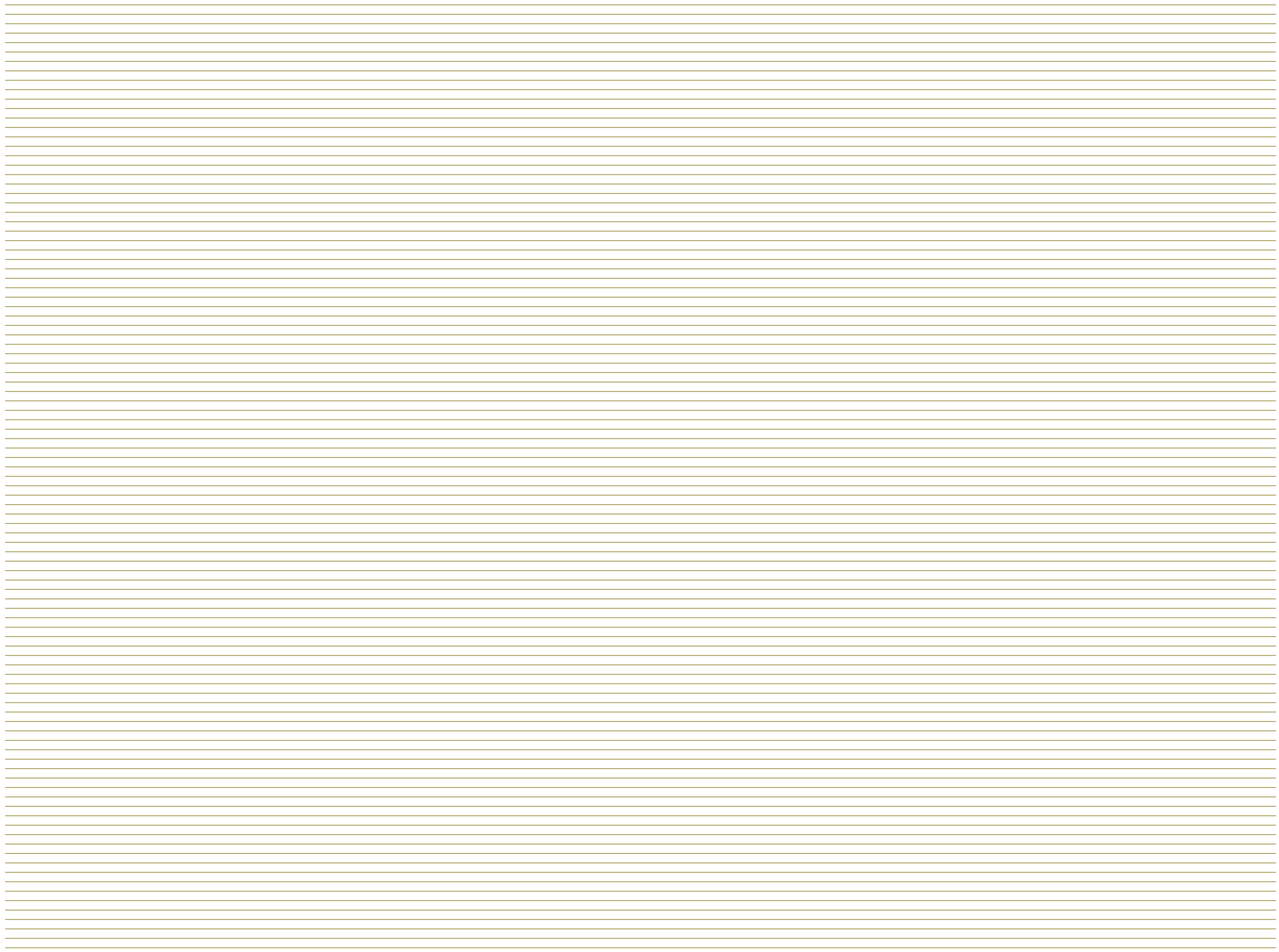


PRESIDENT'S  
DESIGN AWARD  
2006



The inaugural President's Design Award is conferred on individuals who have contributed substantially to our culture, environment and economy.

Their achievements have been recognised internationally. They have thus made a difference to Singapore. They have helped to establish Singapore as a world design city.

MESSAGE FROM  
MR S R NATHAN  
*PRESIDENT,  
REPUBLIC OF  
SINGAPORE*

Appreciation of design reflects a society's development. More than just aesthetics and style, design can also be an expression of a people's values and aspirations.

