

Trendsarticles.com

The inside story

[View without images](#)

While the architects had the vision for The Esplanade, putting it all together was the job of companies such as Naa'im Holdings, a specialist in interior fitouts

The exterior of The Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay may be the focus of attention on the Singapore waterfront, but it is matched by an interior that is equally eye-catching. From the ornate concert hall ceiling to the glamorous dressing rooms for the performers, the complex is a testament to the skills of many local contractors.

Foremost among these is Naa'im Holdings, the company responsible for much of the interior fitout and all the architectural finishes within The Esplanade venues and public spaces.

General manager Ronnie Boey says Naa'im Holdings worked in two capacities - as a carpentry and ceiling subcontractor to the main building contractor, and as a direct contractor to the developer. In this latter role the company was responsible for developing building interior solutions to meet the architects' design specifications.

"This was done in consultation with the designers and a team of structural engineers," says Boey. "Many of the key features in the complex were presented initially as visualisations, with both the materials and the method of construction needing to be worked out by Naa'im Holdings. Shop drawings and material samples were presented to the design team for final agreement."

Boey says one of the biggest challenges in the project was meeting the acoustic requirements. This was achieved through close collaboration between the building team and the architects.

One of the most dramatic features of the interior of The Esplanade is the Concert Hall ceiling. This features special effect-style finishes created by Naa'im Holdings.

"Architectural finishes are the company's specialty," says Boey. "For the auditorium, a glass-reinforced gypsum fibre ceiling with timber ribs and acoustic panelling features two specialised finishes - painted copper and timber effects."

The foyer of the Concert Hall is also noticeable for its elaborate circular ceiling treatment. Here Naa'im Holdings supplied and installed perforated GRG panels that the company fabricated in China.

Large ceiling panels in the Lyric Theatre were also pre-fabricated in China and brought to Singapore in pieces. Boey says the moulded, fibrous GRG panels are designed to float within the ceiling space.

"Naa'im Holdings installed 50 tonnes of steel within this space to support the panels," he says. "The panels are not just a visual element within the theatre, they also have acoustic properties."

The Recital Studio was an area where Naa'im Holdings took sole responsibility for constructing the ceiling geometry.

"This was a particularly interesting concept put forward by the architect," says Boey. "It involved a large, suspended circular disc that hovered above the studio. A team of surveyors helped to ensure this was level."



Toto wash basins reflect the current trend towards vessel bowls.



The Toto flush valve features in the wall-hung Toto toilets.

The Rehearsal Studio, used by performing artists, was another interesting space to work with, he says. This features acoustic walls, mirrored panelling, barres and a sprung timber floor. Rubber padding helps make this flooring soundproof.

Naa'im Holdings also supervised the interior fitout of the Theatre Studio, often referred to as the Black Box. The entire interior is painted black, providing an intimate arena for small performances. The Theatre Studio also features a sprung floor.

Other special features in the complex that were constructed by Naa'im Holdings include the foyer of the Theatre Studio. This has a boomerang-shaped ceiling and 13m-high walls of timber panelling.

The 2159m² Gallery Studio or Jendela exhibition space has a different look, with exposed, concrete floors and aluminium window louvres.

"The architect requested an aerodynamic look for the louvre blades," says Boey. "We sourced these from a company in Italy and had them flown to Singapore to be installed by a local representative." Even the fitouts of the smaller rooms were handled by Naa'im Holdings. These included the luxurious star dressing rooms, the Green Room, artist lounge and general dressing rooms.

The company also supplied and installed all the architectural finishes to public areas of The Esplanade Mall, the commercial zone of the complex. Key materials in this area are the aluminium perforated ceilings, gypsum plaster ceilings, timber railings and carpet designed and woven in Japan. Individual tenants were responsible for their own store fitouts.

Naa'im Holdings was originally established in Brunei more than 20 years ago. Today the company is based in Singapore and has a regional workforce of more than 250. Projects are undertaken throughout Southeast Asia and China.

For more information, contact Naa'im Holdings Pte Ltd, No 140/142 Tagore Lane, Singapore 787560. Tel: (+65) 6457 9991. Fax: (+65) 6457 1882.

When you are watching a live performance, a comfortable seat is almost as crucial to your enjoyment as the quality of the production. To complement the high standard of specification throughout The Esplanade, theatre seating from Furni-Sys Singapore was specified. Furni-Sys supplied custom-designed seats from Spanish manufacturer Ezcaray Internacional to meet a range of different requirements for both the Lyric Theatre and the Concert Hall, says Furni-Sys Singapore manager Philip Lee.

