

MONOCLE

A BRIEFING ON GLOBAL AFFAIRS, BUSINESS, CULTURE & DESIGN

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OUR 40-PAGE
GUIDE**

SPECIAL REPORT

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FROM ART AND DESIGN LOGISTICS AND TECH

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i Sylvanian Families photographed in studio in London

HARDWARE REVOLUTION

Did you know that many popular media devices owe their existence to Singaporean companies? The USB stick was developed in 2000 by domestic firm Trek Technology, who partnered with IBM. Meanwhile, the X-mini Capsule Speaker has been copied by manufacturers the world over.

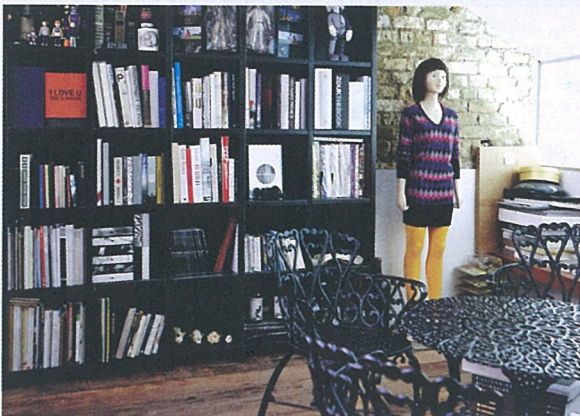
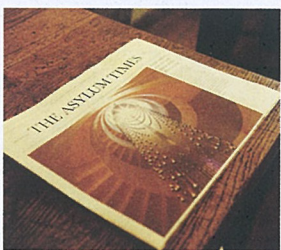
5 Asylum Brand apart

A trailblazer on Singapore's design scene, Asylum's former space on Ann Siang Hill served as unofficial headquarters for the city's creative community throughout the 2000s. Abuzz with talks and spontaneous late-night jams, it was a magnet for musicians, artists and fashion designers.

Now in its 16th year, the creative branding studio brings the same renegade spirit to well known luxury names and national institutions; one of its most recent projects was the popular logo for National Gallery Singapore (see page 15).

Creative director Chris Lee says minimal design reflects his studio's philosophy of solving design problems in a sensible and sophisticated manner. "I strive to create simplicity in all my work, not in terms of execution but distilling complex messages into a single most important vision."

theasylum.com.sg



6 Foreign Policy Beyond borders

Founders of Foreign Policy, a design agency that brands itself as a think-tank, Yu Yah-Leng and Arthur Chin (pictured) say the nurturing of creative ideas that drives their company stems from collaborations and pushing boundaries in their practice. "It's not just about visual graphics but rethinking a need and doing it better," says Chin. "Storytelling is at the heart of it."

From global projects including The Swap Show (an exchange and display of works between five top agencies in Barcelona and Singapore) to the brand architecture for Nanjing's Sifang Art Museum, the couple have not let international boundaries interfere with their ambitions. "It is all about collaboration and opening up perceptions," says Yu. "In our former studio in New York, our colleagues came from everywhere from Venezuela to South Korea. We wanted to bring that DNA back here so we never take a myopic approach."

foreignpolicydesign.com

