

SFIC SIGNS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING TO PROMOTE GROWTH OF LOCAL DESIGN CAPABILITIES ON A DEDICATED PLATFORM

8 Network Partners of DesignS will cooperate on joint initiatives and programmes

- Endeavours to strengthen partnerships between stakeholders and further push for global recognition of the Singapore brand
- Unveils roadmap for SingaPlural 2013



(From Left to Right): Mr Bernard Chan, Chief Executive Officer of 4As; Mr Lawrence Chong, President of DBCS; Mr George Budiman, Vice-President of IDCs; Mr Seah Chee Huang, Honorary Secretary of SIA; Mr Ernie Koh, President of SFIC; Mr Tai Lee Siang, Chairman of DesignS; Mr Damian Tang, President of SILA; Mr Chong Cher Sen, Vice-President of SIP; Mr Wilson Teo, Secretary General of TAFF

Singapore, 6 Nov 2012 – The Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) is pleased to announce that it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to partner Singapore's powerhouse for design talent, DesignS. The eight-member strong alliance comprises of country's top design professions who share the same passion and drive to fuel the development of Singapore's design industries.

The Network Partners of DesignS consists of the following members:

1. Association of Accredited Advertising Agents Singapore (4As)
2. Design Business Chamber Singapore (DBC)
3. Interior Design Confederation (Singapore) (IDCS)
4. Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)
5. Singapore Institute of Architects (SIA)
6. Singapore Institute of Landscape Architects (SILA)
7. Singapore Institute of Planners (SIP)
8. Textile and Fashion Federation of Singapore (TAFF)

With the support of the DesignSingapore Council, DesignS was formed in 2009 with the eight design partners. Today, all eight partners have come together again to operate as one collective team to ensure the success of SingaPlural. The MOU creates a framework of cooperation among the DesignS members to execute SingaPlural on a greater scale which aims to benefit both aspiring and established designers.

Mr Ernie Koh, the newly appointed President of SFIC, expressed his thoughts on this unprecedented alliance, "The design industries in Singapore have been flourishing rapidly in recent years. With the power of 8 sharing a common vision of nurturing and promoting design capabilities from the creative spectrum, the collaborative efforts of the DesignS team will further strengthen the Singapore brand in the international design sphere. DesignS is our A-team who is in top form to help Singapore hit design gold."

In addition, the MOU signifies a commitment for all partners to engage wholeheartedly by leveraging on their strengths, resources and expertise in their respective fields to unanimously support SingaPlural – a multi-faceted design event organised by SFIC and held in conjunction the International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS). After its successful inaugural launch in March 2012, the future editions are expected to be even better and bigger in the coming years.

Mr Koh continued, "SFIC is proud to join the DesignS network. The immediate objective of the MOU is to unanimously support the cause for SingaPlural – a celebration of Singapore design by Singapore designers. Plans are well underway for a more successful one next year. Members can leverage on SingaPlural as the perfect platform to make our design visions into reality. We are certain it will ignite new inspirations and yield exciting results."

SingaPlural 2013

SingaPlural 2013 – Celebrating Design will be held during 8 -15 March 2013, offering a series of satellite exhibitions, symposiums, competitions and exclusively curated design spaces. Apart from successful programmes initiated last year, such as the well-received "30 Chairs Lifestories", SingaPlural 2013 will unveil new programmes spanning across different sectors of design, backed by the expertise of the DesignS network partners. The various forms and themed programmes – showroom design race, design forum, design competition for public benches, to name a few – will be both artistically inspiring and practically aspiring.

SingaPlural's successful debut captured worldwide attention, and is set to attract more world renowned design experts to join its second edition. One of the highly anticipated events is the Singapore Design Summit, boasting a cross-disciplinary and internationally distinguished panel. Other activities include exhibitions, symposiums and outdoor art installations showcasing the best of Singapore's creative talents e.g. 48 Hours Challenge, Design Larger than Life, and more.

DesignS also welcomes the signing of MOU among the its network partners: "DesignS plays a key role in pioneering Singapore brand design and innovation. Now that we have strong partners in our network, we can chart the next growth stage for design in Singapore and further develop future generations of designers," said Mr Tai Lee Siang, Chairman of DesignS.

Mrs Kee Ai Nah, Group Director of SPRING Singapore's Industry Development Group said: "This alliance offers great collaborative opportunities for design

players across different disciplines. We are excited by the possible synergies that could lead to the spawning of new ideas and concepts, from interior design to fashion and furniture. With a diverse yet closely-knitted network of partners under DesignS, this will bring about a new twist to SingaPlural and further strengthen its positioning in Singapore and overseas. We look forward to a pool of strong design talents and companies that can make Singapore proud.”

Mr Lee Yee Fung, Regional Director of IE Singapore added: “Through a strong partnership like DesignS and events like SingaPlural, I am confident that Singapore will continue to make headways toward becoming the design hub of Asia. With a strong alliance like DesignS, it will help Singapore furniture companies increase its global market share and develop them into global brands. ”

Mr Jeffrey Ho, Executive Director of DesignSingapore Council said: “The DesignSingapore Council supported the establishment of DesignS to collaborate on common issues within the local design industry such as professional capability development and business development. The partnership between SFIC and the other members of DesignS allows for a deeper and stronger collaboration between and across the different design disciplines represented by the respective associations. With SingaPlural, they can pool resources and expertise to showcase their collective capabilities and offerings, and this is a good platform to harness the synergy and garner a wider outreach. This benefits members of the associations as well as reinforces the DesignSingapore Council's aim of establishing Singapore as a global city for design creativity and excellence in Asia.”

