

# Interiors that wow

A cinema for kids and a modern laminates showroom are just two of the 118 projects that impressed the judges at this year's Design Excellence Awards. **BY TAY SUAN CHIANG**

## Play and watch

**Cinemaxx Junior by DP Design**  
**Cinemaxx Maxxbox Lippo Village,**  
**Tangerang, near Jakarta**

THIS cinema is meant for kids but adults may find it hard to resist having fun here too. Located in Tangerang, 25 kilometres West of Jakarta, Cinemaxx Junior redefines the movie-going experience.

At this cinema, meant for kids aged three to 10, silence is not expected, neither do kids have to stay put in their seats all the time.

Instead, the space brings together the fun of movie-watching and playing in a cohesively designed environment.

The cinema accommodates 106 people at full capacity, or about 30 families at each screening. The seating configuration has been designed to appeal to a child's sensibilities and the non-conventional seating design encourages informality, with bean

bags, loungers, and sofa beds. General sound levels have also been decreased to take care of children's sensitive hearing.

Generous leg room provided along each platform allows for safe passage-way for running children. Kids also get special meals as part of the experience.



ence. There are also multiple points of entry into the screening area. One of the most exciting ways is to climb up the yellow wall called the "Wall-o-lia" to reach the tube slide, which lets children slide into a colourful ball pit right below the movie screen.



Cinemaxx Junior redefines the movie-going experience with a variety of attractions ranging from a tube slide to a feature wall with back-lit pop-out padded trees (left); a view of the play area outside (extreme left)



The Woods at the new EDL Division showroom resembles a forest that conceals a physical reference library for the timber decors (above); another highlight is The Boutique, where articles of clothing fashioned out of laminates are suspended for visual display (below).

## The modern showroom

**EDL Division by Formwerkz Architects**  
**43 Sungei Kadut Street 1**

IF you have recently renovated your home, you may have gone hunting for the right colour and texture of laminates to use. Most laminates tend to be displayed in a rather boring way, as small samples hanging from the wall.

But at the new EDL Division showroom, shopping for laminates is now a fun process.

Instead of one big showroom space, there are eight smaller zones, each displaying laminates in less-conventional ways.

For example, The Woods resembles a forest that conceals a physical reference library for the timber decor. Look up and you will see a multitude of miniature laminate sculptures, that resemble branches. The space here seeks to inspire the visceral beauty of the forest by celebrat-

ing the real-life intricacies of wood with unexpected grains, tactile grooves and ridges.

Meanwhile, The House is a showcase of past and present collaborative design project models in a wall relief display.



Another highlight of the showroom is The Boutique, where articles of clothing fashioned out of laminates are suspended for visual display to illustrate colour and texture play. We believe laminates are akin to clothes for furniture.

Customers are encouraged to go through all eight sections to fully see the potential of laminates.

## In cool company

**The Co. @ Duxton by Formwerkz Architects**  
**99 Duxton Road**

CO-WORKING spaces are now so stylish it's a wonder why anyone would still want a conventional office.

The Co.'s new branch, at Duxton Road, is a two-storey shophouse space for entrepreneurs, expats and businesses in the creative industry.

The original elements of a shophouse were retained, acting as an overall framework with interior elements to further enhance the historical context of the space.

Formwerkz Architects' Gwen Tan believes that the type of art and graphics used in the space should hold a symbolic meaning to the era right down to the details.

Artefacts from the 1940s to 1960s era were collected and presented. Details such as books and desk lamps serve as softer decorative elements. Wallpaper prints are hand-drawn,



carefully chosen to pay homage to traditional methods as opposed to modern digital print.

Communal dialogue takes place on the second floor with two sets of loungers and a pantry forming a central space.

Loose furniture feature prominently and can be easily re-arranged to cater to town-hall events. Indoor plants are added to bring life to the interiors while the airwells let in daylight to the common areas.

The Co offers a variety of working spaces, from hot-desking to fixed desks, booths and suites.



The main work hall on the upper floor at The Co. @ Duxton (above); the reading room and lounge.

Semi-private spaces come in the form of individual booths with customised screens. The obscure, ribbed glass screen provides privacy without cutting off daylight; it even borrows light from corridors and

nearby openings creating a cosy spot for productivity.

