

Saturday, September 23, 2006

## **Filipina paints Singapore's first art bridge**

For the very first time in Singapore, a bridge has become an artist's canvas.

The Alkaff Bridge, a modern bridge that spans the Singapore River at Robertson Quay, is being given a new look by the Singapore Tyler Print Institute (STPI) which has arranged for internationally acclaimed Filipino artist Pacita Abad to "paint" the bridge. What has emerged is a vibrantly colorful transformation of the landscape in this commercial-cum-residential area with a "bridge of art".

The project is an initiative of STPI, a center dedicated to the development of printmaking and papermaking, and Pacita Abad to bring art to the community. This is a landmark contribution to public art in Singapore.

"Painting the Alkaff Bridge is my gift to Singapore. I believe in public art and we should have more projects like this so more people can enjoy them," Abad said.

The Institute, which collaborates with artists from around the world to create fine art prints, recently completed a large body of works by Abad. These are now exhibited at the STPI Gallery. With trademark rich and cheerful colors and jubilant shapes, Abad's art for the bridge was said to have brought a joyful atmosphere to the New Year.

Singapore as a "global city for the arts" is propelled by public appreciation, participation and support for the arts. STPI believes the bridge will engage and enrich everyone.

At another level, this fully sponsored project serves as an example of partnership between government agencies, private companies and passionate individuals working together to bring art into the everyday lives of all.

The project is supported by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) with permission to paint the bridge granted by the Land Transport Authority (LTA) and CPG Consultants Pte. Ltd. City Developments Limited (CDL), developer of a luxurious commercial-cum-residential complex at Robertson Quay called The Pier, is one of the key sponsors.

"Sponsoring this exciting STPI art project is in line with CDL's mission to make our community a better place to live in," said Kwek Leng Joo, CDL managing director. "As the Roberson Quay/Mohammed Sultan area develops into an arts hub, the colorful Alkaff Bridge will nicely complement the vibrancy of the existing and new developments such as CDL's The Pier.

He added: "Pacita Abad's stimulating artwork will certainly add more life and interest to the area, which is a favorite haunt for the dynamic and artistically inclined professionals. We are indeed proud to be part of this unique public art project."

In-kind support has been provided by Nippon Paint (S) Pte. Ltd., which has made available their palette of 11,000 colors for the artist to choose from, and Professional Industrial Rope Access Services Pte. Ltc. (PIRAS), the highly skilled rope specialists who conducted the physical painting of the bridge under the artist's supervision.

"PIRAS is honored to be part of this momentous project. The team is thrilled to be able to contribute their technical knowledge and skills to help bring color and art to public spaces in Singapore," said Terence Chan P.G., PIRAS director.