Furniture Design Forum 2012 – Design Unity in Diversity

To kick start the partnership, a furniture design forum dubbed “Design Unity in Diversity Forum” will be the forerunner of SingaPlural 2013. The forum provides a platform to encourage a cultural exchange of ideas, inspiration and instill a spirit of entrepreneurship among designers in Asia and around the world.

Said Mr Simon Ong, Chairman of SFIC Design Advisory Panel, "Long established as a fusion cuisine heaven, Singapore possesses unparalleled reputation in terms of blending oriental and occidental cultures. We have every reason to believe we can make Singapore a global center of fusion designs as well."

Two internationally acclaimed studios – Form Us with Love (FUWL) from Sweden, and Lagranja from Spain – will share their ideology and creative direction behind their multi-disciplinary practices. Established in Stockholm in 2005 and quickly gaining success and recognition, FUWL has been named as one of the world's 50 most influential designers shaping the future. It identifies itself with the design philosophy "dedication", devoting not just the products but the holistic design thinking surrounding it. Lagranja designs a unique range of bespoke furniture for clients in the hospitality, art institutions and corporate sectors. It believes design is a perfect mix of attitude, passion, and design thinking which transpires through different design vehicles, thus achieving diversity in design through unity in thinking. The design forum will also feature Swedish designer and entrepreneur Jonas Ericsson, whose Scandinavia lifestyle company is steadily gaining success in Singapore and the rest of Southeast Asia.

By bringing these international design masters and our local design talents face-to-face, SFIC looks forward to helping Singaporean designers identify tangible opportunities and further invigorate the local design community.

For more information regarding the forum and the featured designers, please refer to the Appendix.

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About Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC)

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, Myanmar, 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.

Through SFIC Institute, its training and education arm, the SFIC offers development courses to ensure its graduates remain competitive and relevant to the latest industry developments.

It also manages the International Furniture Centre and organizes the annual Furniture Design Award, Furniture Design Platform as well as International Furniture Fair Singapore/ ASEAN Furniture Show, The Deco Show and The Hospitality Show. 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.

www.singaporefurniture.com

About DesignS

DesignS, a network of design-centric institutes and associations in Singapore, was officially launched on 29 June 2010 by Mr Lui Tuck Yew, then Acting Minister for Information, Communications and the Arts.

Formed in 2009 to provide a platform for the creation of a coordinated Design network, it comprises eight member institutes from the multi-faceted creative spectrum ranging from Architecture, Urban Planning, Landscape Architecture, as well as Interior, Furniture, Graphic and Fashion Design.

DesignS primary goals are:

- Foster a sense of community and network amongst the design fields
- Work in concert on joint educational and continual professional development
- Jointly promote and advance the "Singapore Brand" of design

www.designs.com.sg

About SingaPlural

Organised by the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC), the annual design event unites key stakeholders of the design industry by featuring the best of their design capabilities. The week-long event is held in conjunction with the International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS), Asia's renowned one-stop furniture and furnishings trade platform. It is a large-scale design showcase which positions Singapore as the design hub. The inaugural edition was successfully launched during March 2012 and attracted 25,000 visitors worldwide.

Through SingaPlural 2013 – Celebrating Design, SFIC will be working together with the network partners of DesignS to display the best design elements from the multi-faceted creative spectrum ranging from Architecture, Urban Planning, Landscape Architecture, as well as Interior, Furniture, Graphic and Fashion Design.

APPENDIX

Design Unity in Diversity

(An Industry Initiative by Singapore Furniture Industries Council)

Date: 7 November 2012
Time: 1.00 PM – 5.00 PM
Venue: NAFA's Lee Foundation Theatre



About Form Us With Love



<http://www.formuswithlove.se>

Hailing from Stockholm, FORM US WITH LOVE is a design studio which started in 2005 and has since pushed to challenge the conventional through design initiatives. FUWL partners with companies involved in the development and production of everyday objects, furniture and lighting. Clients include Scandinavian and international brands such as ateljé Lyktan, Bolon, Cappellini, DePadova, Muuto, Design House Sthlm and One Nordic Furniture Company.

In 2012, Form Us With Love was named by Fast Company as one of the world's 50 most influential designers shaping the future.

About Lagranja



<http://lagranjadesign.com>

Established in 2002, Lagranja is a multi-disciplinary design studio focusing its talent in the creation of interiors, products and ephemeral installations.

Lagranja's work has gained international recognition and national acclaim winning prestigious prizes like the Red Dot Award (2007), Premi Ciutat de Barcelona de Disseny (2008), Premio Via (2009), IIDA Excellence Award from the International Interior Design Association-USA (2009), IDEA Award (2008) and Silver Delta Award (2012).

About Jonas Ericsson



Originally from Norrtälje, Stockholm, Sweden, Jonas Ericsson has many years of experience in the fashion and lifestyle industries such as Giogio Armani SpA. With a keen interest in the retail industry, he decided to pursue a Masters in marketing, branding and consumer at the National University of Singapore. He later founded Style: Nordic in 2005 to promote Scandinavian lifestyle products including fashion, home accessories and furniture to the Singapore community.

After six years in Singapore, Jonas headed back to Sweden for newer and greater challenges. He is now on an international mission to share his ideas on design, export, and most importantly, entrepreneurship on the global stage with his new company, Jonas Ericsson Generating AB.