

# Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## ***Sneakertopia: Step Into Street Culture* kicks off at ArtScience Museum**

*Singapore's first sneaker and street culture exhibition spans 10 immersive zones with 13 never-before-seen artworks and rare shoe collections*



*More than 20 creatives and contributors were in attendance at the press conference, including Honor Harger, Vice-President of ArtScience Museum and Attractions, Steve Harris, CEO & Co-Founder of Sneakertopia, and Ross Leo, Co-Founder & Executive Director of SL Experiences*

**SINGAPORE** (23 February 2023) – Visitors can put their best foot forward and wander through a dynamic playground where sneakers, street culture, and art intersect at *Sneakertopia: Step Into Street Culture* – a larger-than-life exhibition making its Asian debut at ArtScience Museum this Saturday.

Having made waves at previous stops in Los Angeles and New York, *Sneakertopia* was the brainchild of Emmy Award-winning producer Steve Harris and Silicon Valley tech entrepreneur Steve Brown, who wanted to share their love for sneakers with people of all ages and backgrounds.

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Held in collaboration with ArtScience Museum, this iteration of *Sneakertopia* organised by SPACElogic with partners SL Experiences and Gushcloud International, is set to knock one's socks off as it assembles a dazzling line-up of local and international artists, creatives, contributors and brands.

The exhibition includes over 100 limited-edition sneakers and 70 murals, installations, designs, and original artworks – many of which have not been shown before. It celebrates the diversity of sneaker culture, traces its history and examines its powerful connections with various genres such as entertainment, technology, contemporary art, hip-hop, sports, and fashion.

On top of works by 13 renowned U.S. creatives including McFlyy, Michael Murphy, Mimi Yoon, Tommii Lim, and smoluk, *Sneakertopia* offers a perspective closer to home through 17 Singaporean and locally-based creatives and contributors.

From artists HURUHARA, Inkten, Juls, Kristal Melson, PHUNK, soph O, and tobyato, to DJ Kiat from SYNDICATE.SG, as well as designers Pek Shun Ping (ALIVEFORM), Josiah Chua, and Mr. Sabotage, the exhibition showcases the multi-talented creatives who have helped to establish the rise of sneaker and street culture in Singapore and Southeast Asia.

Among those featured, 13 of these artists and contributors are showcasing never-before-seen artworks in the exhibition – ranging from murals, prints, large-scale installations and sculptures to even a DJ mixtape with tracks selected based on hip-hop artists' influences and connections to sneaker culture. These works are shown alongside sneaker collections and artworks on loan from the likes of Mandeep Chopra, Founder and CEO of Limited Edt, The Culture Story, and award-winning popstar JJ Lin.

"Born on the streets, this is a show about self-expression, creativity, craft and collecting, and about how a humble rubber-soled shoe became the epicentre of a cultural zeitgeist. Sitting at the intersection of fashion, technology and art, the exhibition explores the significance of sneakers, why they became so highly covetable, and how they have inspired athletes and artists around the world – artists like our own pop sensation, JJ Lin, who we are thrilled to have in the show with a selection of his own rare sneakers, plus artworks by Banksy, Yayoi Kusama and more from his art collection. This is our latest collaboration with JJ Lin, following the opening of his pop-up cafe at ArtScience Museum last year," said Honor Harger, Vice President of ArtScience Museum and Attractions at Marina Bay Sands.

"The culture of the street is about living bravely, making bold choices, pushing boundaries and not being afraid to fail. We hope *Sneakertopia: Step into Street Culture* will become a place where people across generations, backgrounds, and borders can connect through their common appreciation of sneakers and street culture," Harger added.

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“Following the original launch of *Sneakertopia* in Los Angeles, SPACElogic is excited and honoured to bring this unique exhibition to Singapore and kick off the first leg of its Asian tour here. We are especially humbled to work with not just the renowned international artists from the first iteration of *Sneakertopia*, but also our talented local creatives, to curate a whole new concept specially for Singapore. Sneaker and street culture has evolved over the years, and it continues to be a universal symbol of status and self-expression. Through this exhibition, we hope visitors can experience how street art and sneaker culture have become part of our everyday community,” said Ross Leo, Co-Founder and Executive Director of SL Experiences.

Steve Harris, CEO & Co-Founder of *Sneakertopia*, said: “We are very excited to partner SL Experiences and Gushcloud for this exhibition at ArtScience Museum. Sneaker culture continues globally – it is cross-generational and unites all forms of self-expression.”



