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MEDIA RELEASE

SINGAPORE BIENNALE 2008

11 September – 16 November 2008
(Vernissage: 9 – 10 September 2008)

Shigeru Ban's *Containart Pavilion* will house three of the largest indoor installations in exhibition

A desolate snowscape, alien civilizations, interactive ellipses and even the underwater world will be "created" in the name of art at Marina Bay for the upcoming Singapore Biennale 2008 (SB2008), organised by the National Arts Council (NAC).

To mark the start of an exciting journey down the theme of *WONDER* for Singapore's premier international contemporary visual arts event, NAC Chairman, Edmund Cheng officiated at the groundbreaking ceremony of Shigeru Ban's *Containart Pavilion*, held at the Central Promontory Site today.

The *Containart Pavilion*, an architectural creation by internationally well-known Japanese artist Ban, will be constructed using 150 twenty-foot long shipping containers, along with 34 ten-metre recyclable paper tubes.

Once completed, this stunning spacious structure will house three of SB2008's largest indoor installations – *Manas* by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov (Russia), *Between You and I* by Anthony McCall (UK), and *Location (6)* by Hans Op de Beeck (Belgium).

In addition, Australian artist Gary Carsley's works will also be featured in the form of functional tables and chairs within the pavilion that come completely clad with flora-themed scenery prints photographed from Singapore's parks and gardens.

Besides, the environmental-friendly pavilion will act as one of the information centres for the exhibition. It revisits Ban's previous contribution to Singapore Biennale 2006, where he designed the media centre made from recycled paper tubes.

Outside the *Containart Pavilion*, artists Alfredo Juan Aquilizan and Maria Isabel Aquilizan (Philippines) will create an "underwater world of fishes" by recycling about 6000 old slippers for their site-specific installation.

Curated by Artistic Director Fumio Nanjo (Japan), Joselina Cruz (Philippines) and Matthew Ngui (Singapore), SB2008 will feature an illustrious list of more than 50 artists and art collectives from over 36 countries and regions including Singapore.

The exhibition which opens from 11 September to 16 November, aims to build on the critical success of its inaugural 2006 predecessor and continue to be the significant cultural event that brings visual arts into the daily lives of Singaporeans.

Shigeru Ban's *Containart Pavilion* is sponsored by Neptune Orient Lines (NOL), Club 21 and Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). Gary Carsley's works are sponsored by Ikea.

Please refer to the following annexes for more information:

- Annex 1 – Biography of Shigeru Ban
- Annex 2 – Artists' works in/outside the *Containart Pavilion*
- Annex 3 – About Exhibition Venue: Marina Bay

For media enquiries, please contact:

Ms Viviane Then | Corporate Communications Manager | National Arts Council, Singapore
DID: +65 6837 9571 | Mobile: +65 9735 5318 | E-mail: Viviane_Then@nac.gov.sg

Ms Serene Foo | Assistant Director, Corporate Communications | National Arts Council, Singapore
DID: + 65 6837 9575 | Mobile: +65 9646 5394 | Email: Serene_Foo@nac.gov.sg

About the Singapore Biennale

Organised by the National Arts Council, Singapore, the Singapore Biennale aims to position Singapore prominently as an international centre and regional thought leader in the field of visual art. It encourages Singapore artists and Singapore to engage with the international art world, through the invitation of regional and international artists to exhibit with Singapore artists, and for Singapore to join the international community of art biennales whose language is mainly conducted through the medium of contemporary art. As a platform for collaborations with the global arts community, the Biennale provides new opportunities for local visual artists and arts businesses, and is a significant opportunity to cultivate deeper public engagement with the arts. It complements the achievements of other areas of the arts and cultural scene, collectively enhancing Singapore's international image as a vibrant city to live, work, play.

