

# ARTICHOKE

INTERIOR / ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN / OBJECTS / PEOPLE

# 33.

HOTEL SPECIAL  
ALANNAH HILL HQ  
MICHAEL YOUNG



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## THE No4 CLUB

Ministry of Design has reinvented a row of Singapore shophouses as a chic, contemporary hotel that nevertheless references Singapore's colonial heritage.

words  
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photography  
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(C&A PHOTOGRAPHY)

The Club wraps a street corner on Chinatown's Ann Siang Hill, one of few elevated settings in the flat (or flattened) city state. In the early days of mercantile Singapore, the knoll must have afforded good views of the then-nearby seashore, its proximity provoking a concentration of cheap accommodation and remittance shops. Parallels drawn between the transient tenants of this past and the commercial traveller of today are a launching point for this project.

The Club is the first foray of Harry's Hospitality into hotels, its usual business being a very popular chain

of occidentally-oriented bars. Ministry of Design (MOD) developed the concept and branding for the property and designed the accommodation and public area interiors and graphics. Jane Yeo, experienced in creating Harry's more traditional drinking holes, was responsible for the off-lobby lounge and basement tapas bar, both of which revel in much deeper tones, primarily red.

The L-shaped building of the Club was originally a row of shophouses, a Singapore typology of storage or retail space at ground floor and living space above. Over the years,

the individual slices were consolidated and the interiors merged and stripped. Despite its apparently orderly exterior (unified by fresh white paint), the envelope did not yield any "typical" room types – rather a chocolate box of different forms and flavours.

The hotel is entered from a chamfered corner, the lobby formed a little like the famous Aalto vase. A cloud of folded fabric drops from the ceiling, obscuring the outlook of a super-sized Sir Stamford Raffles, reminding us of the other great colonial hotel in this city.

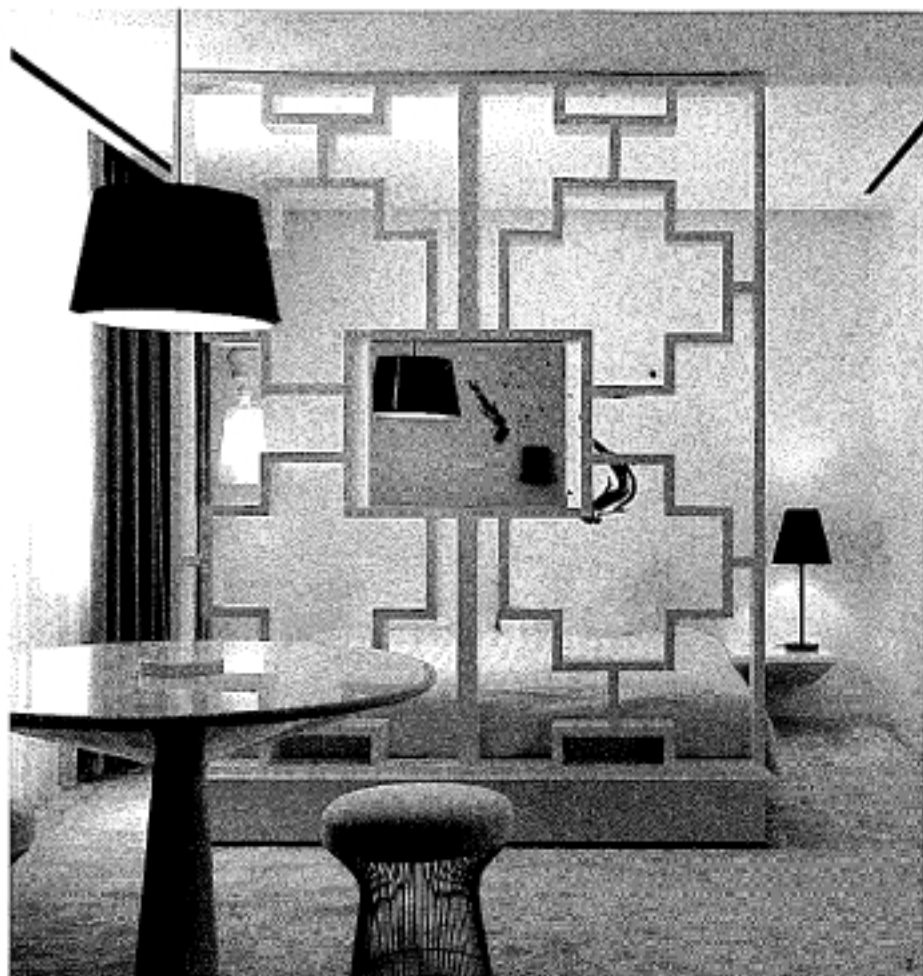
Artwork by Wyn-Lyn Tan, inky sketches of plum branches on the walls and swallows in relief on the ceilings, leads us to the guest rooms on the second and third floors. The curvilinear corridors are simply finished with white paint and silvery carpet, but the door to each room presents a safe-like assemblage of rotating cogs and levers. These discs, in lieu of the usual swingtags, communicate messages like "I need nothing, I feel content" and "Order for me (please make up my room)."

