

PART C

Life!

THE STRAITS TIMES
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Arts apps
Arts groups roll out smartphone apps
C3



Rembrandt retrieved
Snatched sketch found in church
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Food as theatre
Buy a ticket, get a meal
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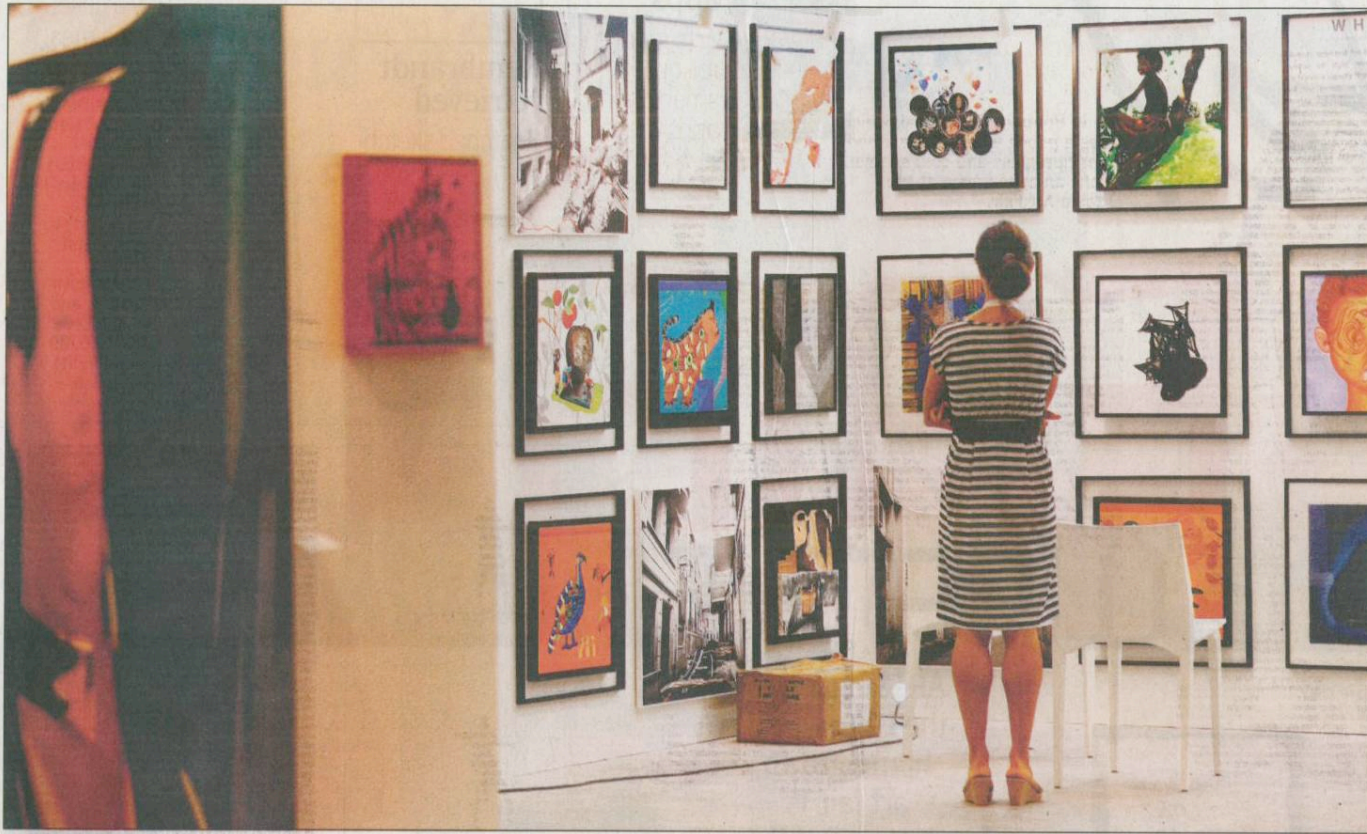
FAIR WEATHER

ARTS Singapore, the 10-year-old home-grown art fair, is closing. But the high end Art Stage and the populist Affordable Art Fair are returning with bigger and better versions.

DEEPIKA SHETTY reports.

C2&3





'We must always look back at where we were. This way, we know where we need to go forward. ARTSingapore's 10 years have been a commendable feat'

Ms Emi Eu (right), director of the Singapore Tyler Print Institute, on how ARTSingapore deserves credit for kick-starting the art fair scene



'Art Stage and the Affordable Art Fair have added the sizzle to the scene. In later years, ARTSingapore became a rather dull platform'

Artist Ketna Patel (right), who participated in both ARTSingapore and the Affordable Art Fair



'I love what Affordable Art Fair has done. There were people in shorts and slippers walking out with art. I hope more people will realise that art does not have to be an elitist thing'

Artist and curator Alan Oei (right)

The Affordable Art Fair, which held its first edition in November last year, received more visitors than anticipated. PHOTOS: ST FILE

SHOW AND SELL

Art fair ARTSingapore is bowing out, but two fresh newcomers – Affordable Art Fair and Art Stage – are staking their claim

The Affordable Art Fair and Art Stage both remain confident of the growing art market here and in the region.

