

by Paola Govoni

BRAND NEW VENUE AND IDEAS FOR IFFS 2019

Since its inaugural event in 1981, the International Furniture Fair Singapore held in conjunction with the ASEAN Furniture Show (IFFS/AFS) and - more recently - with NOOK Asia, has been one of South East Asia's premier sourcing platforms.

Over time, this trade event has strengthened its profile of design-led exhibition, thanks to an increasingly close attention paid to the content of design and the quality pattern of the products on show, as well as to a range of design initiatives held inside and outside the fair (SingaPlural, Design STARS, International Designer Showcase, Design Seminars) offering added depth and dimension to the exhibition and making it a holistic trade event.

Figures of the 2018 edition (8-11 March) speak of 374 exhibiting companies from 26 countries. The event attracted 19,196 trade professionals from 89 countries representing the furniture, furnishing, and interior



Mr Ernie Koh, Chairman of IFFS Pte. Ltd speaking at the Opening Ceremony

design industries.

The Singapore government recognised IFFS's continuing efforts at pushing Asian and international furniture trade. Speaking at the IFFS 2018 Opening Ceremony, guest-of-honour Mr. S. Iswaran, Minister for Trade and Industry (Industry), said: "The global furniture market is expected to expand from S\$624 billion in 2016 to S\$770 billion in 2021, with the Asia Pacific market continuing to see a strong 5% growth. Coupled with changing consumer preferences and the emergence of new technologies, these developments present fresh and exciting opportunities for the furniture industry. To expand the depth and breadth of opportunities available to companies in Singapore, the Government is committed to developing a strong furniture ecosystem together with our industry partners. With our strong pool of design talent and extensive networks in the region, I am excited to see what these new

collaborations can create. In this regard, I would like to congratulate the Singapore Furniture Industries Council (SFIC) on the launch of the



Italian Journalists meet Mr Mark Yong (middle on the right), President SFIC, Singapore Furniture Industries Council



IFFS 2019 will move to the Sands Expo and Convention Centre in Marina Bay Sands (MBS)



Garden and Outdoor furniture from Riva Designs International



The Italian Hospitality project 2018 by Giulio Cappellini at a glance

Singapore Furniture Industry 2021 Roadmap. The roadmap is part of the broader Industry Transformation Map (ITM) in the retail industry, and SFIC has set out an ambitious vision for Singapore's furniture industry - 'To be the Asian Hub Influencing Tomorrow's Urban Living'. This roadmap was developed by SFIC, in partnership with the Government, industry, and partners across diverse clusters including urban planners and architects. The roadmap outlines concrete steps to help companies transform by seizing new opportunities overseas, strengthening partnerships, and developing capabilities to create customer-centric and innovative urban living solutions.

"The trade exhibitions' scene and exhibitors' needs are always evolving, and we need to keep up with the times by embracing change" shared Mr. Ernie Koh, Chairman of IFFS Pte Ltd. "The challenge is in finding the right balance between staying

ahead, while still meeting our exhibitors' needs. As the show continues to evolve, we will progressively reinvent ourselves to cater to the needs of our audiences" he said.

MOVING TO A NEW VENUE

Set to take place from 9 to 12 March, IFFS 2019, ASEAN Furniture Show and NOOK Asia will move from the Expo fairgrounds to the Sands Expo and Convention Centre in Marina Bay Sands. According to the organizers, this premium venue, while retaining existing trade buyers, will also attract a new wave of international audience and provide a promising environment for IFFS to promote trade and contribute to the growth of the industry.

Addressing the move during the International Press Conference on March 8, 2018, Mr. Ernie Koh commented: "Trade shows are ever evolving and through all the changes, our DNA still remains the same - to deliver top notch, design-focused content, invoke innovative ideas, and to facilitate excellent business opportunities. With our focused features, we are confident that this and the upcoming editions will inspire our trade visitors and, most importantly, will meet their business needs".

ITALIAN HIGHLIGHTS IN SINGAPORE

After the successful event of last year, the project called "The Italian Hospitality" by Giulio Cappellini was back for the 2018 edition of IFFS. The event has been organised in collaboration with Marilena Puppi, CEO of OGS, exclusive IFFS representative in Europe and Middle East. Elegance, quality research, a dia-



Comprehensive upholstered furniture offering at IFFS 2018

logue between excellence and technology and great artisanal tradition continuity have been perfectly mixed and gave - in one of the most dynamic areas of the world - a unique Italian Touch made of design and manual skill.

"A great novelty of the 2018 setting - Giulio Cappellini explains - is the emphasis on ceramic, one of the excellence of Made in Italy. It's used for lining and floors but also as a decorative furnishing element. And that's not all: bathroom set, technology for wellness, lighting system, etc. No other country succeeds in offering such a wide range of opportunities when Italy, and consequently the Italian Hospitality, is engaged in a coherent and innovative project, unquestionably powerful".

The Italian Hospitality welcomed its visitors in a 150 sq.m. open space featuring sophisticated lighting effects, chromatic islands, material games, graphic elements and unique design objects capable of creating a strong atmosphere.

The Italian companies involved in the 2018 projects were: Casamood - Florim - Giovanardi - Icone Luce - Irisun - La Murrina - Vismaravetro - Olympia Ceramiche - Cedit - Cappellini - Tonalite - Wave Murano Glass.