

PRESS RELEASE

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IFFS Wows Furniture Fraternity Once Again

2017 Edition Delivers on Both Business and Design Fronts

Singapore, 4 Apr 2017 – The **International Furniture Fair Singapore 2017** concluded with resounding success after an eventful four-day run from 9 to 12 March at the Singapore EXPO. Along with co-located shows - the **34th ASEAN Furniture Show** and the inaugural **NOOK Asia** - the highly-anticipated international trade event attracted 21,966 trade professionals from the furniture, interior design, and furnishing industries - including 87 buying delegations - from 92 countries.

More than three decades on, IFFS continues to reinforce its position as an ideal business platform for the international furniture industry. The 2017 edition featured a diverse international portfolio of 428 exhibiting companies from 35 countries. Together, the participating companies put up an impressive showcase of creative and design-rich pieces that received widespread recognition from industry buyers. The slew of positive sentiments received on the show floor is a testament to visitors' satisfaction over the quality content presented and their overall show experience, emphasising the event's increasing importance in the eyes of industry professionals.

"From a business point of view, IFFS has to redefine itself in order to remain relevant and sustainable, and to continue serving the international furniture ecosystem as a premier sourcing platform," shared Mr Ernie Koh, Chairman of IFFS Pte Ltd. "The quality content was condensed into four power-packed halls this year, and we invigorated the show with more feature areas, design-centric displays, and knowledge-sharing seminars. Through these initiatives, we successfully delivered a content-driven show that focuses on the quality of brands and overall experience, one that offers a more conducive and seamless environment for visitors."

In addition to the industry's acknowledgement, IFFS' efforts at promoting global furniture trade were duly recognised by the Singapore government. Speaking at the IFFS 2017 opening ceremony, guest-of-honour, Mr S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry), said, "IFFS is an excellent showcase of Singapore's dynamic furniture industry, which has grown steadily over the years.... Singapore remains committed to staying open to trade, investments, talent, and ideas from around the world. IFFS epitomises this commitment to openness and connectivity [by] bringing some of the most promising furniture design talent and companies from around the world to Singapore."

Quality Conversations & Connections

The change in direction for IFFS was keenly felt across the show floor, with many industry professionals expressing satisfaction over the quality of conversations and networks forged during the event, and the value these interactions created for their businesses. In particular, exhibitors appreciated the opportunities to break into new emerging markets, an experience that is not often available at international trade shows.

Returning Vietnamese exhibitor, Square Roots Ltd's General Director, Justin Wheatcroft, said, "In the last few days, we met with our existing clients and made valuable, new connections here at IFFS. I'm very happy with what we've received – in particular, contacts for new retailers in markets we were not as strong in previously. I've always liked IFFS for the quality visitors and strong brands it attracts, and I think the organisers should definitely continue to focus on that area of strength. People worry about the size of a fair, but I believe a compact show with solid content is far better than a large one with little direction."

His positive sentiments were echoed by first-time exhibitor, Cilek A.S. from Turkey. “We wanted to expand our presence in the APAC region and felt that IFFS was a good choice due to its central location,” quipped Yasemin Gunduz, Export Manager at Cilek. “We’re very pleased with the visitor turnout and superb responses to our collections. So far, we’ve met good contacts from Australia, Malaysia, and Thailand, and we look forward to selling to these markets through retailers and online platforms. We are seriously considering returning to the show again next year!”

Likewise, visiting buyers also remarked positively when asked about their key takeaways from IFFS. Attending the show for the first time, Ing Hendricus Wichers, President and Founder of Grupo HeWi (Mexico), said, “My main objective is to search for and establish long-term partnerships with reliable suppliers that offer good services and value, and are able to understand my business needs. So far, I’ve met around three to four promising companies that I’m keen to work with. This has far exceeded my expectations and I’m very impressed with what I’ve seen and experienced at IFFS.”

For visitors looking to complement their furniture-sourcing needs with lifestyle furnishing and design-centric decorative pieces, IFFS offered a ‘one-stop solution’ with **NOOK Asia**, the newly-introduced co-located show that focuses on artisanal crafts from around the world. Other noteworthy attractions included the **EU Business Avenues in South East Asia Pavilion, 12 Country Pavilions, Virtual Reality Zone, Upholstery Pavilion, The Outdoor Boulevard**, as well as a series of 12 complimentary **Design × Business Seminars**.

Delphine Leon, Founder and Design Director of D’Apres Nous D&B Pte Ltd, commented, “I have visited IFFS a few times in the past and I’m here again because we find value in trade shows that continually keep things fresh, by offering content that reflects new trends and by introducing promising new players to the mix.”

