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## Singapore on track to become world design city

- Recommendations from DesignSingapore's International Advisory Panel (IAP) meeting to chart the next phase of design development in Singapore

**21 November 2006**

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1. At the close of the two-day IAP meeting today, members of the DesignSingapore's International Advisory Panel (IAP) today concurred that Singapore is well positioned to become a leading design city of the world.

2. The panel, chaired by Edmund Cheng, comprised renowned leaders in international design from the United States, Europe and Japan. (Please see Appendix.)

3. The discussion for this year's IAP meeting was focused on the next phase of enhancing the design sector in Singapore, codenamed Dsg-II. The next phase seeks to accelerate Singapore's position as a world design city.

4. "Singapore is now moving to the next stage of its design development and promotion. DesignSingapore's IAP continues to serve as a key platform for Singapore to stay connected with the international design experts so as to nurture the republic's design identity, culture and capabilities. This exercise is part of a process to develop the strategies and plans for the next five years commencing 2008," said Edmund Cheng, Chairman, DesignSingapore Council.

5. The IAP observed that Singapore's government's support and investment in design infrastructure is tremendous and is the envy of other countries. Moving forward, the country should build on the momentum created through the numerous initiatives already put in place and begin to take the lead in the following three areas.

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## **Creative learning culture ‘from cradle to grave’**

6. The IAP encourages Singapore to inculcate a creative learning culture from as young as pre-school age to drive a vibrant, inspirational and inventive environment. The objective is to nurture a population of people who understand and appreciate the importance and value of design.

7. “It’s important to build a culture of innovation that allows Singapore to continually reinvent itself. For an environment to stimulate the creative juices of a youth culture, Singapore may need to be more bold, chaotic and even edgy,” added Dick Powell, IAP member.

## **Design as a Driver of New Value Creation**

8. New design changes businesses’ basis of competition, delivering a ‘multiplier effect’ through new distribution and display channels, according to the IAP. Design has the potential to meet unidentified needs, create new needs and markets.

9. The IAP had the following key recommendations in these areas:

- a. Businesses to adopt design through a process of cluster collaboration amongst designers, businesses and the end-users;
- b. Small businesses with similar design requirements to form clusters to share the risks and costs of experimenting with new design;

## **Developing a Strong Design Eco-system**

10. To be a leading centre of excellence for design, the need for a strong design eco-system cannot be overemphasized. Nurturing a design eco-system could include prestigious design schools, attracting the best design students, incentives for top designers to work out of Singapore and offering prototyping capabilities.

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11. Key niche advantages in the eco-system should also be developed. “Due to its size, diverse population and sophisticated consumers, Singapore is well-positioned to develop ‘beta communities’ for testing new products and services,” said Steve Hayden, IAP member. “For Singapore to establish its design expertise, it also needs to be able to export its creative services to a global market.”

12. The panel pointed out that for Singapore to thrive as a centre of creative excellence, it needs to position itself as a thought leader in design and arts and leverage its unique cultural diversity.

13. These three key areas work together to foster a creative workforce geared towards knowledge creation, and evolve present-day advantages of Singapore as a configurable and open economy.

**ISSUED BY DESIGNSINGAPORE COUNCIL,  
MINISTRY OF INFORMATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND THE ARTS**

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## **Role Of Panel**

Chaired by the Chairman of DesignSingapore Council, the IAP will consist of members who are high-level and well-networked leaders in the international business and design communities.

The IAP's role is to:

- a) Provide a global perspective on the scenarios, trends and challenges that would impact the development of design in Singapore
- b) Advise on international best practices
- c) Propose how Singapore can leverage its strengths and address its weaknesses so as to increase its international competitiveness
- d) Provide feedback on design and design promotion issues identified by the DesignSingapore Council
- e) Provide advice and assistance in the initiation of international collaborations to promote and raise the international visibility of Singapore as a design hub

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## APPENDIX A

### MEMBERS OF THE DESIGNSINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL ADVISORY PANEL

**Christopher Bangle**  
**Design Director**  
**BMW Group**

Christopher Bangle, Director of BMW Group Design, is the point man for the look and feel of every car and motorcycle that bears BMW's distinctive blue-and-white roundel, as well as the Mini brand and the ultra-luxury Rolls-Royce. Having practiced as an interior designer as well as a product designer, he works on the philosophy that car design lies beyond just designing the automobiles, that one has to "understand the forces shaping the lives and desires of (their) clients". DesignWorksUSA, BMW's in-house design studio, is staffed with award-winning designers who "create the phones, computers, airplanes, trains, snowboards, office chairs, medical interfaces and all that "other stuff" that play a role in the cultural trends and contexts that (their) cars and motorcycles coexist in."

**Edmund Cheng**  
**Chairman**  
**DesignSingapore Council**

Edmund Cheng has been serving as the Chairman of DesignSingapore Council since August 2003. Cheng is also the Deputy Chairman of the Singapore-listed Wing Tai Holdings Limited and Managing Director of Wing Tai Land. Besides his experience as a private developer, Cheng has been extensively involved with government agencies in projects relating to Urban Planning and Building Arts ---- as the Chairman of task forces and non-profit art institutions. Notable ones include the Geylang East Development Guide Plan for URA, the REDAS Building Art Fund and Sculpture Square, Singapore's dedicated 3-dimensional arts promotion and exhibition facility.

Apart from these commitments, Cheng has also been involved as a board member in a number of public and private companies as well as schools and statutory boards in Singapore. They include the Singapore Tourism Board (STB), National Arts Council (NAC), the Esplanade Company, Singapore Airlines (SIA), the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB), Singapore Tyler Print Institute, Singapore Art Museum and The Old Parliament House Limited. Mr Cheng, a graduate of Northwestern University and Carnegie Mellon University in the United States, is an engineer and architect by profession.

