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SingaPlural 2017 underscores design as an enabler for innovation and growth

- First-ever Pop-Up segment unveils new stories of design reshaping retail**
- Highlights emerging trends shaping the future of design: from the Internet of Things to the digital retail revolution**

Singapore, May 18, 2017 – Design will enable innovation and growth for companies in today’s competitive global landscape.

This message was clearly spelt out at SingaPlural 2017 which highlighted design in all disciplines, formats and materials – used by both MNCs and SMEs to wow audiences from Singapore and overseas.

Launched by Minister in Prime Minister’s Office, Chan Chun Sing on March 6, 2017, the 6th edition of this annual anchor design festival of the Singapore Design week – highlighted how companies – especially SMEs can embrace design to create new value, products and markets.

SingaPlural 2017 featured the theme: “Stories – A New Perspective”, a visual and sensory journey transporting the audience into the minds of SingaPlural’s numerous design creatives. Award-winning creative agency – BLACK – curated the design festival.

The nine Singaporean brands that took part in SingaPlural’s first ever Pop-up segment have given the event a thumbs-up; in terms of using design to create new retail experiences for consumers.

Mr Mike Tay, Founder of Onlewo, collaborated with two designers, FLIQ and LING WU in his Pop-up. Together, they launched the BUBBA Chair and the Siu Jie Clutch at SingaPlural 2017.

Mr Tay said: “Onlewo’s brand exposure has benefitted greatly from its participation in SingaPlural 2017. We decided to take a plunge in SingaPlural



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2017 by debuting an experiential booth along with two exclusive products, the BUBBA chair and Siu Jie Clutch. Our booth featured various displays enabling visitors to touch and experience Onlewo's signature fabric.

We found SingaPlural to be an attractive opportunity with its wide outreach to audiences from various walks-of-life. Matching fellow brands such as FLIQ and LING WU to us has helped to drum up excitement and engage our visitors with the fabric design of Onlewo."

Another trend that will be shaping the retail experience is the creative use of technology. A homegrown retailer, Bynd Artisan, that is in the business of customised notebooks for example, has started exploring the use of robotics to design a new experience and unique product for customers.

The local brands that took part in Pop-up included: Onlewo, Bynd Artisan, CATCH, ETTE TEA, Gallery & Co, SCENE SHANG, Shermay's Singapore Fine Food, Supermama and Mystic Vintage. These brands unveiled new products which made exclusive debuts at SingaPlural 2017.

Global brands such as UNIQLO also gave positive feedback on its collaboration with local design teams – Roots and MACHINEAST – in their maiden participation in SingaPlural. UNIQLO chose to work with local design agencies ROOTS and MACHINEAST who adapted different aspects of UNIQLO's AIRism line into a visual and tactile showcase.

Ms Sim Yunying, Marketing Manager of UNIQLO Singapore said: "Our team was overwhelmed by the support we received at SingaPlural 2017. Both Roots and MACHINEAST have done very well to portray various aspects of our AIRism clothing line.

Ms Fizah Rahim, Co-Founder of MACHINEAST, said: "Working with UNIQLO on 10 Minutes was a thoroughly enjoyable experience; it gave us the unique opportunity of sharing our craft during a week-long design festival. We were exposed to different audiences from both the media and general public. All of them were keen to learn more about both UNIQLO and MACHINEAST."

Sharing the same enthusiasm of working with the Japanese fashion giant, Mr Jonathan Yuen, Founder and Creative Director of ROOTS said: "This is our second time participating in SingaPlural, and we were very excited and



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honoured to have the opportunity to collaborate with UNIQLO Singapore on the project, Humidifier, based on UNIQLO's AIRism fabric technology. Throughout the collaboration process and eventually the event itself, we have made a lot of new friends, and certainly built more good relationships."

Commenting on the Design Festival, Mr Mark Yong, Chairman of SingaPlural 2017 said: "SingaPlural 2017 gave novel perspectives to retail, refreshing uses of materials and innovative applications of technology to give a new take on how design can shape lifestyles and drive business growth.

The SingaPlural curatorial team is proud to say that SingaPlural 2017 was a resounding success. We will continue to build on our winning combination of marrying strong content with innovative designs – such as combining fresh local brands with established local designers – to tease, wow, and excite our audiences."

