

Ask any Singaporean about the hype the city-state is receiving lately, and the response is typically a mixture of pride and drop-the-mic attitude. Singaporeans love the melting pot of Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures that permeate every aspect of their tropical city. With its citizens' universal reverence for prime minister Lee Hsien Loong, son of first prime minister Lee Kuan Yew, and a tendency to toe the party line, Singapore is a textbook example of how a former British colony became an Asian tiger in a mere half century. And it has design clout to boot.

"The challenge about being a multicultural country is that there is always this need for racial equality – no one race should be more prominent than another in terms of design aesthetic," observes Singapore native Kelley Cheng, creative director with The Press Room. "You end up having to subdue everything and the aesthetic becomes very global and modern. So you see a lot of very minimalistic and modernist aesthetics here."

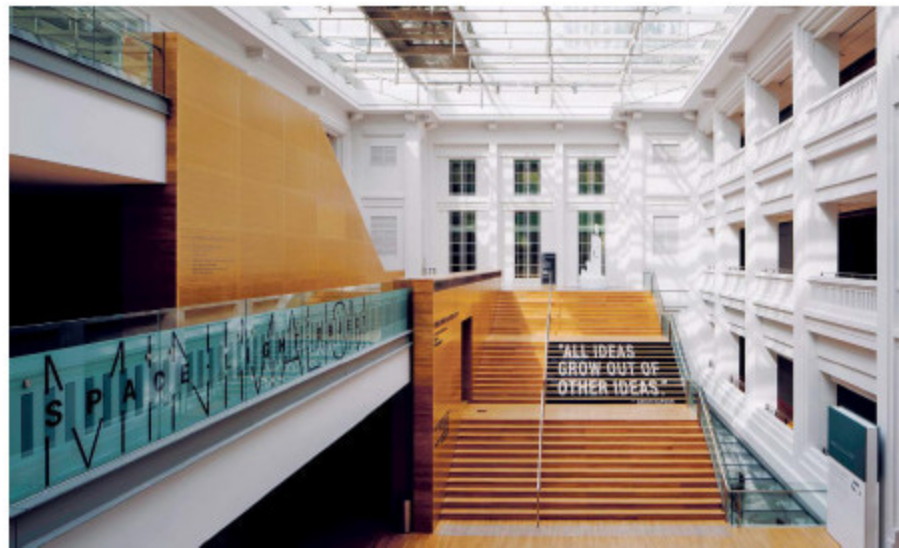
Sure enough, *Minimalism* is the title of the first site-specific exhibition at the National Gallery Singapore, itself an adaptive reuse of the 80-year-old City Hall and Supreme Court buildings by studioMilou Singapore and CPG Consultants, which opened in 2015. Running until April 14,

the exhibition was curated by Robert Cheng of Brewin Design Office, which recently completed contemporary Chinese restaurant Blossom at Marina Bay Sands.

Singapore's hospitality venues are some of its most dynamic spaces. Just down the road from the National Gallery, on Coleman Street, Grand Park City Hall Hotel is the flagship of the Park Hotel Group. It's a tech-driven property with check-in and room controls via a dedicated app and nods to the city's culture with locally commissioned art in its refurbished interiors by Studio HBA Singapore, and in the graphics on its collaterals and backdrops.

On the other side of the National Gallery, in the Mandarin Oriental hotel, MO Bar has a look inspired by Malay sea nomads. It was designed by Wilson Associates Singapore's senior designer Tiffany Chia, who worked with branding consultant Proof & Company, visual consultant ACRE, uniform designers ESTA, and lighting designer Project Light Design.

Opened in December, in 14 low-rise shophouses dating from 1929 in the Tanjong Pagar district, Six Senses Maxwell joins Six Senses Duxton to make up Six Senses Singapore. Its 138 guest rooms were created by French interior designer Jacques Garcia.



The National Gallery Singapore hosts the *Minimalism* exhibition by Brewin Design Office