"The Esplanade model was developed specifically for the Singapore Government following design briefs provided by Theatre Projects Consultants of the UK," he says. "The design was based on the acoustic requirements determined by US-based Artec Consultants, while Vikas Gore of DP Architects in Singapore provided the aesthetic design forms."

Lee says the seat features some of the most advanced material available yet retains a classical theatre look.

"The Esplanade passed very stringent tests conducted in the UK, France, Spain and Singapore," he says. "It was designed with versatility in mind. Seats can accommodate different recline angles and come in varying seat widths. The seating can also be adapted to the three-dimensional, bowl-shaped floor of the auditorium, which was an important feature for this project."



The Esplanade bathrooms feature Toto porcelain sanitary-ware, manufactured in Japan and supplied by Inhwa Marketing of Singapore. The urinal bowls feature the new Toto flush valve.



The sound system supplied and installed by E&E includes portable systems with Soundcraft mixers.

Lee says Furni-Sys Singapore and Ezcaray Internacional are pleased to have been awarded the contract, which was based on the companies' competitive pricing, project experience and professional services.

For further information, contact Furni-Sys (Singapore) Pte Ltd, 50A Foch Rd, Singapore 209273, phone (+65) 6392 2100, fax (+65) 6392 0121.

In any performing arts centre, the sound system is a crucial design element and The Esplanade is no exception. Electronics and Engineering (E&E) was commissioned to supply and install state-of-the-art sound systems for all its venues. Managing director Ronald Goh says the sound system for the horseshoe-shaped theatre needed to cater for traditional Asian and Western performing arts as well as advanced multimedia presentations. The sound system for the Concert Hall, a premier venue for musical performances, required reverberation chambers and an acoustic canopy. E&E installed all the sound system equipment, including Shure microphones, a BSS Soundweb system and Crown MA Series power amplifiers, with an IQ network in the rack rooms. E&E also installed Crown K series power amplifiers, which meet the noise criteria of NC-15, for all the auditoriums. Cadac mixers, D&B and Meyer Sound speakers were provided in the Concert Hall and theatre, while Soundcraft digital mixing consoles, JBL and Tannoy speakers feature in other venues.

For details, contact Electronics & Engineering Pte Ltd, 285 Outram Rd, Singapore 169069. Tel: (+65) 6223 5873. Fax: (+65) 6225 3709.

The attention to detail that characterises The Esplanade fitout is evident in the choice of lifts and escalators. Otis Elevator Co supplied 18 escalators and 15 lifts for the project, including two cylindrical glass lifts with curved glass doors.

Otis managing director Stephane de Montivault says the company was able to meet the architects' special requirements for these lifts using components and resources from Otis operations in the United Kingdom, Germany and Italy.

"Although the glass lifts were pre-assembled in Otis' UK factory, the project was co-ordinated from Singapore. Co-ordinating the final installation with other contractors and obtaining clear access to the site was another major challenge," he says.

The glass lifts are direct-acting hydraulic lifts, with the hydraulic plunger installed directly below the lift car. This ensures the view from the lift is not blocked by a counterweight at the side. Lau says the curved-door design of the glass lifts is similar to lifts Otis installed at the MRT Expo Station - the only other site in Singapore to feature this design.

For more information, contact Otis Elevator Co (S) Pte Ltd, 11 Ubi Rd 1, #05-00 Meiban Industrial Building, Singapore 408723. Tel: (+65) 6298 7733. Fax: (+65) 6297 2646.

Personal comfort is taken for granted at The Esplanade - even the smallest rooms are equipped with the latest product lines from Japanese sanitaryware manufacturer Toto. Inhwa Marketing, the sole agent for Toto in Singapore for the past 20 years, supplied white porcelain sanitaryware for the bathrooms.

The Toto wash basins reflect the latest trend toward vessel designs that sit on top of the counter. They are complemented by chrome-plated sensor faucets that are designed to save water.



E&E has been a professional sound system and cinematographic equipment importer and contractor for more than 50 years. The company provides fully integrated, turn-key solutions with top-of-the-line pro-sound, AV, studio recording and stage lighting systems.



The sound system supplied and installed by E&E includes Crown power amplifiers in the rack room.

The Toto toilet installed throughout the complex incorporates a new Toto flush valve and is designed to cope with continuous use. Its simple, streamlined, wall-hung design ensures both the toilet and the floor are easy to clean.