About the National Arts Council (Singapore)

The National Arts Council (NAC) was established in September 1991 to spearhead the development of the arts in Singapore. To realise its vision of developing Singapore into a distinctive global city for the arts, NAC provides total support to nurture artistic talent, promotes the practice and appreciation of the arts among Singaporeans, builds up capabilities and resources, facilitates internationalisation and advocates the value of the arts. Through its holistic range of programmes and initiatives to develop the entire arts value chain, the Council champions the growth of a vibrant arts sector where the arts is accessible to all, and the community of artists, arts groups and arts businesses can innovate, excel and achieve sustainability in the long term.

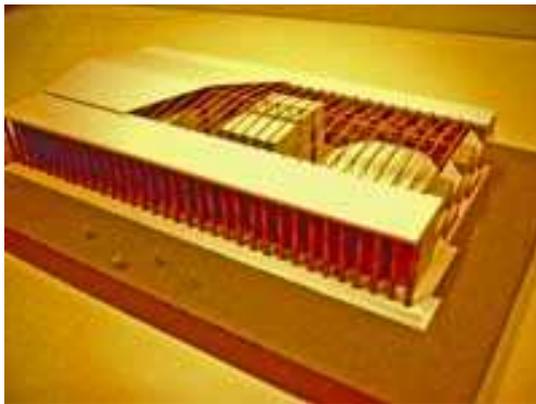
Biography of Shigeru Ban

Shigeru Ban was born in Tokyo in 1957. He is renowned as an architect and is most famous for his work with paper houses. Ban studied at the Southern California Institute of Architecture and later, the Cooper Union's School of Architecture. He graduated in 1984. Ban was the winner of the 40th annual Thomas Jefferson Medal in Architecture in 2005. He was also featured in the Time Magazine in an article highlighting the most promising innovators of the 21st century. He is also the first architect in Japan to construct a building primarily out of paper.

For Ban, "invisible structure" is of utmost importance. "Invisible structure" means that he incorporates the materials used into his structure. He often uses materials that are functional rather than the "newest" materials on the market or the latest techniques. Ban's work is also very much influenced by Japanese architecture - he assimilates concepts like (shoji) the "communal floor", in much of his work. Ban's attraction to paper as a medium for his work lies in the fact that it is low in cost and requires very little technology. Part of the attraction also lies in the sustainability of the material. Some of Ban's paper building projects include the Japanese pavilion building in the 2000 Hanover Expo and a paper log house project to house refugees in Kobe.

The pavilion constructed for the Expo resembled a huge grid covered with a canopy. After the exhibition, the pavilion was recycled. The paper log house project in Kobe involves the construction of simple houses for refugees to stay. These portable houses are easy to construct, transport and store. Ban has also worked with the United Nations to transport paper log houses to Turkey and Rwanda.

<http://www.shigerubanarchitects.com/>



Model of Shigeru Ban's Container Pavilion

Artists' works in/outside the Containart Pavilion



***Manas* by Ilya and Emilia Kabakov**

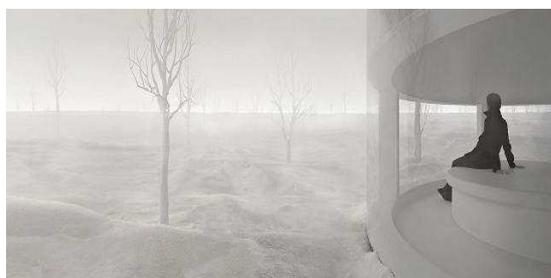
The new installation by Ilya & Emilia Kabakov, titled *Manas* (2007), consists of intricate scale models of a series of mountain observatories, ostensibly designed to collect cosmic energy, special dreams, and views of alien civilizations. Like most of the Kabakovs' sculptural tableaux, the work has the pleasing tone of Russian absurdist literature.



***Between You and I* by Anthony McCall**

The visual (left) shows an installation drawing of *Between You and I* (2006) as part of McCall's "solid light" film series, are simple projections that strikingly emphasise the sculptural qualities of a beam of light. In darkened, haze-filled rooms, the projections create an illusion of three-dimensional shapes, ellipses, waves and flat planes that gradually expand, contract or sweep through space. In these works, the artist sought to deconstruct cinema by reducing film to its principle components of time and light and removing the screen entirely as the prescribed surface for projection. The works also shift the relationship of the audience to film, as viewers become participants, their bodies intersecting and modifying the transitory forms.