Singapore is a country where good design is pervasive. Our buildings and interiors are created for more than shelter and comfort. In the hands of our creative talent, these designs embody our cultural values and our way of life and reflect the global nature of our city. A thoughtfully designed magazine can make us think and feel differently about the issues it presents. Work life is made more meaningful and enjoyable with well-designed tools and appliances. Singapore's efforts to enhance its cultural capital and vibrancy will help strengthen the design sector, including the development of design talents and the growth of Singapore's reputation in design capability and capacity.

The inaugural President's Design Award is conferred on individuals who have contributed substantially to our culture, environment and economy. Their achievements have been recognised internationally. They have thus made a difference to Singapore. They have helped to establish Singapore as a world design city.

A panel of international experts, including Singapore experts, in the various fields of design, selected the winners for the Award. Their time, expertise and support of Singapore's pursuit of design excellence are greatly appreciated.

The outlook for Singapore design is very bright. I look forward to seeing the design sector grow from strength to strength as Singapore marches into the future with confidence.

Design has never been more important to the future of Singapore as it is now.

This President's Design Award will be an important catalyst that will take Singapore design into its next phase of development because its role above all is to inspire.

MESSAGE FROM  
MR EDMUND CHENG  
*CHAIRMAN,  
STEERING  
COMMITTEE,  
PRESIDENT'S  
DESIGN AWARD &  
CHAIRMAN,  
DESIGNSINGAPORE  
COUNCIL*

Design has never been more important to the future of Singapore as it is now.

More Singaporeans are beginning to appreciate how good design can enhance their quality of life and for many, design is becoming the first consideration in determining their choice of a place to call home, a restaurant to dine at, a piece of furniture to rest on or even a kitchen utensil to use.

However, design also plays a critical role in determining how well we perform in a highly competitive global marketplace. Over the years, the number of players has increased in every sector of enterprise, each vying to capture a larger share of the market. Design has been identified as the key driver to giving Singapore the edge over other competitors, by differentiating our products and services internationally.

Design is a key component of the Creative Industries in Singapore, which incorporate arts, media and design. On the global front, the creative industries had been estimated at US\$1 trillion in 2005, growing at an annual rate of 5% annually. \$200 million has been set aside to be invested over the next 5 years to double the sector's contribution to Singapore's Gross Domestic Product from 3% to 6% by 2012. Such an increase will mean greater demand for creative services and products and greater opportunities for those who can contribute to developing these areas.

Of the \$200 million, \$10 million will be spent on developing creative capacity in 2006 alone. Scholarships, training grants, forums, master classes and workshops to train creative talent are just some of the initiatives. The reason for this is simple: design is a human activity and the cultivation of good design begins with fostering the talent, knowledge and skills of the designers. Design becomes a culture and a way of life when the designers and those for whom they design engage at every stage of the process from concept to final product. This appreciation of excellence in design and designers will significantly boost the industry.

But it begins with recognition.

This President's Design Award will be an important catalyst that will take Singapore design into its next phase of development because its role above all is to inspire. By recognizing those who have blazed a trail and made a name for themselves and thus helped place Singapore squarely on the world design map, the President's Design Award sets the direction and the pace for this and future generations to follow.

We are certain that these winners will continue to exceed our expectations of greater design excellence and will pioneer the way for fresh talent to emerge, stepping forward to chart new territories in design.

The President's Design Award is a celebration as well as a landmark for Singapore.

Celebration is central to design and creativity.

MESSAGE FROM  
DR MILTON TAN  
*MICA FELLOW AND  
DIRECTOR,  
DESIGNSINGAPORE  
COUNCIL  
MINISTRY OF  
INFORMATION,  
COMMUNICATIONS  
AND THE ARTS*

The President's Design Award is a celebration as well as a landmark for Singapore.

Celebration is central to design and creativity. This is because a large part of creativity is necessarily played out in the public realm. Though pursued by talented individuals and teams, creativity is ultimately not determined by individuals, but by their peers and the communities that they relate to. Celebration forges this important relationship, and establishes a bond and partnership for us as a community to face new challenges, and to prospect new opportunities with greater confidence.