Inhwa Marketing also supplied Toto urinal bowls for the bathrooms. These have a simple, neat styling and incorporate a similar Toto flush valve to the toilet. As with all the Toto products, they were chosen for their durability and looks.

Inhwa Marketing says Toto has been manufacturing sanitaryware since 1917.

For more details, contact Inhwa Marketing Pte Ltd, 476 River Valley Rd, Singapore 248361, phone (+65) 6735 6546, fax (+65) 6235 6645.

Websites:

www.enepl.com.sg
www.otis.com

Email Addresses:

naaim@singnet.com.sg
furnisgp@singnet.com.sg
enepl@enepl.com.sg



The spectacular Concert Hall canopy at The Esplanade features special effects finishes by Naa'im Holdings, the company responsible for much of the fitout.



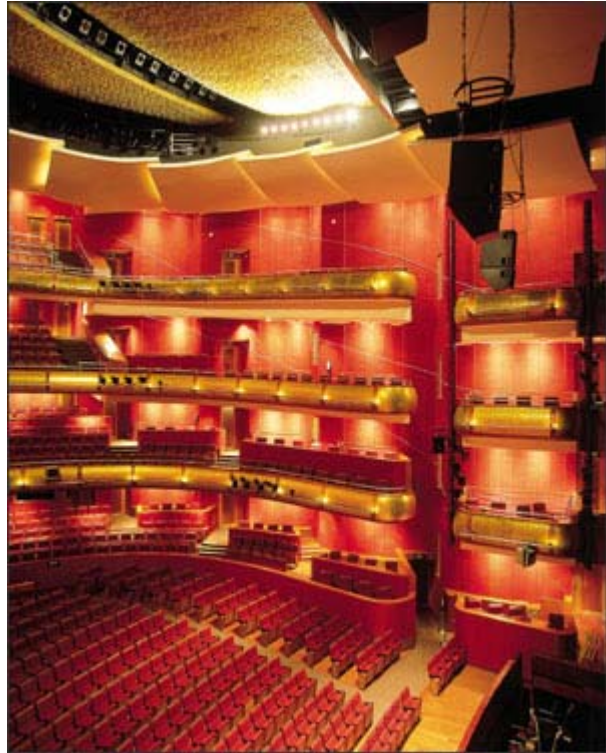
Large timber ribs were also supplied and installed by Naa'im Holdings.



The Concert Hall can seat 1800 people.



Naa'im Holdings was also responsible for the large ceiling panels in the Lyric Theatre. The moulded, fibrous glass-reinforced gypsum panels were designed to float within the ceiling space. They are supported within the space by 50 tonnes of steel.



As in traditional Italian opera houses, balconies are a feature of the Lyric Theatre.



The 2000-seat theatre is spread over four levels in an intimate horseshoe shape, and houses Singapore's largest performing stage. The stage platform incorporates two full-sized stages, which facilitate swift scene changes.



Constructing the elaborate ceiling for the Recital Studio was another project undertaken by Naa'im Holdings. The company says it needed to translate architectural concept drawings into a workable solution. The fan-shaped Recital Studio has retractable seating for up to 250 people.



Its wall and ceiling finishes are specifically designed to ensure the best possible acoustics.



The black-lined interior of the Theatre Studio provides a neutral backdrop for experimental theatre and dance.



The foyer of the Theatre Studio features a boomerang-shaped ceiling, constructed by Naa'im Holdings. The ribbed structure is floodlit at night.



Seating for both the Lyric Theatre (shown here) and the Concert Hall was custom-designed and manufactured for The Esplanade and supplied by Furni-Sys Singapore.



The Esplanade seating model was designed to accommodate the dish floor of the auditorium.



The Esplanade seating also features in the Concert Hall. Furni-Sys Singapore has provided seating for other sizable projects in Singapore, including The Rock Auditorium Suntec, Eng Wah Cinema Suntec, the Ministry of Education headquarters and the Asian Civilisation Museum. Ezcaray Internacional has been in business for 15 years and has furnished many projects in Europe and around the world.



Otis Elevator Co supplied and installed 15 lifts at The Esplanade, including two cylindrical glass lifts. The company says the lift controllers were sourced from Otis Germany, the hydraulic components from Otis UK and the architectural components from Otis Italy. The lifts were pre-assembled in the UK.



Otis also supplied and installed 18 escalators.



Otis escalator.



Timber finishes by Naa'im Holdings are a feature of the public spaces.



Curved ceiling panels in the commercial corridor were also built by Naa'im Holdings.



The dramatic panelled ceiling of the main lobby, was also constructed by Naa'im Holdings.