The Affordable Art Fair is growing in size for its second edition, featuring more than 70 compared to 50 galleries in its debut last year. Contemporary art fair Art Stage is focusing on stronger curation and a greater representation of Asian artists in its second edition.



At ARTSingapore in 2009, works such as Evening Tea (left), a painting by Richard Winkler, sold quickly even though it cost \$150,000. Despite the art fair's past success, it will not be returning this year.

Book the dates: See facing page



deepika shetty

One of Singapore's longest running art fairs is closing after 10 years. ARTSingapore, which once had a monopoly on the domestic art fair market, says it will not return this year. It debuted in 2000 and had more than 100 participating galleries in 2008 and 2009. Last year, it made a shift to becoming a boutique fair featuring about 50 galleries.

While the veteran fair is closing, the brash newcomers which made their splashy debuts last November and in January this year are making plans for their upcoming second editions.

Speaking exclusively to Life!, ARTSingapore's director Chen Shen Po, 45, said: "Due to the emergence of two new fairs and especially with the support given to the new players, we have decided not to hold our fair this year. Instead, we will take this time to re-think our positioning on how to go forward."

Last year, the home-grown art fair held at Suntec Singapore drew 12,000 people compared to 15,000 in 2009, though the final sales tally for the event rose to \$6 million, compared to \$5 million the year before.

Despite the increased sales, Ms Chen believes the market may not be ready for so many fairs.

"The market is limited and we are not sure it is ready for three fairs which are held just a few months apart," she said.

While she does not have any concrete plans for the future, she did mention she will take her time to decide on her "next step for Singapore".

Ms Emi Eu, director of the Singapore Tyler Print Institute which has taken part in the fair four times, said ARTSingapore deserves credit for kick-starting the art fair scene.

"We must always look back at where we were. This way, we know where we need to go forward. ARTSingapore's 10 years have been a commendable feat," she said.

Other arts industry insiders noted that the new fairs have challenged the incumbent with new ideas and new energy.

Artist Ketna Patel, 43, who participated in both ARTSingapore and the Affordable Art Fair, said: "Art Stage and the Affordable Art Fair have added the sizzle to the scene. In later years, ARTSingapore became a rather dull platform."

"I and many other participants have felt, very palpably, the organiser's energy percolate down to all layers of the Affordable Art Fair. For anyone new to art, the fair and the venue were a lot less intimidating compared to ARTSingapore. I have showed similar work in both fairs, but sold more at the AAF."

The success of both the Affordable Art Fair and Art Stage proves there is a market for such events in Singapore.

Last year, the open, bazaar-like Affordable Art Fair targeting first-time buyers drew 9,500 visitors over three days, exceeding the organiser's estimate of 9,000 people. The fair, which featured more than 50 art galleries from 17 countries, offered artworks priced between \$100 and \$10,000 and generated \$1.75 million in sales.

This year, the event will be held at the same venue - the F1 Pit Building at Marina South - in November. With more than 70 galleries from Asia, Australia and Europe, organisers are hoping to attract more than 12,000 visitors.

At a media briefing on Tuesday, fair director Camilla Hewitson said the highlights will include limited-edition print works by Japanese pop artist Takashi Murakami and prominent British artist Damien Hirst.

A recent graduate showcase will promote the city-state's young talent and works of local artists such as Genevieve Chua and Justin Lee will be on show. There will also be talks on contemporary art by artists and curators and children's art workshops.

Mr Will Ramsay, 41, founder of the Affordable Art Fair, told Life! "As we saw with the first edition, this is a format that really appeals to people and the success last year was beyond our expectations. We aim to help develop local art markets, bringing in more buyers and nurturing future collectors."

Similarly, Singapore's inaugural global contemporary art fair, Art Stage, attracted 32,000 visitors though its target was 50,000. In the second edition, fair director Lorenzo Rudolf is hoping to keep it at 120 galleries, with more tightly curated gallery presentations.

The focus will be on sharpening the quality of works which galleries will be bringing in. The organisers will be releasing the final list of participating galleries by the end of next month.

"The second edition will be a continuation of what we started," said Mr Rudolf, 51.

"It will remain a fair with a distinct Asian identity supporting the Asian art market. Which is not to say that there will be no Western galleries, but the Western galleries will be very clearly selected. I do not want to bring in galleries who will show us works which they cannot sell in the West, particularly in these times."

