

NEWS RELEASE

RECORD-BREAKING NUMBER OF ENTRIES AT FURNITURE DESIGN AWARD 2008 *FRESH DESIGN TALENTS FROM ASEAN UNVEILED AT AWARD CEREMONY*

SINGAPORE, 7 March 2008 – Rising stars of furniture design from the region were unveiled today as the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) announced the results of the highly-coveted Furniture Design Award (FDA) for 2008 which garnered an impressive 530 entries.

Call for entries to the annual design competition began in April last year. FDA 2008 saw a jump in participation rates in all its three categories, with a 13-per cent increase in the Young Designers Category and six-per cent growth in the Open Category as compared to previous year. In the Students Category, the highest number of entries in FDA's history was recorded with 360 entries from 21 local and foreign institutions.

Entries for FDA 2008 were received from a total of 12 countries. These were Australia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand, The Philippines, The United Kingdom and Vietnam.

Mr Andrew Pang, Chairman of FDA 2008's Organising Committee, said: "We've opened the Students Category to participants from ASEAN this year after receiving much interest from the region. Many exciting student entries were submitted from Thailand and The Philippines, proving that we've indeed made the right move as having entries from all over ASEAN will certainly raise the standard of the competition and better expose our local designers to the different cultural aspects of design. We're also delighted to see the increase in participation for the Young Designers and Open categories. This again affirms the industry's recognition of the FDA as an invaluable platform to elevate the profile of individual designers as well as their companies. In this year's competition, besides the FDA Grand Award, judges will also

be conferring the Honourable Mention and Merit Awards to participants who have demonstrated a keen eye for design; and for the first time this year, winners will be able to incorporate a customised FDA logo onto their name cards, email, letterheads and other publicity materials.”

Mr Simon Ong, Chairman of the Design Development Committee for SFIC, said: “The FDA is a channel for us to discover fresh talents and we hope to further develop these talents by exposing them to the production processes first-hand. Besides the hands-on mentoring sessions, winners of the Student and Young Designers categories also have priority in securing a placement under the Designer Co-Development Programme. This programme allows selected outstanding young designers to undergo a 12-month internship at one of Singapore’s leading furniture companies. At the end of the internship, the participants will get to produce at least one of their designs and be invited to do a showcase at PLATFORM, which is held in conjunction with the International Furniture Fair Singapore/ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS).”

He continued, “PLATFORM aims to facilitate exchanges between the region’s up-and-coming designers and established international furniture players. The first PLATFORM held last year was a great success, resulting in several design houses entering into collaborations with industry players. Several participants were also selected to exhibit their works at the prestigious IMM Cologne 2008. This year, PLATFORM will present the works of 61 young designers from 17 organisations/institutions. For the first time, an award will be presented to the best product at the PLATFORM showcase, courtesy of Halo Asia. The winner of this award will walk away with US\$3,000.”

The judging for the Best Product Award will be conducted on 8 March 2008 with criteria based on creativity, marketability and functionality.

For FDA 2008, entries were assessed by a judging panel that included internationally renowned designers, Mr Michael Young, Founder and Director of Michael Young Ltd from Hong Kong, and Mr Voon Wong, Founder of voonwong&bensonsaw from the United Kingdom. Other prominent industry personalities on the panel included Mr Aamer Taher, Founder of Aamer Taher Design Studio and Council Member of the Singapore Institute of Architects; Mr Carsten Ovesen, Managing Director of Carsten Ovesen Design; Mr Jeff Choo, Director of Ai Associations Pte Ltd and Member of the Interior Design Confederation (Singapore) as well as Mr Tan Beng Seng, Managing and Design Director of Oniondesign Pte Ltd and Vice President of the Designers Association Singapore.

The entries were judged on their creativity, marketability, functionality and on environmental-friendliness and ergonomic aspects. Participants in the Students and Young Designers categories were also evaluated on their interpretation of the design theme “*TENSION*”. Category winners received a certificate, a trophy and up to S\$6,000 in cash. Two other awards – the “Best Use of Wood” Award and the American Hardwood Award – were also presented across categories. *(Please refer to the fact sheet for more details.)*

The winning designs of FDA 2008 will be showcased at IFFS/AFS 2008 from 9 to 12 March at the Singapore Expo (Foyer 1). In addition, as part of SFIC’s design outreach efforts, the works by the finalists of FDA 2008 along with those of the 4th FLIP Challenge held late last year will be exhibited at the National Museum of Singapore from 1 to 14 June 2008. The 6th Furniture Design Forum will also be making its successful return in June 2008 at the Gallery Theatre of National Museum of Singapore. Guest speakers include Mr Naoto Fukasawa, a renowned furniture designer of Naoto Fukasawa Design from Japan.

FDA 2008 is sponsored by Agility – Fairs & Events and IFFS Pte Ltd as well as supported by DesignSingapore Council, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore, SPRING Singapore, American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC), Designers Association of Singapore, Interior Design Confederation (Singapore) and Singapore Institute of Architects.

For more information on the SFIC’s design initiatives, please visit www.singaporefurniture.com.

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About Singapore Furniture Industries Council

Singapore Furniture Industries Council was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture industry. It currently represents 95% of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65% 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 also organises the annual Furniture Design Award to spur trend-setting furniture designs from Asia. 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.

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