With the dynamic mix of ethnicity and nationalities, the space is not built to a specific user, but is flexible enough to appeal to everyone.

## Dine in awe

**Aura by JPA Design**  
**National Gallery Singapore, #05-03**

IT is hard to decide what people love most about Aura – the food, the decor or the view. It is most likely a combination of all three.

Located on the uppermost levels of the National Gallery's City Hall wing, Aura is a fine-dining Italian restaurant, trendy bistro and hip cocktail lounge all in one.

The restaurant proper, on the fifth floor, is an intimate and luxurious 90-seater fine-dining space that is a blend of Old World elegance and sleek and modern finishes.

The restaurant's symmetrical design combines a vintage sensibility – with its custom-made smoked mirrors, handsome copper lamps and art deco-inspired fittings – with modernist bursts of colour in hues of teal, emerald and amber.

In the restaurant, a feature wall of hexagons references a detail on the balcony parapets of the museum's facade. The hexagons, laid on top of



The restaurant proper at Aura is a luxurious 90-seater fine-dining space (left); the Sky Lounge is a 200-seater rooftop venue, overlooking the Padang and MBS in the distance (below).

one another from big to small, pop out in uniform rows.

Rose-gold mirrored ceiling panels create the illusion of volume. The terracotta booth seats are a mix of fabric and faux leather, while marble partitions add a luxurious touch.

Aura's Sky Lounge, a 200-seater rooftop venue, overlooks the historic Padang and Marina Bay Sands in the distance. The space is cleverly designed to convert easily from a dining lounge to a banquet venue, giving the

owner, restaurateur-chef Beppe de Vito, the opportunity to capture a broad range of clientele, and maximise the benefit of its unrivalled location and views.

Befitting its location in an art gallery, there had to be art in the restaurant too. Inside the Sky Lounge, there are two floor-to-ceiling sculptures by artist Grace Tan, who was inspired by the Corinthian columns fronting the Supreme Court and American artist Jeff Koons' whimsical style. Her work



has two columns connected to the ceiling in violet and gold metallic "blobs" that look like water splashes. taysc@sph.com.sg @TaySuanChiangBT

# Teochew treats on SIA flights

**By Tay Suan Chiang**  
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COLD crab, pig trotter jelly, and *hei chor* or prawn rolls – now you can have these iconic Teochew delicacies while up in the air onboard selected Singapore Airlines (SIA) flights.

The airline is offering Teochew cuisine, on top of its usual food offerings, from now till February 2017.

The Teochew dishes are in line with the airline's Deliciously Whole-some dining programme.

Richard Neo, SIA's manager for inflight services, food and beverage, says that Teochew cuisine is light, and the most healthy out of all the Chinese cuisines.

His team, together with chefs from

SATS who cook meals for the airline's passengers, visited several renowned Teochew restaurants to decide on the menu.

Dishes were recreated in the SATS kitchen, and the chefs had to keep in mind that some flavours would change when the meals are served in the air.

At 30,000 feet, taste buds and the sense of smell are the first things to go, which explains why airline food usually tastes bland.

The SATS chefs had to make sure that while Teochew cuisine is already light on its own, it had to be tasty when served onboard.

Recipes had to be tweaked, and the process took about nine months to complete from concept to the final product.

Sharp-eyed passengers will notice that the pig trotter jelly looks much darker than what is normally served at restaurants.

Mr Neo explains that the stock used had to be reduced to ensure the dish still tastes authentic, hence the darker shade of jelly.

And in the case of *orh nee*, the creamy yam paste dessert, shallot oil was used instead of lard, to ensure that the taste would not change even onboard.

Other Teochew favourites for First and Business Class passengers include steamed pomfret and braised duck, and even the classic Teochew porridge with braised cabbage and salted egg.

Premium Economy and Economy



Class passengers will not be left out either. They can enjoy braised duck with egg, beancurd and preserved vegetables, with steamed rice, as well as a *cheng tng* dessert, served as a 50th birthday, the airline served Peranakan fare onboard.



Some of the iconic Teochew delicacies that will be offered on onboard selected SIA flights include cold crab, pig trotter jelly and hei chor (above) and Teochew porridge served with braised duck in spiced soya sauce, boiled salted egg and braised cabbage with wood fungus (above left).