Mr Rudolf and his wife Maria Elena Rudolf, 53, who heads VIP relations at Art Stage, are currently on a 10-city Asian visit looking at galleries and artists' studios and meeting key collectors. As they travel from Tokyo to New Delhi, they expect to find new works and new artists whose works can be a fitting addition to Art Stage next year.

Artist and curator Alan Oei observed that Art Stage has raised the bar in terms of what kind of art can be exhibited and sold.

Speaking about both fairs, the 34-year-old said: "I love what Affordable Art Fair has done. There were people in shorts and slippers walking out with art. I hope more people will realise that art does not have to be an elitist thing."

"At Art Stage, one got to see large-scale installations or video art which have not been seen before at the other fairs. That said, does it have anything to do with local arts? Not at all, and not for a long time, because most of our artists are not selling at those price points. I just go there to enjoy the rush, the art and the smell of money."

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How to buy art

Artists, curators, collectors and gallerists give their take on buying that perfect piece.

- If you are a first-time buyer, take your time. Unless you absolutely love something, do not buy it.
- If you are not familiar with the art and the artist whose work you like, go back and do your research before buying it the next day. You can reserve a work in the meantime.
- Do not hurry. Galleries might try to rush you by claiming scarcity or must-buy deals, but if you look hard enough, you may be able to find similar works by artists.
- Buy what you can afford. If a painting you like is beyond your budget, ask if there are any other works by the same artist.
- Many galleries allow you to pay in

instalments - just ask.

- If you are buying a piece of art to fit a specific space, take measurements before you start looking. It is possible to make a small painting seem larger to fill a space but hanging a work in an area that is too small for it will not work.
- Ask the seller how best to hang and light the work. Also, while a good frame can enhance a picture, a bad one can ruin it. If the work is unframed, ask whether the gallery offers a framing service.
- If you are buying for investment, focus on original works by established artists.
- Ask to see other examples of the artist's work as this can indicate whether the artist's practice has been consistent.
- Most visitors tend to overlook the educational side of an art fair. Attend lectures, discussions, seminars and be a part of often heated debates and conversations with the artists and the audience.

Book the dates

AFFORDABLE ART FAIR

What: The fair which began in London made its Asian debut in Singapore last year. It will feature more than 70 galleries from Asia, Australia and Europe this year. It aims to make art accessible to the masses, with all offerings priced between \$100 and \$10,000. Three-quarters of the works on show will cost less than \$7,500.

Where: The F1 Pit Building in Marina South. Free shuttle bus service from City Mall MRT

When: Nov 18 to 20, 11am to 6pm (Nov 18), 11am to 8pm (Nov 19) and 11am to 6pm (Nov 20)

Admission: \$10 (adults), \$7 (students & seniors). \$30 for four. Free entry for children below the age of 12. For more information, go to www.affordableartfair.sg

ART STAGE SINGAPORE

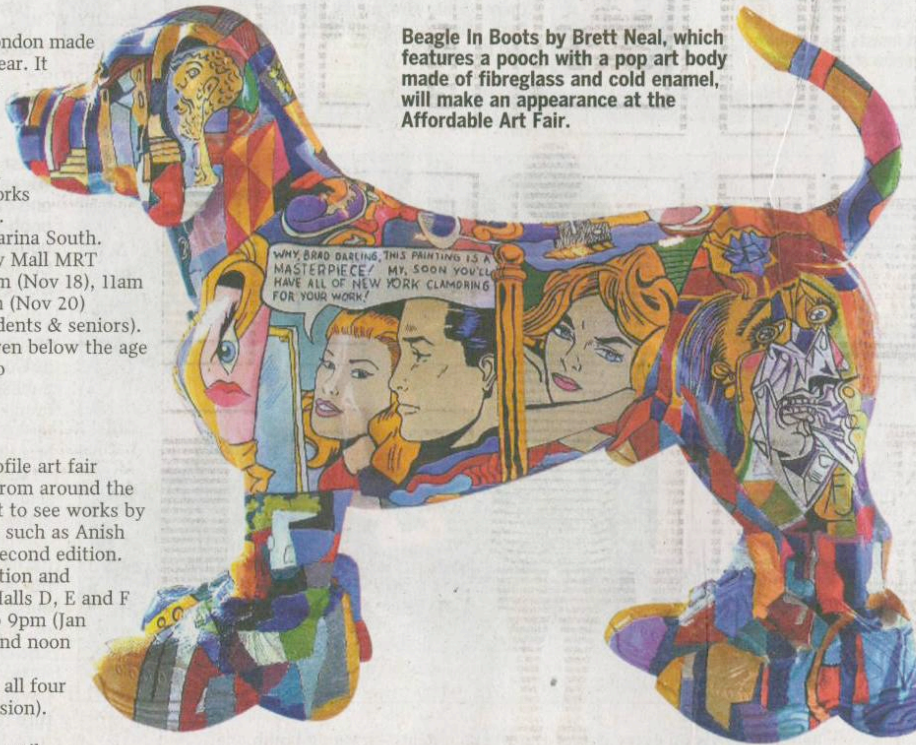
What: Singapore's most high-profile art fair featured more than 120 galleries from around the world in its January debut. Expect to see works by avant-garde contemporary artists such as Anish Kapoor and Damien Hirst in the second edition.