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**Richard Seymour\* and Dick Powell**  
**Industrial and Product Designer**  
**Seymourpowell**

Richard Seymour\* and Dick Powell are two of Europe's leading industrial/product designers. Since forming Seymourpowell in 1984, the consultancy has risen to a commanding position on the international stage, with clients as diverse as Nokia, Dell, Yamaha, Tefal, Casio, Jaguar and BMW. Seymourpowell works behind the scenes of top brands in the world, focusing on "deep futures" of these companies by developing as far as 8 years ahead of the current market. Seymour and Powell write regularly in the British design press and have appeared on numerous TV and Radio programmes on design, including BBC Design Awards, Designs on Your "", Better by Design, Innovation Nation, BBC Design Classics and even Woman's Hour. They firmly advocate that good design is about making life better for people.

Seymourpowell has won numerous design awards including Design Week, D&AD, ID Award, BBC Design Award, Minerva Award, D&AD President's Award, France's Janus Award, America's Starpak and Silver Screen Awards (for best corporate film), DBA's Design Effectiveness Awards, the Gerald Frewer Memorial Trophy (for the Institute of Engineering Designers) and has been twice shortlisted for the Prince Philip Design Prize.

*\*Unable to attend IAP discussion*

**Steve Hayden**  
**Vice-Chairman**  
**Ogilvy & Mather Worldwide**

Steve Hayden launched his advertising career in Detroit writing for the General Motors Corporate account. Hayden opened an office for Chiat/Day in New York in 1980, and another office for the agency in San Francisco in 1981. Ad history was made when he teamed up with Lee Clow to create the famous "1984" Orwellian take-off campaign for Apple depicting a running woman who hurls a hammer at a giant video "Big Brother".

In 1986, Steve moved to BBDO to become CEO of West Coast operations. In addition to overseeing the Apple business, Steve managed other prestigious accounts like Pioneer Electronics, Nike, Dodge Cars & Trucks, Pizza Hut, Sega America and Twentieth Century-Fox.

In 1994, Ogilvy asked Steve to join the agency in a newly created role -- the ultimate "Brand Steward" -- to oversee creative, media and brand management for the entire IBM account worldwide.

**Toshiyuki Kita**  
**Architect, Industrial & Furniture Designer, Author**  
**IDK Japan**

For over 30 years, Kita has designed while preserving the heart of traditional arts and craft, without disregarding the influence of technology in our society. He is the famed designer behind the products of Sharp AQUOS LCD TV; the home-use Mitsubishi robot WAKAMARU, and the famous lounge chair WINK from Cassina, held by the permanent collections of several museums, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, and Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris. Kita currently has design studios in Osaka and Milan.

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**Toyo Ito**  
**Architect**  
**Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects**

Toyo Ito graduated from Tokyo University, Department of Architecture in 1965. After a brief stint in Kiyonori Kikutake Architect and Associate, he started his own studio, Urban Robot (URBOT) in Tokyo, 1971. Its name was changed to Toyo Ito & Associates, Architects in 1979. He has served as Guest Professor at Columbia University and is an Honorary Professor at the University of North London. He is a leading exponent of architecture that addresses issues of the contemporary “simulated” city.

Some of his important works are *Tower of Winds* in Yokohama (1986), *Yatsushiro Municipal Museum* (1991), *Old People's Home* in Yatsushiro (1994) and *Sendai Mediatheque* (2001). He has won many awards including the 33rd Mainich Art Award for *Yatsushiro Municipal Museum* in 1992; Education Minister's Art Encouragement Prize in Japan in 1998 and The Arnold W. Brunner Memorial Prize in Architecture from the America Academy of Arts and Letters in 2000. Ito also won the Good Design Awards 2001 Grand Prize for *Sendai Mediatheque*; World Architecture Awards 2002; Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement from the 8th Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition in 2002 and the Architecture Institute of Japan Prize in 2003.

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## About DesignSingapore Council

Design changes and improves lives, inspires creativity and new forms of expression. It also enhances business competitiveness in today's crowded marketplace.

DesignSingapore is Singapore's response to these propositions and opportunities. As a national initiative, DesignSingapore aims to place Singapore on the world map for design creativity. It looks to developing a thriving, multi-disciplinary design cluster of industries and activities in Singapore that has relevance and impact globally. The initiative also aims to bring design to business boardrooms, new audiences and new markets.

The DesignSingapore Council, set up since August 2003 by the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts, is the public organisation for promotion and development of Singapore design.

In 2005, the Council presented *SINGAPORE*Edge featuring 100 of Singapore's design talents in London and launched the inaugural Singapore Design Festival with 134 events contributed by 88 partners. The Council has also taken Singapore design exhibitions to the 2004 Venice Biennale International Architecture Exhibition, Sao Paulo Architecture Biennial in 2005, World Expo 2005 at Aichi and, most recently, the Salone Internazionale Del Mobile in April 2006. DesignSingapore had recently presented at the Venice Biennale and London Design Festival in September 2006.

More information on the Council is available at [www.designsingapore.org](http://www.designsingapore.org).

## Crea©tive 2006

Crea©tive 2006 – Reinvent Your Future is a month-long showcase to celebrate and promote Singapore's creative industries, which comprises the arts, design and media. Now in its second year, this international showcase is initiated by the Ministry of Information, Communications and the Arts (MICA) as part of the efforts to develop Singapore into a prominent Asian hub for the creative industries.

Bringing to Singapore and international audiences an experience of world-class creativity this year are Beyond 2006, Asia Media Festival, President's Design Award, Noise Singapore, GreenField, Creative Youth Xchange, 20/20 and 10TouchPoints.

For more information, please visit [www.mica.gov.sg/creative2006](http://www.mica.gov.sg/creative2006).