

Recording the "real"
National Day Parade
in Singapore

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Reflections In An Electronic Eye

THERE IS A fairly basic paradox at work in televised public spectacles. Be it a football Cup Final, a Royal wedding or an Olympic extravaganza, the event would be less of an event if it were not for the people who are *not* watching it on television. Broadcasts would lose much of their sparkle without the tens of thousands of spectators who lend sound and colour to the televised image. You just can't replace the raw excitement, the feeling of exhilaration which is to be had from being a part of a massive crowd . . . but then, you just can't beat the grandstand view you get from your armchair at the flick of a switch.

Instead of becoming lost in the sea of people who witness the "actual" National Day Parade in Singapore, we opted one year for the altogether more comfortable, and certainly more comprehensive view provided by ten cameras and innumerable technicians, editors, producers and assorted media wizards. We even had the choice of four languages by way of running commentary — the different nuances and phraseology altering each of the images almost imperceptibly, but altering them nonetheless.

Because of television, the National Day Parade does not take place only on the Padang. It comes into the living rooms of houses all over Singapore. The event is celebrated wherever its image is televised. It is this event — the one which takes place in countless households — which these photographs record. They may well appear to be just images of images, but in fact they reflect the events of National Day as they are seen by the largest number of Singaporeans.



