



The Kallang Wave is one of three popular bench designs in the Pick a Bench, Pick a Place project. The benches will be made from planks salvaged from the old National Stadium. PHOTO: URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

# Kallang Wave returns in choice of bench designs

By LEE JIAN XUAN

THE Kallang Wave may have taken a hiatus with the tearing down of the National Stadium, but it could be popping up across the island – in the form of a bench.

Made from weathered chengal planks from the old National Stadium that closed in 2007, the bench – designed by local designer Colin Seah – has been making waves in the Urban Redevelopment Authority’s (URA) Pick a Bench, Pick a Place project.

It is one of three designs which are popular among the public, who will get to decide which 24 bench designs – some of which have been on display in areas like the Esplanade, Marina Bay and the Singapore River since last year – should be installed across the island.

The other popular designs are “Bench as Sculpture” and “The Coil”, said the URA.

The public also votes on where these benches should be placed. There are 24 choices – ranging from heartland areas such as Bishan-Ang Mo Kio

Park to areas in the city such as the National Museum – with the top 15 getting up to four benches each.

The voting, which wraps up at the end of this month, has seen Orchard, Marina Bay and heartland parks taking the lead, it added.

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong uploaded a picture of himself seated on the “Aesop Unbreakable” bench on his Facebook page last Monday.

“The old National Stadium (and its benches) brings back fond memories of football matches, National Day Parades, and so many events we attended with family and friends. We should preserve these memories, which are part of what makes Singapore feel like our home,” he wrote.

Undergraduate Loo Wenbin, 24, who voted for the “Kallang Wave” bench to be placed at the Punggol Promenade, said: “The design speaks to the landscape aesthetically, as the promenade is by the waters. I think it’s quite cool and creative.”

The bench’s designer, 42-year-old Mr Seah, who is

founder-director of architectural firm Ministry of Design, said: “The bench captures the dynamic motion of the Kallang Wave... I wanted it to immortalise the gesture.”

In a similar project, 28 furniture pieces made from fallen tree logs were also on display at Dhoby Ghaut Green last week, as part of the SingaPlural event during Singapore Design Week.

Singapore Heritage Society’s honorary secretary, Dr Yeo Kang Shua, lauded such efforts as “creative forms of recycling, which help us avoid a use-and-throw culture”.

“Such activities help Singaporeans to better understand our country’s heritage and landscape,” he said.

But he also noted that such displays should be accompanied by proper explanations of their origin.

“They should not be scattered about the country without explanation, because timber after all is just timber.”

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