(From L to R): *The Frugal Pop-Up*, *The Dream Room*

Featuring 10 colourful zones, *Sneakertopia: Step Into Street Culture* will take visitors on a creative journey through the world of sneakers and all its connected cultures, inspiring them to leave their mark on each section as they come to embrace their creativity and self-expression. Detailed descriptions of each gallery and its highlights can be found [here](#), while a complete list of creatives and contributors can be found [here](#).

## **The Playground**

It is no surprise that sneaker culture has its roots in the sports industry. This zone pays homage to notable sports heroes in sneaker history such as LeBron James, Serena Williams and Michael Jordan, showcasing how collaborations between professional athletes, designers, and brands have led to the development of innovative sneaker designs.

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*The Playground*

In two never-before-seen showcases, Singapore streetwear legend, Mr Sabotage, displays his passion for sneaker collecting and customisation. In addition to sneakers from the original 1985 set of Nike Dunks, varsity pennants and jackets will be presented from his personal collection. Another display recreates a second-hand vintage cabinet from his SBTG studio, highlighting memorable moments in his career, influences in sneaker culture he had as a child, and brand collaborations.



*Mr. Sabotage's collection of Air Jordan 1s, customised sneakers, collaboration sneakers, Korean-manufactured soles, workshop tools and skateboards*

There are also 14 sneakers from a complete collection of Air Jordan 1s featured, along with tools from the SBTG workshop and his studio's discovery of a sole bearing Korean characters indicating that it was 'of the highest quality' – a sign of the state's important role in Nike's production chain during the 1980s.

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KICKflip (2019) mural by Jonas Never and Giant Skateboard (2019) sculpture by Steve Harris

Additionally, skateboarding is strongly represented in this gallery, with Tony Hawk and Lizzie Armanto performing kickflips and aerial acrobatics over a skate bowl. Alongside an interactive skateboard artwork by Steve Harris, this mural by prominent Los Angeles muralist Jonas Never honours the athletes' contributions to skateboarding and sneaker culture.

	<p><b>James Haunt</b>  <i>Posterised</i>          2019          Mural</p>
	<p><b>Ron Bass</b>  <i>Crowning of LBJ</i>          2019          Throne, sneakers, plastic roses, plastic bottles, chains, basketballs, spray paint, glue</p>

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## The Backlot



*The Backlot*

*The Backlot* showcases how sneaker culture has infiltrated the entertainment industry through films, television series, and media. This includes well-loved Hollywood films such as *Do the Right Thing* (1989), *Space Jam* (1996), and *Back to the Future II* (1989), where Marty McFly's futuristic kicks eventually became a reality with the Nike MAG designed by renowned American shoe designer Tinker Hatfield. It suffices to say that sneakers have transitioned from being part of various subcultures to a global cultural phenomenon due to the mass reach of the media.



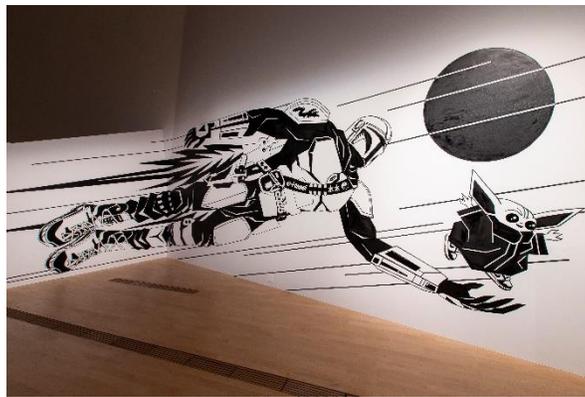
*JJ Lin's personal sneaker and art collection*

Visitors to this zone can also delight in the opportunity to see some of award-winning pop superstar JJ Lin's coveted collection of sneakers and art. As a lover of street culture, Lin has generously loaned rare sneakers and artworks by iconic contemporary artists such as Banksy, Yayoi Kusama, and Daniel Arsham. This installation aims to mimic the layout of a house, with *Laugh Now Door B* by Banksy serving as the 'front door', framed by smaller paintings – or 'windows' – by Eddie Martinez, George Condo, Shoko Nagazawa, and Yayoi Kusama.

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Available only at *Sneakertopia*, Lin has also specially curated apparel from the FW 2022 collection of his much-raved lifestyle label SMG for visitors to snag at the exhibition's concept store. Pronounced as 'smudge', SMG stands for 'Still Moving UnDer GunfirE', which recognises the pressures of life and enforces the belief of persevering in style, even in difficult situations.



MANDO (2023) by Tommii Lim

Meanwhile, *MANDO (2023)* by Tommii Lim will be unveiled for the first time, paying homage to the popular TV series *The Mandalorian*, which highlights themes of connection, family and adventure. The concept for Lim's artwork was inspired by a pair of sneakers that reminded Lim of his father, with the artist paralleling their relationship to that of Mando and Baby Yoda's. The artwork conjures joyful memories of their past encounters and imagines their journey together into new worlds.