The twenty-two rooms are monochromatically decorated with a restrained palette of three materials – carpet, timber and paint, accented by a suite of shiny lamps. Each room on the floor is unique, space dominating structure in all but one, where the columns are used to advantage in the creation of a posted bed. Fabrics and carpets are white and a silky, sterling grey. The room extends through glass into a bathroom of super-sized black and white diamonds with a console-like vanity.

Public areas are furnished with a curated selection of classic and custom pieces. The rooftop pavilion serves dual purpose as breakfast room and bar. Its sunny terrace transforms before sunset at seven as the tables fill with young professionals, and the mood of the main room is modulated by varicoloured light emitting from punched patterns on walls and ceiling.

Nimble navigating between the aesthetic extremes of containerized "international travel modern" and op shop baroque, MOD has created in the Club a cool, compelling and personable retreat. A contemporary take on colonial chic that, in celebrating historical context, defines an experience unique to – and unique in – Singapore.

L IN THE LOBBY, A STATUE OF SIR STAMFORD RAFFLES WITH HIS HEAD IN THE CLOUDS



2. UNIQUE LAYOUTS AND TAILORED ARTWORK MAKE EACH OF THE TWENTY-TWO ROOMS DISTINCT.

3. THE LOBBY FEATURES WALL ART DESIGNED BY MOD AND IMPLEMENTED BY WYN-LYN TAN.

4. THE BLACK AND WHITE THEME IS EVEN CONTINUED IN THESE LOBBY CHAIRS.

5. BLACK AND WHITE TILES WERE USED IN THE LOBBY, BATHROOMS AND SKY BAR.



**project**

The Club Hotel  
28 Ann Siang Road  
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www.theclub.com.sg

**design practice**

Ministry of Design (MDO)  
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**project team**

Colin Seah, Kevin Leong,  
Joyce Wan Soane, Cheryl Luth,  
Don Castaneda, Bryan Law,  
Doris Sia, Roberto Rivera,  
Lolita Alejandro

**ffb interior design**

Jana Yeo  
architectural gp  
Park + Associates  
art illustration  
Wyn-Lyn Tan

**time schedule**

Construction: 6 months

**products**

**walls**  
Armour coated white, white  
paint and perforated metal  
from EDZ.

**flooring**

Tiles from EDZ. Carpet from  
Umi Carpets. Black tile to  
elevator from Elatic.

**lighting**

Halogen downlights and  
LEDs from EDZ. Other  
lighting from Light Phase.

**furniture**

Lobby chairs from Lagan  
Design Source. Other furni-  
ture from Sofa and Others.

**finishes**

Curtains from Serbe Antic.

**bathrooms**

Sanitary from Wan Tai & Co.

