

Seminar on "The Science and Art of Green Building Design" and Launch of Architectural Book on the National Library Building

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Dr N Varaprasad, Chief Executive, National Library Board

The National Library Board (NLB) organised a seminar on "The Science and Art of Green Building Design" on 22 July 2008, which focused on the various architectural design aspects of 'green' building design and its significance in an urban environment. The seminar aims to share NLB's experience in designing a 'green' building and to create awareness of the benefits of 'green' building designs. NLB was awarded the *Green Mark Platinum Award* bestowed by the Building & Construction Authority in 2005 and the *First Prize* in the *ASEAN*

Energy Efficiency Award under the category of 'New and Existing Buildings' in 2007.

Dr N Varaprasad, Chief Executive, NLB, opened the seminar by pointing out that the title of the event acknowledged that it took not only science to create the new National Library building but art played a tandem role too. He said that NLB is very conscious of its public role to support and promote environmental sustainability and that in keeping with the National Library's spirit and ethos, knowledge has been created for this

seminar to be shared with everyone in the larger community.

The keynote was delivered by the design architect of the building, Dato' Dr Ken Yeang. He launched into his keynote speech by asserting that the battle for sustainable futures would be in cities rather than in buildings. Dr Yeang proceeded to share the science and art of his green building designs through projects spanning different countries. He said that his background as an ecologist rather than as an architect formed his views and philosophy on green buildings.

Mr Jeffery Neng, Deputy Director of the Green Mark Department at the Building & Construction Authority, spoke on the Green Mark scheme and how it is taking shape here in Singapore, spelling out the initiatives towards a more green building ethos. Green Mark is used as a benchmark to identify good practices in the development, construction, maintenance and management of buildings.

The roundtable discussion was chaired by Dr Tay Kheng Soon, Principal Partner, Akitek Tenggara. The other members of the roundtable included Dato' Dr Ken Yeang; Prof Lee Siew Eang, Associate Professor, Department of Building, School of Design and Environment, National University of Singapore; Mr Jeffery Neng, and Mr Carsten Huttche, Founder/Director, Environmental Professionals.

Mr Ronnie Tan, Senior Research Associate, Publishing and Research



Mr Tai Lee Siang, President, Singapore Institute of Architects

Services, NLB, ended the seminar by highlighting the various information resources available to research green buildings and bioclimatic design. These resources include NLB's databases, the Internet as well as print materials from the National Library. Some of the databases recommended by Mr Tan include Business Monitor International, EBSCOhost, EIU, Engineering Village2, Factiva, ProQuest, ISI Emerging Markets, Global Trade Atlas and KOMPASS.

The seminar attracted 105 participants comprising architects, staff from statutory boards such as Jurong Town Corporation, Building & Construction Authority, National Environment Agency, National Parks Board, and architecture students from the National University of Singapore.

After the seminar, the National Library launched the architectural book, "The National Library of Singapore: Redefining the Library". The occasion was graced by Guest of Honour, Mr Tai Lee Siang, President, Singapore Institute of Architects.

The book showcases the National Library Building at Victoria Street as an architectural icon for Singapore and the region and shows how the architects and designers have endeavoured to revolutionise and humanise the library concept to meet the needs of users. Highlighted in the book are the various innovative and green features of the National Library Building such as the application of cutting-edge technology, bioclimatic use of landscaping, intelligent building systems and the green elements in the facade design. It is envisaged that architects and designers will gain an understanding of the building design rationale and gain invaluable insight into the design concepts and features that went into the construction of the building and NLB's learning lessons.

The book is available for sale at S\$57.70 (with GST) at Kinokuniya Book Stores and online at The Library Shop (<http://shop.nlb.gov.sg>). Limited copies are also available for loan at NLB libraries.



Roundtable Discussion (from left to right): Mr Carsten Huttche, Assoc. Prof Lee Siew Eang, Mr Jeffery Neng, Dato' Dr Ken Yeang and Prof Tay Kheng Soon