## **McFlyy**

*M.J. Phone Home*, 2019  
*The Shoe Surgeon a.k.a. Godfather of Customs*, 2019  
*Shoe Addiction*, 2019  
*Gump*, 2019  
*The Future is Now*, 2019  
*Flight Club*, 2019  
Mural

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**Jahan Loh**

*Dragon Chasers*

2007

Digital prints on canvas, Vans x Jahan Loh sneaker sample prototype

## **The Art + Sole Gallery**

*The Art + Sole Gallery* is divided into two zones dedicated to creatives who have infused their works with a passion for sneakers. New York City in the 80s witnessed the rise of sneaker culture and a new generation of artists making waves in the international art scene, with the shoe serving as both a canvas and an inspiration for the creation of artworks.

The first zone focuses on sustainability, promoting the repurposing and upcycling of materials such as cardboard and deadstock fabrics in creating new works. The artworks prompt reflections on contemporary society, patterns of mass consumption, and hype culture as brands adopt more eco-friendly and innovative practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions caused by sneaker production.



*The Super Large Superstar (2023) by smoluk*

Inspired by sneaker culture and hip-hop music, Smoluk creates colourful sneaker sculptures using recycled materials, with the adidas Superstar and Nike Air Force 1s amongst her silhouettes of choice. These larger-than-life sneakers are a symbol of the widespread and unavoidable prevalence of sneaker culture in contemporary society, as reflected in sneakerheads who often

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amass 'kicks' and display them as if they are pieces of art. Her works also serve to denounce issues such as mass consumption and throwaway culture.

Created on-site specially for this exhibition, Smoluk will present her largest sneaker sculpture to date, made from locally collected recycled cardboard of all shapes and sizes.

	<p><b>Aeropalmics</b> <i>Main Character</i> 2023 Sculpture</p>
	<p><b>Josiah Chua</b> <i>DREAM 777</i> 2023 Sculpture</p>

During the 1980s, New York clamped down on street art and graffiti, declaring the city a 'graffiti-free zone' by 1989. In consequence, street artists including Futura, Jean-Michel Basquiat, and Keith Haring started painting in the suburbs, eventually getting into galleries and museums. The second *Art + Sole Gallery* fuses sneaker culture with street art, offering fresh takes on graffiti by a new generation of artists. While Mimi Yoon embraces femininity and the strength of women, Juls engages in mark-making and automatic drawing with references to tags and graffiti writing.

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	<p><b>Juls</b>  <i>Altered</i>, 2023  <i>Dooog</i>, 2023  <i>Caca Vide</i>, 2023  <i>Stuck Skate Klab</i>, 2023  <i>Ghost</i>, 2023  <i>Abacadabra</i>, 2023                      Mural and framed prints</p>
	<p><b>Mimi Yoon</b>  <i>Give A Girl the Right Shoes and She Can Conquer the World</i>                      2019                      Mural</p>

**Traverse Additional New Zones at Sneakertopia**

Exclusive to this iteration of *Sneakertopia: Step Into Street Culture* are three zones – *DIY/Expression*, *The Street*, and *Technology + Innovation*. Combined, they exhibit a variety of works by local creatives who explore different facets of art, street culture, and design innovation.



*The DIY/Expression zone*

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*DIY/Expression* embodies the spirit of collaboration and sharing of ideas that has always been practiced by artists, designers, athletes, brands, and celebrities associated with sneaker and street culture. The focus of this gallery is two Singapore-based creatives, soph O and Kristal Melson, who share a passion for subcultures, fashion, street art, and skateboarding. Their collaboration represents their responses to street culture.



(From L to R): *Regardless, the Streets are HERE (2023)* by HURUHARA; *A Myna Rebellion (2023)* by Sam Lo 'SKLO'

Meanwhile, *The Street* is an ode to the unique street art scenes that have developed in cities across Southeast Asia over time. In this zone, visitors are confronted with an overwhelming display and influx of visual noise depicting the flurry and commotion of city streets. Here, Sam Lo presents a large-scale sculpture of a myna bird and a mural on corrugated metal panels while HURUHARA presents an installation of artworks, objects, and archival videos of regional street artists.



(From L to R): *Monstera in various colourways* by Pek Shun Ping; *digital artworks* by Inkten

In *Technology + Innovation*, creatives whose practices incorporate technology and street culture are also presented. Visual artist Inkten has moved from painting on the streets to painting in

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Virtual Reality, highlighting digital artworks in her display, while Pek Shun Ping, a Singaporean designer, will showcase his 3D-printed shoe brand, ALIVEFORM.