Compact Show, Comprehensive Content

Business aside, visitors were treated to a visual extravaganza as they strolled across the packed fairgrounds in search of show-stopping creations. True to its promise of delivering a content-rich show that inspires and sparks conversations, IFFS 2017 provided the industry with a feast for the senses with a variety of immersive, engaging, and high-quality showcases that featured well-designed furniture.

Popular feature areas like **The White House**, conceptualised by award-winning Singaporean designer, Nathan Yong, and **The Italian Hospitality**, curated by Italian design master, Giulio Cappellini, easily captured visitors’ attention with their stylish and sleek presentations.

In particular, visitors appreciated the calming and neutral appearance of The White House, noting that it served a plethora of purposes and made for good photo opportunities. Iwan from Green Interiors Indonesia, shared, “The way the strips of paper cascade downwards remind me of waterfalls. The colour choice makes it soothing, and it’s perfect for visitors to rest their eyes and feet after visiting the exhibitors’ booths.”

While the industry stalwarts drew in the crowds, up-and-coming designers were also given the valuable opportunity to showcase their works to a global audience and gain greater exposure at IFFS. Of special mention is the **Design STARS Showcase**, a collective display of works presented by 10 design talents from around the globe.

Design STAR participant, Celine Ng from Fraction Design Studio (Singapore), enthused, “IFFS was absolutely enjoyable. The fair is an unrivalled opportunity for me to meet with international brands and designers, allowing for endless possibilities – from future collaborations, further design critique and development for my works, and even chances to form new bonds and friendships with both Singaporean and fellow designers worldwide!

Another design showcase that garnered much attention was the **Furniture Design Award (FDA) Showcase** that consists of competition entries submitted by the 11 finalists of FDA 2017. Organised by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council, the FDA is a reputable platform to uncover budding design talents. The 2017 winning design is the Yokan Chair - a miniature chair inspired by a traditional Japanese dessert – by Hiroki Sakamoto.

He shared, "I was very surprised to have won the grand prize as the other entries were all very impressive. To be recognised by an international jury consisting of top-calibre design professionals really meant a lot to me. FDA has been an amazing experience and I have received a lot of interest in my work at IFFS."

Moving forward, the Organiser plans to continue in this new direction, and focus on curating a show that celebrates design, emphasises on experiences, and facilitates connections.

Koh concludes, "Ultimately, we want IFFS to not just be an internationally-renowned sourcing platform, but one that ignites conversations, and forges connections between exhibitors and buyers as well. Through nurturing a vibrant network of relationships, we hope that the impact and influence of IFFS can be felt throughout the year, and not just during show days."

For more information, please visit www.IFFS.com.sg and www.NOOKAsia.com.sg.

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About the International Furniture Fair Singapore

The International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS), held in conjunction with co-located events - the ASEAN Furniture Show (AFS) and the newly rebranded NOOK Asia - is regarded by industry experts as Asia's premier sourcing platform and design-led exhibition. With over three decades of experience since its inaugural event in 1981, IFFS remains the most distinctive channel for regional and international companies to penetrate the global market.

Together, the events – IFFS, AFS and NOOK Asia – will feature a comprehensive range of furniture, furnishing, decorative accessories, interiors and fittings by a diverse portfolio of quality exhibitors, and attract a healthy and well-represented attendance of trade buyers and visitors from the entire furniture ecosystem and value chain.

To make it a holistic trade event, the various design initiatives – SingaPlural, Design STARS, Furniture Design Award, and Design Seminars – offer added depth and dimension to this Singapore-anchored trade event, raising its profile as a show not-to-be-missed in the industry calendar.

IFFS is supported by the ASEAN Furniture Industries Council (AFIC), DesignSingapore Council, International Enterprise (IE) Singapore, Singapore Exhibition and Convention Bureau and SPRING Singapore.

For more information, please visit:

IFFS 2017 www.IFFS.com.sg

NOOK Asia 2017 www.NOOKAsia.com.sg

For media enquiries on IFFS, AFS & NOOK Asia, please contact:

Asia Pacific, Americas & Rest of the World

Ms Alina TEE
Red Bug Communications
+65 6220 4787
alina@redbugpr.com

Europe and Middle East

Mrs Marilena PUPPI
OGS Organizzazione Gestione Servizi Srl
+39 0 2345 0610
info@ogs.it

Organiser's Office – IFFS Pte Ltd

Ms CHUA Siew Bee
+65 6505 9176
siewbee@iffs.com.sg