Mr Yong, who is also the president of the Singapore Furniture Industries Council also stressed: "The sixth annual SingaPlural is a game changer for the design industry. It featured over 100 participants, bringing together local and global talent and coming up with inspirational ideas to shape the future of design in Singapore."

SingaPlural 2017 also hosted several international collaborations including the KYO Project. KYO is a collaboration between Singaporean designers and traditional Japanese craftsman from the Kanto region. It featured Colin Seah of the integrated spatial-design practice, Ministry of Design; Chris Lee of Asylum and Wong Mun Summ and Richard Hassell from WOHA. It was also supported by the Kanto Bureau of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI-Kanto).

The KYO project was focused on the creation of various furniture and lifestyle products. These ranged from utensils, toys, and even Kimono fabrics.

SingaPlural 2017 also took the opportunity to envision Singapore's future through the feature project TOMORROW – personally curated by BLACK's Jackson Tan, designer of the iconic SG50 logo.

Mr Tan said: "We brought together for the very first time - ten President Design Award winners with ten illustrators to conceptualise how SG100 will



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look like and how we will live in 2065. Ideally, we hope to still be able to enjoy Singapore's famous Chilli Crab as Chris Chai has envisioned in *Eat!*"

Mr Kelvin Li, a visitor of TOMORROW at SingaPlural, said: "I thoroughly enjoyed my time at TOMORROW. I was better able to appreciate the future of Singapore by contrasting it with the classic mediums of books, typewriters, CDs and Overhead Projector slides. It gave me a new perspective even as I visualised the future."

Despite its successes over the past six years, the SingaPlural team refuses to rest on its laurels – it is already drawing up new plans for fresh collaborations and partnerships come March 2018.

Commenting on the future of SingaPlural, Mr Yong said: "2018 looks set to be promising year ahead for design. I hope that SingaPlural 2018 will continue to serve as the platform for creativity and ideation - connecting design and business to stimulate business growth and solidify Singapore's stature as Asia's leading design capital."

SingaPlural 2017 was held from 7-12 March 2017 at the F1 Pit Building. It is also the anchor event of the Singapore Design Week. For more information, please visit the www.SingaPlural.com website.

ABOUT FESTIVAL CURATOR

BLACK is a multi-disciplinary creative agency based in Singapore specialising in branding, design and curation. Notable projects include the brand concept and identity of SG50 - to celebrate Singapore's golden jubilee and CREATIVE©ITIES - an exhibition that "maps creativity in Asia Pacific's cities today". Jackson Tan is the creative director of BLACK who was awarded 'Designer of the Year' in 2007, President's Design Award and the PROMAX ASIA BDA Gold in 2001, 2002, 2003, 2008, 2009 and 2010. BLACK was also named Asia's Top Design Practices in the Singapore Design Awards 2015.



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ABOUT FESTIVAL ORGANISER

Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) was established in 1981 as the official representative body of Singapore's furniture and furnishings industry. Its membership comprises furniture manufacturers, interior fit-out specialists, retailers, designers, as well as furnishings and materials suppliers. Currently, the council represents 95% of established furniture manufacturers in Singapore, of whom 65% have subsidiary manufacturing plants in various countries across the region, including China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Vietnam.

SFIC's primary role is to promote the interests of its members and of the Singapore furniture and furnishings industry. For 36 years, SFIC has helped its members to adapt to changes in the business environment by introducing trade, talent, design development and business innovation activities, as well as upgrading business capabilities. Revolving around SFIC's 3i strategic framework – Improve, Innovate, and Integrate, all of the Council's programmes aim to grow the local furniture and furnishings industry and ultimately, to strengthen the 'Singapore brand' globally.

ABOUT SINGAPORE DESIGN WEEK

The Singapore Design Week (SDW) brings together a collection of local and international design activities in Singapore. Held annually, the SDW is organised by the DesignSingapore Council.

Open to the design community, businesses, design students and the general public, the SDW aims to raise awareness of good design, deepen the appreciation and understanding of design innovation and encourage the use of design for innovation and productivity. Through this platform, the DesignSingapore Council also hopes to enhance the synergy among its design partners, and in turn boost Singapore's profile and attractiveness as a global city for design.

SDW features local and international design trade shows, conferences, showcases, exhibitions and workshops that span various design disciplines.

Visit <https://new.designsingapore.org/sdw> for more information

SingaPlural Celebrating Design 2017



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