

No More Free Space?
Singapore Pavilion



la Biennale di Venezia

16. Mostra Internazionale di Architettura
 Partecipazioni Nazionali

The Singapore Pavilion’s ‘No More Free Space?’ opens at the 16th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Sale d’Armi, Arsenale
Open to the public from 26 May – 25 November 2018



SG Permanent Secretary Gabriel Lim with SG Curator Wu Yen Yen



JP Architect Sejima Kasuyo (Pritzker Prize 2010), SG Lead Curator SUTD Erwin Viray, SG Permanent Secretary Gabriel Lim



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Speakers for the Design Forum at The Singapore Pavilion:
Taiwanese Curator Huang Sheng-Yuan, SG Curator Wu Yen Yen, Executive Director of the Pritzker Prize Marta Thorne, SG Curator SUTD Chong Keng Hua, SG Curator Tomohisa Miyauchi, SG Lead Curator Erwin Viray

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Venice, 25 May 2018 – Commissioned by the DesignSingapore Council (Dsg) of the Ministry of Communications and Information, and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the Singapore Pavilion asks if there is indeed **No More Free Space?** in the island state, in response to the overarching theme *Freespace* conceptualised by curators Yvonne Farrell and Shelley McNamara.

The Singapore Pavilion was officially inaugurated on Friday, 25 May by Mr Gabriel Lim, Permanent Secretary for the Singapore Ministry of Communications and Information, in an Opening Ceremony event at the Sale D'Armi of the Arsenale.

“The question ‘No More Free Space?’ kept confronting Singapore throughout our 53 years of nation building. Fortunately, the answer has been a resounding ‘No!’ so far, as we overcame our constraints and transformed from Third World to First. But nation building is a journey that never ends. We must always apply our creativity and passion when faced with the question ‘No More Free Space?’ to create a brighter future for our people. We will never be done building a better Singapore by design,” said Mr Gabriel Lim.

No More Free Space? tells the story of how, in spite of the limitations in physical space, Singapore-based architects, urban planners and place-makers have creatively found ways to bring delightful free spaces to the city’s everyday life.

The exhibition, which marks the country’s sixth showcase at the International Architecture Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia, since 2004, celebrates how architects and planners have innovated and borrowed



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from nature to create useful and delightful spaces and places.

Set against the backdrop of Singapore's compact urban environment, the exhibition features 12 Singapore-based projects that showcase the resourcefulness of the architects, their inspirations and the realisation of ideas, while borrowing natural resources such as light, air, greenery and water. Each of the 12 projects featured shows imagination, openness, discovery and resolution to turn constraints into possibilities. The projects also tap into social capital in order to bring joy and connect people to the larger community.

The Pavilion's centrepiece features an immersive installation, an ethereal cloud made of skilfully handcrafted acrylic knots gently suspended in the vast spaces of the Sale d'Armi – a venue supported by the National Arts Council. Complete with a multi-sensory projection of lights, sounds and images of Singapore, the pavilion invites visitors to immerse themselves in the spaces within the cloud and enjoy the multi-sensorial installation – in itself an example of a resourceful, unexpected free space. The presentation will be restaged in Singapore in 2019 to engage the public about turning Singapore's physical constraints into possibilities with imagination and creativity.

No More Free Space? hopes to be a testimony of how the creative freedom of mind has the power to turn space constraints into a myriad of alternative possibilities.

Singapore is a unique, multi-cultural, multi-ethnic island city-state with a population of about 5.6 million people on a land area of just 720 km². Its dense urban fabric has to support a multitude of uses and needs whilst dealing with spatial constraints.

More than 400 times smaller than Italy, Singapore has turned its constraints into opportunity by re-imagining what a highly compact city can be. As a city and nation-state, Singapore has to set aside land not just for housing, utilities, business, water catchment and recreation, but it also has to ensure there is land for future growth to keep the economy thriving and vibrant.