Creativity is about going beyond the given limits of established conventions and the status quo. Important though these are for us to maintain an even keel in everyday life, creativity is crucial for us to adapt to the constant changes around us. Whether through incremental innovation or disruptive shifts of paradigms and new value creation, creative acts offer alternatives, and stake out new possibilities; invite the realignment of our priorities, influence our choices, and even challenge our understanding of the world around us. The new landmarks of creative achievements — such as those represented by this inaugural President's Design Award — in uncharted territories are therefore crucial for trailblazing designers as well as for the rest of us to know where we are and where we are headed.

We honour and celebrate the achievements of our creative designers and their works, and look to this Award as landmarks to help us chart the course of our design futures, and to plumb the depths of design possibilities.

In evaluating this year's submissions, we were heartened by the high quality and range of projects submitted for consideration.

Collectively, they demonstrate the high quality of design thought and execution achieved in Singapore, responding to various uses and challenges across large and small-scale projects.

MESSAGE FROM  
MRS CHEONG-  
CHUA KOON HEAN  
*CHIEF EXECUTIVE  
OFFICER,  
URBAN  
REDEVELOPMENT  
AUTHORITY*

Singapore architects and urban designers are unfolding their talents to reveal diverse works which capture the attention and imagination of both local and international audiences. Cast against the backdrop of a heightening awareness in the field of urban design, our home-grown architects are actively pushing boundaries and establishing new territories in building design.

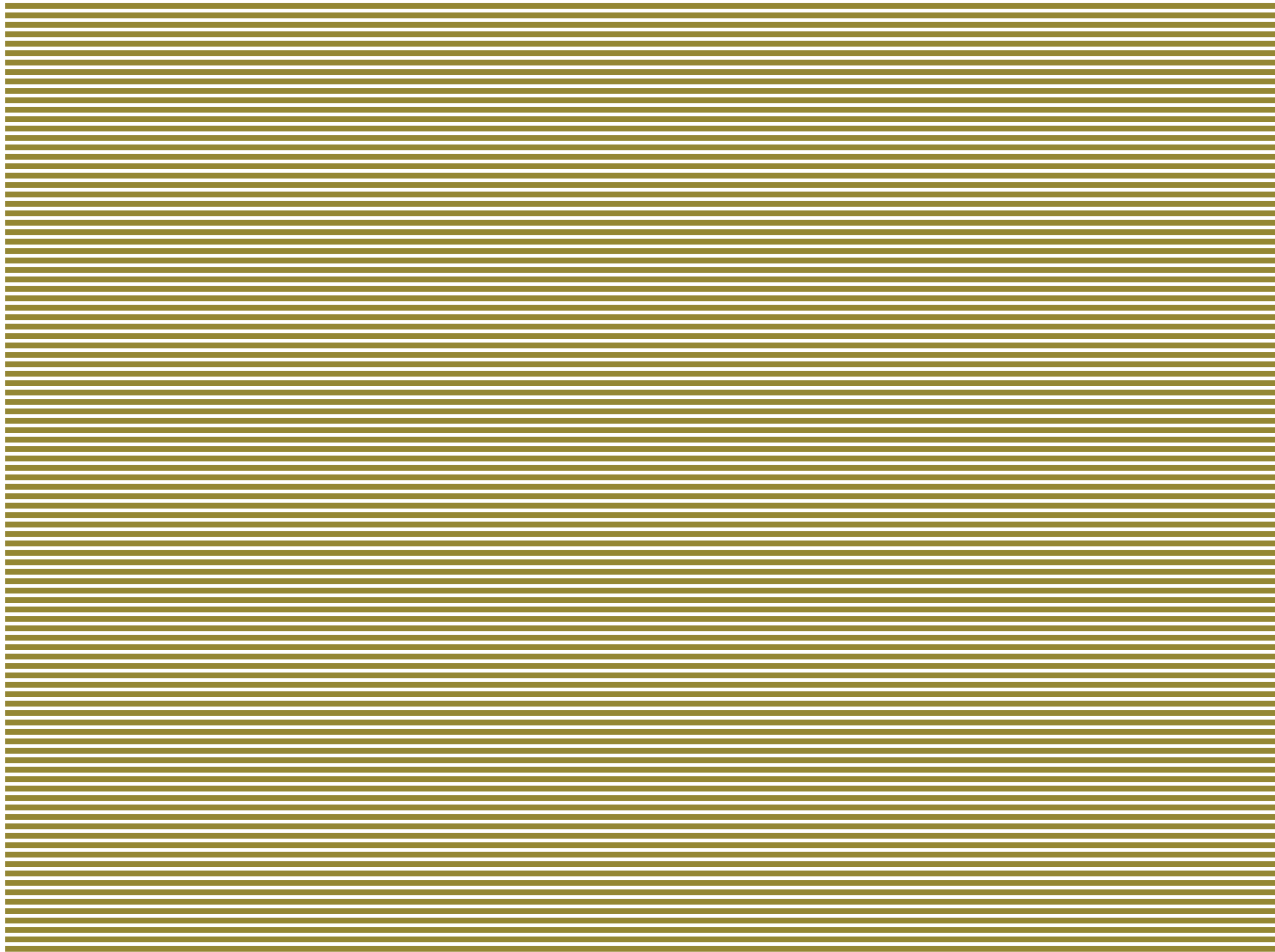
Urban Design expands the creative brief to extend building design towards the public realm. It embraces the city's context as inspiration when deriving building form, scale and programming. It considers the physical environment, our history, cultural heritage and social dynamics. Urban design also manifests itself in how the city is interconnected – in the design of pathways, roads and greenery. It touches the lives of the city inhabitants, as they navigate through its streets, meet and gather in public spaces.