Extracted from Serpentine Gallery, London



***Location (6)* by Hans Op de Beeck**

Visual artist Hans Op de Beeck has created *Location (6)* (2008), a monumental installation which draws on Op de Beeck's interest in manmade vistas, as well as his fascination with melancholic barren spaces devoid of human life.

Through a hallway, the spectator reaches an observatory with a panoramic window offering a view of an imaginary desolate snowy landscape. Everything basks in white light and is shrouded in a fog. The whole place has an ephemeral, almost immaterial feel about it that invites viewer to gaze into the near-nothingness.

Extracted from E-Flux

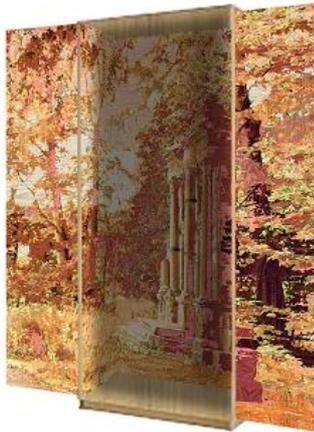


Diang (2003) by Alfredo Juan and Maria Isabel Gaudinez Aquilizan

Alfredo Aquilizan and his wife Isabel are Filipino migrants who now reside in Brisbane, Australia. Alfredo was born in 1962 in Cagayan Valley, whilst Isabel was born in 1965 in Manila. The couple specializes in installation art comprising objects owned by the community they reside with, often drawing inspiration from the Filipino community.

Diang features collected things from the seashores of Philippines suspended on windharps.

Extracted from Jan Manton Art



Untitled (new work) by Gary Carsley

Gary Carsley has exhibited in Australia and Europe for more than twenty years. Carsley names his works *Draguerreotypes* after the first photographic technique, *Draguerreotypes*. The works created dissolve into complex wooden veneer inlay to take on the material characteristics of photographs.

Flowers being an important motif in his artwork, Carsley's works call for close inspections and detail. His *Draguerreotypes* playfully engage in questioning physical and cultural appearances.

Extracted from Skirting the Issue: Gary Carsley exhibition catalogue

About Exhibition Venue: Marina Bay



With 360 hectares of prime land for development extending seamlessly from the existing Central Business District, Marina Bay is the centrepiece of Singapore's urban transformation that will support its continuing growth as a major business and financial hub in Asia. With many exciting developments shaping up, Marina Bay is planned as a Garden City by the Bay, attracting new investments, visitors and talent, as well as becoming a new destination for the local community.

This is the first time an art installation of this scale has been installed at the Central Promontory Site at Marina Bay, bringing more colour and buzz to the heart of the area. Shigeru Ban's *Containart Pavilion*, held at the Central Promontory Site, will be the key highlight of a series of outdoor artworks at Marina Bay entitled Singapore Biennale @ Marina Bay.

Marina Bay has been designed with people in mind, with a 24/7 vibrancy that will include the highly anticipated Integrated Resort (a destination attraction offering world-class hotel, convention, leisure and entertainment facilities, and casino) as well as other residential and commercial developments.

Marina Bay will be a place for people from all walks of life to explore, exchange and entertain. There will be apartments set amidst lush greenery near Singapore's waterfront. The local community and visitors alike can enjoy the parks, waterfront promenade and attend the events and celebrations held at the Bay. State-of-the-art office space and transport infrastructure will provide seamless connectivity for companies and professionals to grow and exchange business ideas. It will be a place with a loop of attractions and round-the-clock energy that continues during and outside office hours.

URA, as the Development Agency for Marina Bay, actively collaborates with stakeholders to create an exciting calendar of events at Marina Bay for everyone to enjoy. The Singapore Biennale@Marina Bay is one such event where URA has partnered with the National Arts Council to present an exciting selection of contemporary art installations at Marina Bay.