

NEWS RELEASE

Celebrity designer Karim Rashid shares his world at the Furniture Design Forum 2009

SINGAPORE, 6 April 2009 – Karim Rashid, the prolific designer of Karim Rashid Inc, wowed the audience at the Furniture Design Forum 2009 (FDF), organised by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) in collaboration with Singapore Mozaic Brand Ambassador, Office Planner Pte Ltd. The forum was held at the Singapore Expo on 11 March 2008, in conjunction with the International Furniture Fair Singapore 2009/26th ASEAN Furniture Show and the venue was packed corner to corner with 439 participants comprising local and overseas furniture industry players, designers, architects, design students, trade agencies and the media.

The topic of the day was “Shaping the Globalandskape” and Mr Rashid shared his views on how our world has evolved greatly and boldly challenged design to keep up.

Dressed in his trademark pink and white presenting against a backdrop of his works flashing onscreen in slideshow format, Mr Rashid spoke at length on the differences between pragmatic design and poetic design. He also urged the audience to think about the following questions: Are we too nostalgic when it comes to design? Has design evolved in tandem with our lifestyle requirements? Has design become something ‘elite’? Many provocative points were raised by Mr Rashid and these were vividly illustrated with various situations and examples. Stories from his childhood, experiences from flying and even design ideas were openly shared. He also spoke at large on his wishes and aspirations for the future of design showing an

interesting and alternative view point. These topics were raised in quick succession and kept the audience completely enthralled.

After the presentation, a panel discussion involving Mr Rashid; Mr Gilles Mangin, Business Development Director, Office Planner Pte Ltd; Mr Gavin Woo, Managing Director; Office Planner Pte Ltd and Ms Kelley Cheng, Editor-in-Chief for ish and Singapore Architects ensued. Members of the audience took the opportunity to ask Mr Rashid more in-depth questions about his lecture, as well as discuss other salient issues such as sustainability.

Mr Simon Ong, Chairman of Design Development, SFIC said: "We are honoured to have Mr Karim Rashid as the keynote speaker at FDF 2009. It was a very insightful and thought-provoking session and a rare chance for us in the furniture design scene to better understand the experiences and visions of a prominent international design personality like Mr Rashid. We are sure that the audience walked away inspired and with much food for thought!"

The event was supported by DesignSingapore Council, International Enterprise Singapore (IE Singapore), SPRING Singapore, American Hardwood Export Council, Designers Association Singapore, Interior Design Confederation (Singapore), Singapore Institute of Architects and International Furniture Fair Singapore Pte Ltd.

For more information on Mr Rashid's lecture, please refer to Appendix A.

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About Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)

SFIC was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture industry. It currently represents 95 per cent of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65 per cent have subsidiary manufacturing plants in the region including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam. Its primary role is to promote the interests of its members and the Singapore furniture industry. Many of its initiatives aim to facilitate members' exposure to the world market, develop local talent and encourage entrepreneurship. SFIC organises the annual Furniture Design Award and PLATFORM to spur trendsetting furniture designs from Asia.

SFIC is the parent company of International Furniture Fair Singapore Pte Ltd, and IFFS Pte Ltd is the organiser of the annual International Furniture Fair Singapore and ASEAN Furniture Show. SFIC also manages the International Furniture Centre, a year-round platform for international

buyers to source and trade for a wide range of quality, well-designed furniture from Singapore and the region.

To ensure the industry's growth and viability, SFIC continues to forge close partnerships with the government and trade-related agencies to harness technology, knowledge and information for effective strategic planning.

In addition, SFIC represents Singapore in the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council (AFIC).

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Appendix A

- The Digital Age is causing the world to shrink and this contributes to how Karim Rashid practices today.
- The purpose of design is to make our lives better
 - o Yet, design has evolved to become a case of pragmatic vs poetic (elite) design
- Technology has democratised creativity and has given us the tools to disseminate creativity
 - o Consumers are now ready and empowered for anything
- The human beings are too nostalgic; as such we are not moving forward, changing or innovating.
 - o We need to take advantage of our creative dormant gene to make the world a more comfortable place