Urban Design is, very simply, about seeing the potential of each site in relation to the surroundings and transforming them into delightful places for the enjoyment of the public. Such delightful experiences would be etched in the memory for generations to come.

This inaugural President's Design Award is particularly momentous for architecture and urban design. In evaluating this year's submissions, we were heartened by the high quality and range of projects submitted for consideration. Independently, each of the winning designs presents a set of creative architectural solutions specific to its site and surrounding context. Collectively, they demonstrate the high quality of design thought and execution achieved in Singapore, responding to various uses and challenges across large and small-scale projects.

When the President's Design Award was first mooted, a key objective was to raise an awareness of not only good architecture, but also the importance of urban design. It is rewarding now to see how the attention to good urban design has made the winning body of architectural works outstanding. Together, architecture and urban design demonstrate the key role that design plays in creating places for communities; and how good design pays in generating economic, socio-cultural and environmental benefits.

On behalf of the jury members, I would like to congratulate the winners of the President's Design Award and thank them for their valuable contributions in shaping our city.



The President's Design Award is Singapore's highest honour accorded to designers and designs from all disciplines, a recognition of the significant contributions and achievements of an extraordinary group of people, who are making a difference to the lives of Singaporeans and to the lives of larger global communities.

The winners become the standard bearers of the measure of design excellence, to which future generations of designers should constantly aspire, and exceed. These standards permeate eventually into the consciousness of a society, bringing a greater awareness and appreciation of quality design.

# FOREWORD

It is a typical September morning in London with light rain and a slight whisper of wind. Two 'London' double-decker buses are parked at Elys Yard outside the Old Truman Brewery. At first glance, nothing seems really out of the ordinary - until one realizes the 'commuters' on the buses are not taking a physical 'journey'. The trip, in more ways than one, is through the realm of Singapore design.

This is 20/20 Movement – Singapore Design Tour, making its debut in the London Design Festival to critical acclaim. The two buses and its parking lots are the focal point of a Creative Depot, which showcases the work of "a new generation of multi-disciplinary designers who embodies an unconventional design movement and attitude"; a bus terminal of Singapore hip in the terminally hip East End of London with its funky art and design galleries, bistros, bars and chic restaurants.

The London debut of 20/20 is amazing, considering that it is a homegrown event started only two years earlier. Curated by Black Design with a unique system of peer review (each year's participants nominate their successors for the following year), the message behind the London exhibition is clear – that the design scene in Singapore is pushing boundaries and going places – fast. Elsewhere, Singapore architecture takes centre-stage with an exhibition of winning works and finalist entries from recent competitions and projects in the nation's Pavilion for the 10th International Architecture Exhibition at the Venice Biennale. Themed "Singapore Built and Unbuilt", the contemporary and yet futuristic exhibition unveils the visions, ideas and thought processes of leading Singapore and international architects as they breathe life into new landmarks, some complete and some yet to be built.

Earlier in April, the DesignSingapore Council makes its debut presentation at the Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan with a presentation of a slew of products developed under the DesignSingapore-Kita Studio. Aimed at developing Singapore's design talents as well as fostering exchange and collaborations with international designers, the first in the series of studio projects brings together four leading Singapore companies, namely STIKFAS, Enzer, Aspial-Lee Hwa and Air Division with well-known Japanese product designer Toshiyuki Kita for a year-long collaborative project. The exhibition attracts around 1,000 visitors during its week-long run and the attention of international media.

