



DESIGN LAUNCHPAD PLATFORM BY SFIC

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An international audience looking for fresh products, feedback from the market and a chance to showcase new designs: these were the things promised by PLATFORM, an initiative under the Design Entrepreneur Development Programme by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC). PLATFORM 2008 saw the participation of 61 young design entrepreneurs from 17 organisations and companies showcasing new prototypes for the home, office and outdoor living areas.

Vanessa Chow from Objet Living, a company that specialises in modern and functional lifestyle furniture, believes initiatives like PLATFORM are vital in promoting furniture design by local creatives. "PLATFORM is key to the promoting of local brands as it's the stepping stone to future events in both the local and international arena," shares Chow. "It will also facilitate the establishment of possible business partnerships for local firms to expand overseas and capture a wider audience in this process."

PLATFORM seeks to foster Singapore's growing position as a furniture hub, and local designers are the first to receive the benefits of a flow of international manufacturers and buyers. "We think it is a good idea to launch our collection in a trade show to get the first-hand market reaction to our design," comments Nathan Yong from air design

group, a design consultancy company, "We always find that it is important to understand how our design play in the role among the commercial market". Various enquiries from manufacturers, buyers and suppliers at PLATFORM 2008 finally resulted in a successful collaboration with Belgian furniture company, Ethnicraft, to produce 20 pieces of furniture. Yong credits the successful collaboration to the meeting of like-minded companies and a mutual respect for design.

It is this spirit of collaboration that PLATFORM seeks to nurture through SFIC's Design Entrepreneur Development Programme. For A Quarter, a young furniture company exploring the melding of art and design in its furniture, the most exciting project that came out of PLATFORM 2008 was a chance to participate in the Singapore Garden Festival 2008 and Orientales exhibition with 1degOFF, a design collective that also pursues cutting-edge furniture design through the fusion with art. "For the Orientales exhibition, Bacus Boo, the design director from 1degOFF offered us the invaluable opportunity to form a design group to reinterpret oriental design language into a modern expression", shares Bryant Chua from A Quarter, "It was also a good learning lesson to understand more about our own culture."

Yong envisions that PLATFORM could continue to grow beyond its current reach of 18,000 manufacturers, buyers and designers to continue to push local design to another level. "PLATFORM should be a Salone Satellite of Asia, and our local designers will be able to pit their works against the international designers," says Yong, referring to the showcase of budding designers at the prestigious Milan Furniture Fair, "This will help everyone in improving their area of work at the international level."

Along with the green revolution sweeping the globe comes the need to seek alternative materials and sustainable resources. PLATFORM 2009 welcomes participants to showcase green creations that are innovative and environmentally-friendly, and invites designers to be part of the green movement in making the world a better place.

For designers, architects and members from art and design institutions, book your space now at PLATFORM 2009. PLATFORM 2009 will be held in conjunction with International Furniture Fair Singapore 2009/ 26th ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS) from 9th to 12th March 2009 at the Singapore Expo. For more information, contact Joyce Lee at [65] 6505 9165 or Eric Teo at [65] 6505 9195, email platform@singaporefurniture.com or visit www.singaporefurniture.com/design.