

# INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR SINGAPORE (1-5TH Mar 2005)

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The International Furniture Fair Singapore 2005, held in conjunction with the 22nd ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS '05), opened to great aplomb. With a record number of 34 representing countries displaying more than 30,000 pieces of quality, design-led furniture and furnishing products from the world over, the fair occupied 55,000 square metres of floor space and spread over all six halls of the Singapore Expo.

The IFFS/AFS '05 was organised by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), and to ensure that participants at the show obtained maximum business mileage in terms of networking opportunities, the SFIC incorporated the complimentary Business Matching Service to encourage trade link-ups between exhibitors and potential buyers prior to the fair. A first among international trade shows, this service has enjoyed tremendous success since its launch in 2003.

With design being its priority, the IFFS/AFS '05 featured the best in furniture design with an expanded Design Gallery that showcased award-winning furniture concepts by twelve international design-led companies. The show also offered an impressive line-up of industry renowned speakers to give insight into the industry, and to garner an effective exchange on design and upcoming trends at the 3rd Furniture Design Forum on 2 March. The winning entries of the 12th Furniture Design Award and those of the inaugural Furniture, Lifestyle, Innovation, Perspectives (FLIP!) Challenge, together with the finalist entries of both competitions were also on display to provide visitors an overview of Asian creativity and potential furniture trends for the global market.

The Furniture Design Award is an annual furniture design competition organised by the SFIC. First launched in 1993, the award aims to discover new design talents and to be a reputable showcase for the unique creations of Asia's best creative minds. FDA 2005 was supported by the DesignSingapore Council, the Singapore Economic Development Board, International Enterprise Singapore, SPRING Singapore, the American Hardwood Export Council, the Designers Association of Singapore, Interior Design Confederation (Singapore) and the Singapore Institute of Architects.

The theme for FDA 2005 was "New Asia". It was conceived with the aim to unveil a new design era in Asia with design concepts and innovations that boast a strong Asian influence. A total of 396 entries were received for FDA 2005; the entries were then judged based on conformity to the theme, creativity and innovation, form, functionality, choice of material, marketability and environmental friendliness. The finalists were announced during the press conference of the IFFS / AFS '05, and were on display throughout the period of the entire fair.

The Gold Award from the Students Category went to Matthew Tan from Temasek Polytechnic for his entry 'Vox'; the Silver Award went to Liu Ping from LaSalle-SIA College of the Arts for her entry 'Balance', and the Bronze Award to Tan Bee Hock from Nanyang Polytechnic for his entry 'Qi Pao'. Hans Tan's 'Bamboo Chair' took home the Gold Award for the Young Designers Category, while the Open Category saw a Bronze Award given to Susie Tay from THELIFESHOP Pte Ltd for her entry 'iSh Lamp'.

The inaugural Furniture, Lifestyle, Innovation, Perspectives (FLIP!) Challenge, rolled out in October 2004 was a competition open to students of local arts and design-related institutions in Singapore. Participants were required to paint, innovate or transform unfurnished two-door cupboards – sponsored by Kenas Pacific Pte Ltd – into works of art while retaining their basic storage function. 32 entries were submitted for the competition, out of which 13 were short listed as finalists.

Two teams from the Inspiration Design School bagged the top and third prizes with the entries, I-Revolution and Cow, respectively. The first runner up was Vibrant Glory, a one-person effort from the Temasek Design School. The merit awards went to Reflection of Singapore by Raffles LaSalle Institute, Mondrian in Store by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and Aspiring to New Heights by Temasek Design School. The works of art were then auctioned off during IFFS / AFS '05 at Singapore Expo to raise funds for TOUCH Community Service, a multi-service voluntary welfare organisation that serves more than 35,000 needy persons across all ages and races in Singapore.

During the press conference of the IFFS / AFS '05, Mr Andrew Ng, Vice President of the SFIC also announced the development of the International Furniture Centre, a key component of the Furniture Industry Capability Programme aimed at developing the industry into a significant player in the global market. Conceptualised as a part of the masterplan to develop the Sungei Kadut Industrial Estate into a Furniture Hub, the IFC will provide total solutions for the global furniture market and further consolidate Singapore's furniture and design hub status in Asia.

Located at 19 Sungei Kadut Street 2, the IFC is strategically situated in the centre of the Furniture Industrial Hub, which has the highest congregation of furniture companies in Singapore. The Centre has a gross floor area of 260,000 square feet – 70 percent of which will be dedicated to permanent furniture export showrooms. The IFC will also include a Design Village and the Furniture Learning Institute, which was launched in February 2004.

The Design Village, inspired by the Milan Design Week's Salon Satellite, will be one of the key features at the IFC. Complete with an FDA Winners' Gallery, a Designer's showcase, a design resource centre and a prototyping centre, budding designers can look to the Design Village as the place to congregate and gather inspiration, gain knowledge and exchange ideas. Established designers can take advantage of the Designers' Showcase to display their works, while industry players can tap on the design talents found at the Village, and use the facilities at the prototyping centre for a more systematic approach towards creating new furniture products.

Set to be fully operational by October 2005, the IFC and the IFFS / AFS will hopefully make Singapore a more rewarding venue for the world's furniture players to meet and conduct business.

The International Furniture Fair Singapore 2005 / 22nd ASEAN Furniture Show was held on 1 – 5 March 2005. For more information on IFFS/AFS '05, visit [www.ifs.com.sg](http://www.ifs.com.sg).

