

Media Release
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**Design Superposition at National Design Centre
invites visitors to ponder the true value of design**

10 local and international designers explore the multi-faceted nature of design in an exhibition produced and curated by DesignSingapore Scholarship Recipients



7 February 2022 – In quantum physics, superposition refers to the combination of all possible states in a system. In design culture, across its various disciplines, a similar phenomenon is emerging: design seems to be everything, yet also nothing.

So, what is the value of design?

In Design Superposition, the latest exhibition at the National Design Centre, 10 local and international creatives come together to explore the schizophrenic nature of design through the introspection of their own unique practices, in fields like

illustration, architecture with fengshui principles, industrial design, science and technology, fashion, digital media, visual art, and nature.

Viewers are encouraged to take this exploration into their own hands and interact with the exhibits in the hopes that they may make their own evaluations about what design means to them. "At its core, Design Superposition is about the production of design culture and industry, and a reflection of whether design is valuable or not," as its curator Yeo Ker Siang explains.

The exhibition is organised by the DesignSingapore Associates Network (DAN). Formed by the DesignSingapore Scholarship recipients in 2017, DAN is a platform for the design community in and outside Singapore to engage in design conversations on critical issues. Since its inception, DAN has been active in developing community-focused projects and events, ranging from talks, panel discussions and exhibitions at the National Design Centre.

"Design Superposition is about using design to look at design and to contemplate its value and purpose for the society. Beyond exploring the meaning of design, this showcase is a wonderful opportunity for our next generation of design leaders to collaborate, express their creative talent and push boundaries," says Emily Ong, Deputy Executive Director, DesignSingapore Council.

Design Superposition

Exhibition runs until 10 April 2022

9am to 9pm daily, free admission

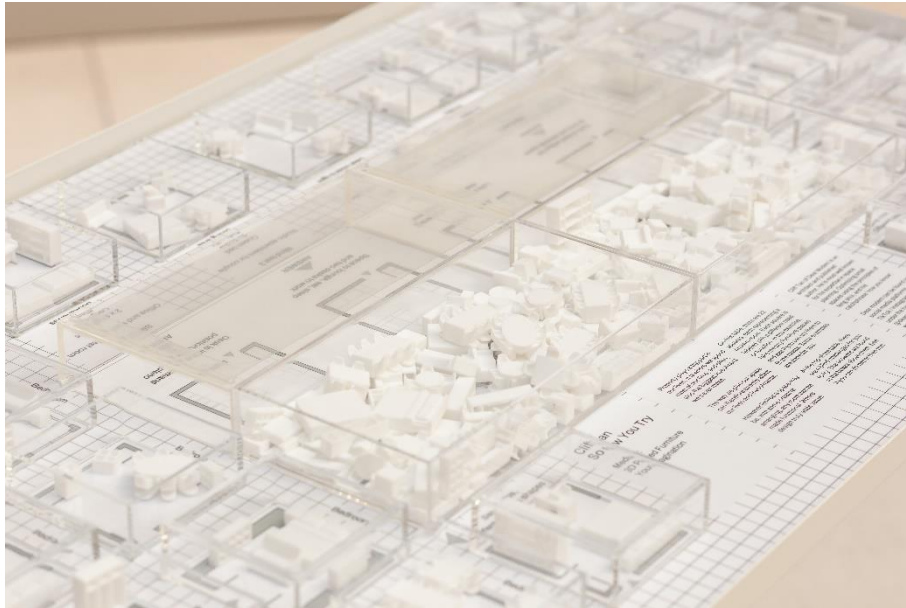
National Design Centre, 111 Middle Road, Singapore 188969

<https://designsingapore.org/event/design-superposition.html>

Press Assets

High-res exhibition images can be downloaded [here](#).

Annex A: Exhibits at Design Superposition



***So Now You Try* by Cliff Tan**

About the exhibit:

Property is intrinsic to our lives; it is where we spend most of our time and is often the biggest investment we make. With creative spatial planning, any room can be made functional regardless of size – this is where design truly adds value!

22 squares each represent a 4mx4m room, labelled with a different need or function. Visitors are invited to layout the tiny furniture pieces and design a room that suits the need. There are also four blind challenges which ask visitors to fit a specific set of furniture into a set space.

About the designer:

Cliff Tan of Dear Modern is an architect and published author. He is most well-known for his expertise in optimising small spaces using the principles of feng shui, and his catchphrase 'now you know'.



Bring Me Back to the Time Store by Debbie Ding

About the exhibit:

'Bring Me Back to the Time Store' explores the dissolution between design and art, and the line between fiction and reality.

Is there Singaporean Sci-Fi? Three objects from local "science fiction" drama shows have been redesigned and recreated for display, exploring design fabrication methods to produce objects which are not just functional or strictly for consumption. As we progress towards the idea of the consumer and viewer as a complex being, can design also be used to translate ideas into material objects? Can the form of objects carry meaning to challenge commonly held assumptions?