Singapore design is given the spotlight in "Design Stories" at the Singapore Pavilion during the World Expo in Aichi. Directed by Glen Goei, the exhibition of more than 53 Singapore designers and design institutes draw crowds to the pavilion designed by DesignAct.

Meanwhile in the US, the Chicago Athenaeum, one of the world's foremost museums dedicated to both architecture and industrial design announces thirty-three winners of the 2006 International Architecture Awards, a programme to honour and celebrate the most outstanding architecture designed and built around the world. Of the winners, six are designed by homegrown companies such as WOHA Designs and SCDA. Of the six structures, three built by Chan Soo Khian of SCDA are located in USA, China and Malaysia.

In the field of Visual Communications, Lim Sau Hoong of 10AM grabs awards at the Cannes Lions and Asia Pacific Media Awards, just two out of seventy-seven for her Bank of China campaign whilst Theseus Chan continues to astound with each successive issue of WERK, winning numerous awards and new international collaborations and Mylene Tjin leads a winning design team to clinch the iF Product Design Awards 2006 for the HP Deskjet 460 Mobile Printer.

Going places. Pushing boundaries. Definitely.

Replay the events of the past 18 months to get the big picture.

Singapore holds its first Design Festival in November 2005. The "multi-faceted showcase of design creativity and an interactive forum between Asia and the world" is aimed at engaging a wider audience by transforming the emerging design culture in Singapore into an interactive understanding of the whole design process from concept, product and beyond.

The signature anchor event of the Singapore Design Festival, DesignEDGE presented a strong line up of international creative talent, who shared, demonstrated and performed their design processes on one main stage, flanked by seven pavilions, each dedicated to a different genre, music, print, art, interactive media, urban culture, animation and fashion. Needless to say, DesignEDGE, jointly organized by DesignSingapore Council and IdN magazine, has made its way into the international design event calendar as a "must-go, must-see, must-do" event.

Singapore's design scene is further enlivened by a number of international partners, who have located their regional headquarters in the city because of its position in relation to the rest of Asia.

The Red Dot Award, presented by the German design institute *red dot* since 1955, ranks amongst the largest design competitions in the world with the participation of 40 countries. It acknowledges two categories – communication design and product design – in industrial products. In November 2005, Singapore is given the honour of hosting the Red Dot Award 2005, making it the first time the competition was held outside Germany. Out of 630 entries received from 32 countries, 10 winners are named, three of them Singaporean. *red dot* further establishes a base in the former Traffic Police building in Maxwell Road, repainted red and renamed *red dot traffic*.

In anticipation of Asia's growing influence on design, BMW DesignworksUSA, the California-based strategic design consultancy owned by BMW, opens its first studio outside USA and Munich. Citing Singapore's excellent infrastructure and its embrace of diverse cultures as the reasons for location, the studio allows Designworks to offer its "international standards and a unique cross fertilization approach to Asian markets" and at the same time, draw from cultural reference markers in Asia to form concepts for design for its clients in USA and Europe.

This select catalogue of achievements is not recounted for the sake of national pride. It is proof beyond doubt – there is a wealth of design talent in Singapore equal to the best in the world and that Singapore is a Creative Nation.

The President's Design Award is Singapore's highest honour accorded to designers and designs from all disciplines, a recognition of the significant contributions and achievements of an extraordinary group of people, who are making a difference to the lives of Singaporeans and to the lives of larger global communities. It is an achievement award, an honour to be prized above all others.

The winners become the standard bearers of the measure of design excellence, to which future generations of designers should constantly aspire, and exceed. These standards permeate eventually into the consciousness of a society, bringing a greater awareness and appreciation of quality design.

The inaugural President's Design Award is presented to two exceptional Designers of the Year and seven outstanding Designs of the Year, whose work and voices we have attempted to capture in the following pages.

Our Designers of the Year, Chan Soo Khian and Theseus Chan have both gained the respect of their international peers. Chan Soo Khian received the award of International Architecture Awards 2006 from the Chicago Athenaeum for 3 projects out of 33 winners and most recently, was presented the SIA-Getz Architecture Prize for Emergent Architecture. Theseus Chan's WORK has won prestigious awards with Singapore Creative Circle Awards, Art Director's Club of New York and British D&AD. His brainchild WERK, an influential publication that showcases new trends in fashion, photography and design, is highly sought-after and distributed by high fashion retail outlets all over the world which count themselves as his collaborators.

The Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay with its contemporary design redefined the skyline of Singapore. Together with the stately classical aspects of the Fullerton Hotel and its younger, more modern sister, One Fullerton, they express the spectacular breadth of Singapore architecture. On a more intimate note, the historic Majestic Hotel is given a new lease of life as the New Majestic Hotel with transformed interiors, which charm urban travellers to Singapore and instil a strong yearning to return. In a similar vein, a community of worshippers finds a home in the Church of St Mary of The Angels where the building infuses the experience of space, light and nature with spiritual and social significance.

Reinterpreting retail into a lifestyle hub, the MINI Habitat offers more than just motoring services - the Singapore model has become a prototype for other MINI hubs elsewhere in the world. The exhibits of the Asian Civilisation Museum are illuminated by the design intelligence of Sebastian Chun and bring to life, stories of the past civilisations for generations to come and finally, Mylene Tjin's keen appropriation of how a business professional interacts with his work tools led to the design of the award-winning HP Deskjet 460 Mobile Printer and sets the standard for other designers to follow.

Despite the expansive spectrum of creativity, interesting and significant commonalities can be drawn from personal statements from each of the designers gleaned through separate interviews.

More than just a profession, every designer speaks about his work with great passion, as if it were a calling. Both Chan Soo Khian and Theseus Chan, Designers of the Year, discover their awareness of design from an early age and there is a sense of destiny, which compels them to do what they do. Similarly, Koh Seow Chuan, Tay Lee Soon, Colin Seah, Mylene Tjin, Brett Cameron, Wong Mun Summ and Richard Hassel and members of their design teams and Sebastian Chun discover their affinity to design fairly early. They speak with conviction and clarity and with great purpose about their craft. One suspects that even without a national award, these designers would continue to set for themselves the high standards, for which they are being recognized.

It is this passion, or what the business consultant and former Zen Buddhist monk Yasuhiko Genku Kimura calls “knowledge of their creative vision” which drives to standards of excellence. It is this passion without which Tay Lee Soon says it is impossible to pursue a career in architecture.

They travel for work and for leisure and encourage others to travel to discover new insights from other cultures. Upon their return, these insights will provide fresh perspectives of Singapore. Whilst the winners do not deliberately define themselves as distinctly Singapore, the capacity to engage and to return to fundamentals allows them to evolve original concepts within the shared context of ‘being Singaporean’. However, it is when they refuse to be limited except by their imaginations that they do their best work and this is recognized and rewarded by both local and international accolades.

Finally, what strikes us most about the designers is their infectious optimism. Their work revolves around the creation of worlds of the future. Many are engaged in preparing the next generations to make their mark and when asked to give advice to aspiring designers, all readily shared insights and positive encouragement. Despite attendant challenges of living and working in a culture that sometimes seems that it has yet to refine its appreciation of design and quality, they stay connected and creative because they are focused on the future.

Daniel Pink in his book ‘A Whole New Mind: Moving from an Information Age to a Conceptual Age’ talks about how in order to succeed, one must supplement well developed high tech abilities with aptitudes that are “high concept” and “high touch”. “High concept involves the ability to create artistic and emotional beauty, to detect patterns and opportunities, to craft a satisfying narrative, and to come up with inventions the world didn’t know it was missing. High touch involves the capacity to empathize, to understand the subtleties of human interaction, to find joy in one’s self and to elicit it in others, and to stretch beyond the quotidian in pursuit of purpose and meaning.” The winners of the President’s Design Award have evolved and continue to evolve high concept and high touch in their work and through their efforts, Singapore design is taking great strides forward.



**DESIGNERS  
OF THE YEAR**

CHAN SOO KHIAN  
*SCDA Architects Pte Ltd*

THESEUS CHAN  
*Work Advertising Pte Ltd*

**DESIGNS OF  
THE YEAR**

6 SPECIAL EXHIBITIONS  
AT THE  
ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM

CHURCH  
OF  
ST MARY  
OF  
THE ANGELS

ESPLANADE -  
THEATRES  
ON THE  
BAY

FULLERTON HOTEL  
&  
ONE  
FULLERTON

HP  
DESKJET 460  
MOBILE PRINTER

MINI  
HABITAT

NEW  
MAJESTIC  
HOTEL