Where: Marina Bay Sands Exhibition and Convention Centre Basement 2, Halls D, E and F

When: Jan 12 to 15 next year, 1 to 9pm (Jan 12 and 13), noon to 8pm (Jan 14) and noon to 6pm (Jan 15).

Admission: \$60 (season pass for all four days); \$30 (day pass); \$10 (concession).

For more information, go to www.artstagesingapore.com or e-mail info@artstagesingapore.com



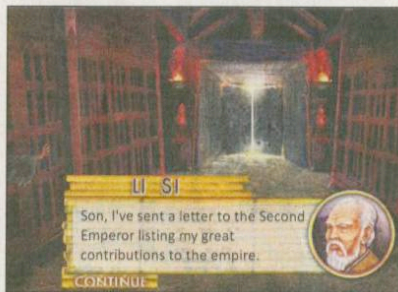
Beagle in Boots by Brett Neal, which features a pooch with a pop art body made of fibreglass and cold enamel, will make an appearance at the Affordable Art Fair.



Other works at the Affordable Art Fair this year are Dutch Boy 'Tea' (left) by award-winning artist Tim Sullivan, I Control Me (below left) by street artist TR-853-1, better known as Trase, and For The Love Of God, 2009 (below right) by Damien Hirst.

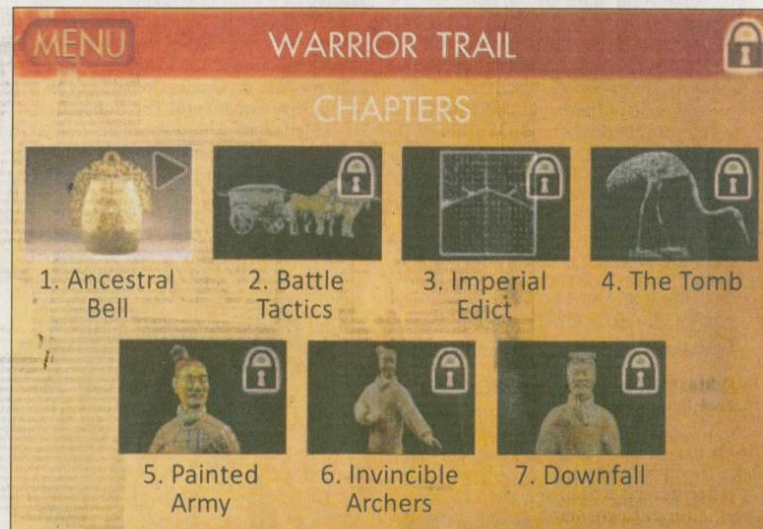


PHOTOS: LA LANTA FINE ART, COLLECTORS CONTEMPORARY, UTTERLY ART LLP, FIUMANO FINE ART



'New technology allows us to put these objects in context with movement and sound. This means visitors can better understand their role and significance'

A National Heritage Board spokesman on the Terracotta Warriors app (above and right), which tells the story of the prime minister and architect of the Qin Empire and his son in interactive chapters



PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MAGMA STUDIOS PTE LTD

Coco Chanel 'was Nazi spy'

New York - A new book about the life of Coco Chanel (right) published in the United States on Tuesday aims to strengthen claims that the French designer collaborated with the Nazis during World War II as a spy code-named Westminster.

The book, *Sleeping With The Enemy: Coco Chanel's Secret War*, by Paris-based American journalist Hal Vaughan, claims not only that the designer was the lover of a German officer, Hans Gunther von Dincklage, which has been well-documented, but also that they were spies who went on missions to Madrid and Berlin.

The book also claims Dincklage was a Nazi master spy, who ran a spy ring in the Mediterranean and in Paris



fashion house on Tuesday poured doubt on the book's allegations.

"What's certain is that she had a relationship with a German aristocrat during the War.

"Clearly, it wasn't the best period to have a love story with a German even if Baron von Dincklage was Eng-

lish by his mother and she (Chanel) knew him before the war," the Chanel group said in a statement.

The fashion house also disputed that the designer was anti-Semitic, saying Chanel would not have had Jewish friends or ties with the Rothschild family of financiers if she were.

But the book draws on English, French, German and American archives to claim Chanel, whose