

Textile and Fashion Federation to operate Design Orchard retail showcase from August 2020

Singapore, 14 July 2020 – The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) announced that the Textile and Fashion Federation (TaFF) will be the new operator for Design Orchard’s retail showcase from 1 August 2020, offering local brands wider reach and collaboration opportunities, while further nurturing and profiling home-grown design talent.

Design Orchard is a multi-agency project to develop new and emerging home-grown talents in the fashion and lifestyle sectors. It was launched in January 2019, with Naiise operating the [retail showcase](#) on the ground floor and TaFF running the fashion-centric co-working and [co-working and incubation spaces](#) on the second and third floors. Amidst the current economic climate, Naiise is leaving Design Orchard to consolidate their business operations and focus on their namesake online and brick-and-mortar stores¹.

Moving forward, TaFF will manage both the retail showcase and the co-working and incubation spaces, creating greater synergies in operations, programming, branding and marketing. Local brands continue to be at the forefront of the retail showcase, and all existing brands, suppliers and employees at the showcase will be retained during the transition.

“Naiise has created a one-of-a-kind retail showcase, bringing together the largest curation of local brands under one roof on Orchard Road. Their departure is understandable in the current economic climate. We wish them all the best, and thank them for raising the profile of our local brands,” said Ms Ranita Sundra, STB’s Retail and Dining Director. “TaFF has stepped forward despite the challenging business climate, and we are confident they will build on Naiise’s work and find synergies in running the showcase as well as the co-working and incubation spaces. Our priority now is to facilitate a smooth transition for all brands, suppliers and employees at the showcase.”

Developing local brands

¹ These include Naiise Iconic @ Jewel, Naiise @ Paya Lebar Quarter and Naiise @ Kuala Lumpur.

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Over the past one and a half years, Naiise curated a diverse line-up of local brands at Design Orchard, paving the way for fashion labels like Minor Miracles, Martha Who and Kanzi to make their first foray into brick-and-mortar retail. Through their mentorship programme, Naiise connected brands with industry veterans such as Mr Loh Lik Peng from Unlisted Collection and Ms Sharon Wong from Motherswork to sharpen their business models and create more growth opportunities. The home-grown retailer also organised regular workshops and monthly events which helped draw traffic to the retail showcase; such as rooftop yoga and barre sessions, a pop-up café and food tasting session, and an art workshop for children during the June school holidays last year.

Between January 2019 and March 2020, the retail showcase welcomed more than 270,000 visitors. During the temporary closure of the store from 7 April to 18 June², Naiise continued with online marketing efforts to build greater awareness of the local brands at Design Orchard in Singapore. They also focused on training employees to ensure service and hygiene standards remain high, and safe management measures are adhered to.

Naiise founder Dennis Tay said: "The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted businesses in Singapore and around the world. To better position ourselves for recovery, we made the difficult decision to consolidate our resources across the Naiise family and focus on Naiise's online and brick-and-mortar operations. Championing local brands remains a key priority for Naiise, and Design Orchard will always be a project close to our hearts. We look forward to TaFF taking the retail showcase to even greater heights."

TaFF to helm retail showcase, co-working and incubation spaces from August

As the only fashion-related trade association championing the growth of Singapore's local design community, TaFF has rich experience working with home-grown brands and helming showcases. For example, the trade association launched and spearheaded KEEPERS: Singapore Designer Collective³, a pop-up store that presented over 100 Singapore designers

² This was during the Circuit Breaker period and Phase One of the economy's reopening.

³ KEEPERS was launched in collaboration with Carolyn Kan, founder of Carrie K, and supported by STB. It was located where Design Orchard stands.

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and artisans in a multifaceted showcase, from September 2014 to January 2016. The strong performance of KEEPERS led to the eventual development of Design Orchard. Other go-to-market initiatives that TaFF has created to continue to push the boundaries of providing a unique retail experience is the TaFF Trunk series. The event allows for shoppers to experience and discover local brands in a personal and interactive environment. Over the years, TaFF has also organised overseas pop-ups in countries such as Shanghai, Malaysia and currently making plans for Jakarta next year. More recently in June, the trade association launched the OneOrchard.Store, an online marketplace aimed to aggregate and galvanise Singapore-based brands to market and facilitate exposure of these designers as well as to support the retail industry during this challenging period.

As the current operator of the co-working and incubation spaces, TaFF has secured over 60 events at The Cocoon Space⁴. These events comprised talks and workshops on topics such as fashion analytics, intellectual property and merchandising. The association also launched The Bridge Fashion Incubator, a customised incubation programme, with 11 brands last year.

Moving forward, TaFF will leverage its domestic and regional trade association network to create more opportunities for brands at Design Orchard. As part of their plans for the retail showcase, they will enhance the existing mentorship programme and increase the number of open calls to widen the range of local brands and new products at the showcase. Consumers can also look forward to new events such as an exhibition of capsule collections from TaFF's annual fashion design competition Singapore Stories, workshops as well as themed trunk shows.

Ms Ho Semun, TaFF Chief Executive, said: "Naiise has done a fantastic job launching and growing the retail showcase. We appreciate the opportunity to continue their good work in the heart of Orchard Road, which remains an important lifestyle destination. Supporting the local design community is key to TaFF's mission, and we are excited to have the opportunity to develop a holistic design eco-system through Design Orchard's retail showcase, co-working and incubation spaces."

⁴ The Cocoon Space is a co-working and event space on the second floor of Design Orchard.

Commented [VK(1): @TaFF: Any examples of pop-ups/showcases to highlight between 2019 and 2020, to show how you worked with/ support local brands? Is it accurate to say OneOrchard.Store was set up in response to COVID-19?

Commented [VK(2R1): Added TaFF Trunks initiative. Description on OOS approved.

Commented [PA3]: Approved

Commented [PA4]: 11 brands in TBFI cohort 1

Commented [VK(5): This section has been revised.

TaFF to check for accuracy, and to include any new plans for the retail showcase. All plans mentioned here must be confirmed.

Commented [PA6R5]: Edited and approved

Commented [VK(7): Proposed edit for TaFF's consideration

Commented [PA8R7]: Edited and approved

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About the Singapore Tourism Board

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