About the designer:

Debbie Ding (DBBD.SG) is a visual artist and technologist who researches and explores technologies of perception through personal investigations and experimentation. Prototyping is used as a conceptual strategy for artistic production, iteratively exploring potential dead-ends and breakthroughs – as they would be encountered by amateur archaeologists, citizen scientists, and machines programmed to perform roles of cultural craftsmanship.

She has had solo exhibitions at The Substation Gallery, Singapore (2010) and Galerie Steph, Singapore (2013). Other group exhibitions include 'Wikicliki' (Singapore Art Museum, 2021), 'President's Young Talents' (Singapore Art Museum, 2018); 'After the Fall' (National Museum of Singapore, 2017); Singapore Biennale (2016); Radio Malaya (NUS Museum, 2016). Her work was shortlisted for the President's Young Talents 2018 and Impart Art Awards 2020.



Floating Pixels by Junichi Yamaoka

About the exhibit:

Just as pixels on a monitor can change in colour, merge and repeatedly separate, 3D-printed magnetic particles floating on the water's surface can similarly change into various forms by magnetic force and return to its original form.

We usually live our lives unaware of the pixels on our screens, focusing instead on the content that the pixels present. Through this exhibit, viewers are reminded that our experience and inventions of the world are always designed through a series of simple phenomenon via information, and that pixels are also inevitably material through design.

About the designer:

Junichi Yamaoka is an artist and researcher interested in Interactive Media, Digital Fabrication, Media Art, and STEM education. He graduated from the Department of Media and Governance, Keio University in 2013, and received his Ph.D. in 2015. He was a visiting researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, a project assistant researcher at the University of Tokyo. Currently, he is a Senior Assistant Professor at the Keio University Graduate School of Media Design, where he supervises the Future Crafts Project.

His papers have been accepted by international conferences such as User Interface Software and Technology. In addition, he has received the WIRED CREATIVE HACK AWARD 2014 Grand Prix, and the Japan Media Arts Festival Jury's recommended works.



I Want More Sunlight by Kotaro Abe

About the exhibit:

"There are two kinds of light - the glow that illuminates, and the glare that obscures."
- James Thurber

This documentary explores the nine-month journey of a man as he attempts to rekindle with the Sun through the invention of his own rituals.

Moving to the United Kingdom from his home country Japan, the man starts to suffer from Seasonal Affective Disorder and realises the importance of the Sun and the effect it has on his life. Inspired by Icelandic folklores, Anthropology studies, Neuroscience and his desire to feel more connected to the Sun, he creates a series of prototypes of rituals and apparatuses which may seem absurd. However, equally absurd is the psychological distance humans have built between themselves and Nature.

This documentary illustrates how the man tries to overcome his issues by changing his state of mind: rather than changing our environment, we can instead change our mindsets towards it.

About the designer:

Kotaro Abe is a Japanese designer. After obtaining a BA Environmental Information studies in Keio University (Japan), he became a visiting researcher at Keio University as an interaction design tutor. In June 2017, he completed his MA in Design Interactions at the Royal College of Art (UK). He has received awards from renowned institutions including: D&AD, WIRED Japan, and Bloomberg, and has exhibited in London, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Los Angeles, and Bangkok. Kotaro's ultimate mission is to provoke our thoughts by addressing tangible social, cultural, and environmental issues with a hint of 'humour'. His projects often overlap various realms of social and scientific domains.



100 Marble Tiles by Offcut Factory

About the exhibit:

From conversations with local marble suppliers, Offcut Factory learnt that it is commonplace for marble to be rejected by clients simply because they do not appear “clean” or “perfect” enough.

Have consumers been unwitting perpetrators of the material waste problem, if the line between what constitutes waste and usable material is merely defined by our arbitrary and superficial perception of beauty?

Visitors are challenged to identify which 10 tiles out of the 100 were cut from discarded marble.

About the designer:

Offcut Factory is an initiative that reframes material waste by design. It aims to foster a spirit of sustainability by envisioning a framework and community where factories and businesses can find alternative solutions to material waste management.



Nature's Number by Out Of Stalk

About the exhibit:

"In our data-driven world, we tend to overvalue numbers and undervalue anything ephemeral, soft, and difficult to quantify." - *Atomic Habits*, James Clear

The layout of Singapore's natural landscapes strikes a balance between the naturally occurring and human engineering, which leads to the question: does nature present design beautifully? Or is nature what makes design beautiful?

Through this exhibit, where distances among the trees in particular areas are materialised with strings, viewers are invited to ponder on the numerical value of design. We pay attention to numbers as a measure but that does not mean that it is important. Likewise, things that we cannot quantify are not necessarily unimportant. What is the importance of assigning a quantifiable value to design, and how will this number change with time?

