on Levels 2 and 3 introduce ceramics, furniture and beadwork through tactile activities. An activity trail booklet encourages visitors aged 7 and above to look closely at the objects. On Level 2, an Activity Space designed by Singaporean visual artist HAFI invites visitors to create self-portraits, design objects and play with oversized soft sculptures.



Design impression. Image: Peranakan Museum

Key details

- Exhibition: Exceptional/Everyday: New Acquisitions, New Perspectives
- Dates: 30 October 2026 to 29 August 2027

- Venue: Special Exhibitions Gallery, Peranakan Museum (admission charges apply)
- More information: go.gov.sg/tpm-exceptionaleveryday

More Peranakan food and culture

For a taste of the cuisine, see our post on [Sunâ??s Cafeâ??s 1-for-1 Peranakan buffet](#) and our report on the [Armenian Street Party celebrating Peranakan food](#).

Date Created

28/10/2026

Author

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