Top picks at International Furniture Fair Singapore

What: One of four lamps in the Mooncrater Collection by French architect and designer Renaud Noret. The lamp is presented by his newly launched design studio Elliptic Circle. It has a marble base and its lamp head can be rotated to adjust the intensity and direction of light.
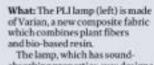**Price:** US$ 1,240 (S$1,630)

What: This desk mirror (right), part of home-grown furnishings brand Ipse Ipsa Ipsum's Peranakan Moderne collection, is handcrafted with coloured bone inlay pieces, together with a flower-shaped frame made of stainless steel and brass metal. The mirror also reflects the room's air quality and ambient temperature on its surface. Designer Jeremy Sun and Ipse Ipsa Ipsum were inspired by a bedsheet print at the Peranakan Museum, as well as the shape of Peranakan floor tiles.
Price: $198

What: AT-AT (left), a limited-edition Star Wars-inspired stool and side table sculpted from marble by award-winning home-grown designer Nathan Yong. It was created as part of a collaboration with Disney to commemorate the release of Star Wars: The Last Jedi (2017) and is on display as part of the fair's Carte Blanche showcase of 20 renowned and emerging brands from around the world.
Price: $6,300

What: Japanese Masafumi Ishikawa, one of 10 up-and-coming designers featured at the fair, has created the World Clock (right), a one-hand, 12-sided clock that can be rotated on its side to show the hourly time in different cities around the world.
The clocks are made from injection-moulded ABS plastic.
Price: US$59 (S$78)

What: The PLI lamp (left) is made of Varian, a new composite fabric which combines plant fibers and bio-based resin.
The lamp, which has sound-absorbing properties, was designed by Paris-based Arro studio. It is part of the Carte Blanche showcase.
Price: Not for sale

• Prices listed are for items sold at the International Furniture Fair Singapore.

BOOK IT / INTERNATIONAL FURNITURE FAIR SINGAPORE

WHERE: Halls 3 to 6, Singapore Expo, 1 Expo Drive
WHEN: Today, 9.30am to 6pm; tomorrow, 9.30am to 5pm
ADMISSION: Today, $20, register at venue from 9.30am; tomorrow, $20 from 9.30am to noon, free from noon to 5pm
INFO: iffs.com.sg

Toh Wen Li

Many science-fiction films date quickly, but Star Wars has stood the test of time.

That, at least, is the belief of Singaporean designer Nathan Yong, who is paying homage to the beloved classic with a series of marble sculptures that function as stools or side tables.

These subtle pieces echo the silhouettes of four vehicles that appear in Star Wars – the Sandcrawler, Millennium Falcon, TIE Fighter and AT-AT – and are now on display at International Furniture Fair Singapore (IFFS).

"A lot of Star Wars merchandise is too mass consumer-ish. It's very easy to design a sofa inspired by Star Wars, but it's too literal. I wanted to show the importance Star Wars has on people's lives."

And what better way to do so than by carving out these "stoic, monolithic and brutal" pieces from marble, says Mr Yong, co-owner of furniture store Grafunkt. The material, he adds, is lasting and acquires a natural patina as it ages.

IFFS, which began in 1981, brings together 374 exhibitors from 26 countries.

The organisers, who say that the fair is the first of its kind in Asia-Pacific to feature an augmented-reality zone, expect the event to draw about 20,000 international trade buyers and visitors from more than 100 countries.

Mr Yong's Star Wars pieces were created as part of a collaboration with Disney and displayed in the fair's Carte Blanche highlight, a showcase of 20 renowned and emerging brands from countries such as France, Italy, Spain and China.

The works there range from upholstery designs by 83-year-old French company Pierre Frey to sound-absorbing panels created by MUT Studio for Spanish brand Sancal.

Meanwhile, local furnishings brand Ipse Ipsa Ipsum is presenting 10 pieces from its Peranakan Moderne collection. These works, says the brand's creative head Saurabh Mangla, were inspired by items such as Peranakan tiles and kebayas, and combine nostalgia with surprise.

A vanity mirror with bone inlay pieces reflects air quality and temperature with the help of LEDs. Then there is the Magnetica Mixgrid storage series, with drawers that answer to the tug of a magnetic key.

Mr Mangla, who designed the collection with Singapore-based craftsmen Jeremy Sun and Nicholas Paul, says: "Asia has become a large consumer of brands from the West. Why not our own?

"We (in Singapore) must state our own design language... and any design language in Singapore is incomplete without technology."

Another highlight at the fair is a showcase of 10 up-and-coming designers from around the world.

One of them is 36-year-old Masafumi Ishikawa from Japan, who devised a one-hand world clock that can be turned on its side to tell the hour in 12 cities.

Mr Ishikawa says: "I used to live in the United States until last year. At that time, my friends and family were in Japan... I wanted to feel the time difference physically and imagine what they were doing."

While he admits the device is not strictly functional – it is not very precise and does not take into account daylight saving time – he believes it has a human touch and offers more scope for the imagination.

Next year's fair will be held at Marina Bay Sands, the organisers announced on Thursday.

Switching to the downtown venue after 19 years at the Expo will help the trade fair evolve to focus more on innovation and technology, says IFFS chairman Ernie Koh, who adds that the fees it charges exhibitors will not increase.

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