About the designer:

Out Of Stalk is a label that explores the intersection between florals and design. With the goal of reconnecting nature, each work is a reflection of their beliefs that each creation is an expression of the fleeting moment - therefore, out of stock.



Juror of Everyday Designs by Sim Hao Jie

About the exhibit:

Visitors are invited to become a 'Juror of Everyday Designs'. Choose a trophy stamp and award the ordinary designs shown on the card provided.

Design is neither valuable or useless until it is observed and measured. Instead of perpetuating viewers' inclination to value designs based on accolades, this 'awarding activity' looks to provoke thought about design around us and encourage a culture of design appreciation in everyday life.

About the designer:

Hao Jie is an industrial designer with experience in product innovation and development. He leads and executes across the disciplines of industrial design, design research, service and experience design. He seizes opportunities to collaborate with partners from different backgrounds on projects of varying disciplines, continuing to contribute and grow as a multi-disciplinary designer.



Alam Sekita: Jiran (Neighbour) by thesupersystem

About the exhibit:

Bees play a critical role in natural ecosystems by assisting in the pollination of plants. A lack of understanding of bees has led to the extermination and relocation of hives, and further environmental degradation.

Jiran (Neighbour) is a portable beehive that provides security for bees in urban areas. It informs humans of the presence of bees by changing colour when bees are occupying the hive. Design has played a vital role in dividing humans and their non-human counterparts by creating boundaries, carving out spaces and restricting movement. Can design, however, be redefined to allow the co-existence of humans and non-humans in human-centred spaces?

About the designer:

thesupersystem is the brainchild of Heider Ismail, currently a student at Lasalle College of the Arts pursuing his Masters in Design. What started out as a school project eventually evolved into a practice that merges technology, science and design while heavily driven by post-human philosophies (Donna Harroway, Carey Wolfe). thesupersystem has also exhibited at National Gallery Singapore and London Science Festival.



Meaningful Differences by Will & Well

About the exhibit:

Will & Well believe that 'superposition' begins with the user. By allowing people's needs to lead their design, they are able to serve a much wider population. Fiddly buttons are made magnetic; hard-to-reach zippers are cast aside for new ways to dress; restrictive apparel is made customisable through straps and hook-and-loop closures.

By tackling the little gaps and affecting marginalised communities, Will & Well creates meaningful differences for all through design.

About the designer:

Will & Well is an inclusive fashion label founded to improve lives by changing the way we wear clothing. Many elements of modern clothing like buttons and back zippers have not been updated for centuries, and these inconveniences that are easily dismissed are further amplified for people with disabilities. With forethought of these marginalised groups, Will & Well applies design thinking and technology to create apparel that impacts lives by providing comfort, dignity, and independence in daily dressing rituals.



***When Words Fail* by YT Tommy Lee**

About the exhibit:

Is a digitally painted illustration artistic enough to be considered art, or carefully thought out enough to be called design? Existing in a limbo, this work explores the ability of an illustration to evoke emotions and share insights about end-of-life caregiving.

As our loved one slips into unconsciousness in the final stages, we watch and wait, bracing ourselves for the inevitable end while treasuring every present moment. With that in mind, can illustration, in its distanced way, also serve to bear witness through visual communication and aid in the healing process?

About the designer:

YT Tommy Lee is an illustrator from Singapore. Her work explores the emotive use of colours and space, creating visuals that carry a sense of quiet contemplation.

About the National Design Centre

The National Design Centre is the nexus of design, the meeting point for creative minds and businesses and the venue for presenting all things design. It is also home to DesignSingapore Council. The repurposed, award-winning conserved building is as much an emblem for outstanding Singaporean design and architecture, as it is a thriving venue for visitors to attend showcases and programmes. Find out more at www.designsingapore.org/national-design-centre.html.

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. The Dsg is a subsidiary of the Singapore Economic Development Board. For more information, please visit www.designsingapore.org.

About the Design Associates Network

DesignSingapore Associates Network (DAN) is an independent group supported by the DesignSingapore Council (Dsg), Singapore's national agency for design. Formed by Dsg Scholarship recipients in 2017, the group is a platform for the design community in Singapore and beyond to engage in design conversations on critical issues. Since its inception, the group has been active in developing community-focused projects and events, ranging from talks, panel discussions and exhibitions at the National Design Centre. Each Dsg Scholarship recipient is designated a DesignSingapore Associate upon award of the scholarship.

About the DesignSingapore Scholarship

Since its inception in 2005, the DesignSingapore Scholarship has been awarded to individuals passionate about design, with a desire to develop or further their design career through education. The Dsg Scholarship grooms both designers and non-designers to become design leaders who will use strategy and innovation to make things better by design. Scholarship holders may come from different fields of design, but they share one common trait – they are game changers and aspire to contribute to Singapore, and the design sector. The DesignSingapore Council has awarded the Scholarship to 65 talented individuals to date. For more information, visit <https://bit.ly/DsgScholarship>.

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