"The Singapore Pavilion shows that we have not allowed constraints to limit our imagination. Instead, we have had the mental 'free space' to re-imagine what our compact city could be. The 12 projects showcased did not just fulfil functional needs but were designed to delight – to create shared memories and emotional connections. When this happens, there is a rootedness that makes us love our home even more. This is why, we believe that design can help us become an innovation-drive and loveable city," said Mr Mark Wee, Executive Director of the DesignSingapore Council (Dsg) and Co-Commissioner of the Singapore Pavilion.

"Singapore is one of the world's most liveable cities, an outcome of integrated and long-term planning, with priority placed on good architecture and urban design. The articulation of good design in our spaces not only sparks imagination, but can also evoke wonder and turn spaces from the functional and utilitarian into a delightful community asset. The Singapore Pavilion this year, showcases creative brilliance in the design of our public and private spaces, bringing vibrancy and delight to the people," said Mr Larry Ng, Group Director of Architecture and Urban Design Excellence at the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) and



Co-Commissioner of the Singapore Pavilion.

“Responding to the overarching theme of the Biennale Architettura 2018 “Freespace”, the Singapore Pavilion asks: “No More Free Space?” to open a conversation on how Singapore-based architects, urban planners and place-makers have creatively found ways to bring delightful free spaces to the city’s everyday life. Through an integral tenet of SUTD – design thinking and imagination – the Singapore Pavilion brings everyone: students from SUTD, NUS, Singapore Polytechnic, practising architects, computer engineers, craftsmen, and the public to appreciate the wonders of our environment,” said Prof Erwin Viray, Lead Curator and Head of the Architecture and Sustainable Design pillar at the Singapore University of Technology and Design.

For more information on the Singapore Pavilion and design forum, please visit website: www.nomorefreespace.com.

Please download the official press kit here: <http://bit.ly/SingaporePavilion2018>

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About the DesignSingapore Council

DesignSingapore Council's (Dsg) vision is for Singapore to be an innovation-driven economy and a loveable city through design by 2025. As the national agency that promotes design, our mission is to develop the design sector, help Singapore use design for innovation and growth, and make life better in this UNESCO Creative City of Design. Dsg is a division of the Ministry of Communications and Information.

www.designsingapore.org

About the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Singapore (URA)

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is Singapore's land use planning and conservation agency. Our mission is "to make Singapore a great city to live, work and play". We strive to create an endearing home and a vibrant and sustainable future city through far-sighted planning and innovation, in partnership with the community.

URA's multi-faceted role includes being the main government land sales agent. Through the sale of State land, we attract and channel private capital investment to develop sites to support economic and social development. We also partner the community to enliven our public spaces to create a car-lite, people-friendly and liveable city for all to enjoy. In shaping a distinctive city, URA also promotes architecture and urban design excellence. Visit www.ura.gov.sg for more information.

About the Singapore University of Technology and Design

The Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) is Singapore's fourth public university, and one of the first universities in the world to incorporate the art and science of design and technology into a multi-disciplinary curriculum. SUTD was established in collaboration with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and seeks to advance knowledge and nurture technically-grounded leaders and innovators to serve societal needs.

Also in collaboration with Zhejiang University and Singapore Management University, SUTD, a research-intensive university, is distinguished by its unique East and West academic programmes which incorporate elements of entrepreneurship, management and design thinking. Graduate opportunities include the Master of Architecture, the Master of Science in Urban Science, Policy and Planning, and various SUTD PhD programmes. www.sutd.edu.sg





About National University of Singapore (NUS) and the Department of Architecture, NUS School of Design and Environment

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore (NUS) is Singapore's flagship university, which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise. NUS has 17 faculties and schools across three campuses. Over 38,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives. NUS also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

The Department of Architecture, which is part of the NUS School of Design and Environment, was established in 1958. Today, NUS Architecture offers a wide range of programmes, including landscape architecture, urban design, urban planning and integrated sustainable design. Building on the strength of its rich heritage and visionary leadership, NUS Architecture is poised to remain at the forefront of global excellence in architectural education and research, with a focus on high density Asian cities in the tropics. For more information on NUS and NUS Architecture, please visit www.nus.edu.sg and www.arch.nus.edu.sg.