## **Activity Space with Tell Your Children**

Additionally, *Sneakertopia: Step Into Street Culture* features an interactive and educational *Activity Space* designed in collaboration with creative studio, Tell Your Children (TYC), that invites visitors of all ages to explore sneaker culture throughout the past, present, and future.



*A Walk in Time (2023) mural by Tell Your Children*

*A Walk in Time* depicts six famous personalities wearing iconic sneakers, each representing a different subculture. By scanning a QR code and hovering a phone over the artwork, parts of the mural come to life.

Moving into the present, *Take a Sneak Pic!* offers visitors the opportunity to showcase their unique and individual style through their very own sneaker photoshoot. The images are then added to a growing archive of sneaker images that serve as a record of current fashion footwear choices.

Fast forward to the future, visitors can sign up for the *Sneaker Collage* masterclasses led by TYC, which explore new sustainable ways of looking at sneakers through the creative use of recycled materials.

## **Concept Store**

To commemorate the exhibition launch in Singapore, there will also be a concept store that holds a range of unique and exclusive collectables for visitors to take home a piece of *Sneakertopia* history. These include apparel from JJ Lin's lifestyle label SMG, rare sneakers from Limited Edt, and other merchandise.

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Visitors are invited to bring home a souvenir at the concept store

Produced in collaboration with homegrown designer-toy powerhouse ActionCity, exhibiting artists Sam Lo and tobyato are releasing their respective sculptures – *A Myna Rebellion* and *tobyato sneaker stone lions* – in the form of collectable art toys. This marks the first time audiences are able to collect their works in this form.

Found exclusively at *Sneakertopia*, they will be released in several batches, with the first launch featuring a highly collectable 'Artist Proof' edition that is limited to only three pieces per figure. Every piece is specially hand-painted to the colours of the original sculptures, with unique packaging and certificates designed by the artists. A general edition of both figures will be released to a wider audience in the near future, with other colourways and larger edition sizes.

Additionally, local creatives Kristal Melson, PHUNK and Mr Sabotage, will have their own personal merchandise sold in-store, while collectable t-shirts and stickers featuring artworks by other creatives can also be purchased.

## **Complementary programmes to *Sneakertopia*: *Step Into Street Culture***

In celebration of the marriage of film, sneakers, and street culture, a specially curated film programme will be ongoing at ArtScience Cinema on Level 4 throughout the exhibition run from 6 March to 30 July, with a range of blockbusters and arthouse selections for all audiences. This includes classics like *Space Jam* (1998) as well as recent favourites such as *Black Panther* (2018), *Spider-Man: Into The Spider-Verse* (2018), and more.

For booking details and more information on the film programme, please visit the website [here](#).

*Sneakertopia* will run from 25 February to 30 July 2023.

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## **Tickets and Reservations**

Tickets are available for purchase at all Marina Bay Sands box offices and website. Guests are strongly encouraged to pre-purchase tickets online prior to their visit.

Ticket prices are as follows:

	<b>SINGAPORE RESIDENT (SGD)</b>	<b>STANDARD TICKET (SGD)</b>	<b>SRL TICKET (SGD)</b>
<b>Adult</b>	18	21	14.70
<b>Concession</b>	14	16	11.20
<b>Family</b>	50	58	-

For more information on *Sneakertopia*, visit

<https://www.marinabaysands.com/museum/exhibitions/sneakertopia.html>

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### **About Marina Bay Sands Pte Ltd**

Marina Bay Sands is Asia's leading business, leisure and entertainment destination. The integrated resort features Singapore's largest hotel with over 2,200 luxurious rooms and suites, crowned by the spectacular Sands SkyPark and iconic infinity pool. Its stunning architecture and compelling programming, including state-of-the-art convention and exhibition facilities, Asia's best luxury shopping mall, world-class dining and entertainment, as well as cutting-edge exhibitions at ArtScience Museum, have transformed the country's skyline and tourism landscape since it opened in 2010.

Marina Bay Sands is dedicated to being a good corporate citizen to serve its people, communities and environment. As one of the largest players in hospitality, it employs more than 10,000 Team Members across the property. It drives social impact through its community engagement programme, Sands Cares, and leads environmental stewardship through its global sustainability programme, Sands ECO360.

For more information, please visit [www.marinabaysands.com](http://www.marinabaysands.com)

### **About ArtScience Museum**

ArtScience Museum is a major cultural institution in Singapore that explores the intersection between art, science, technology and culture. It is the cultural component of Marina Bay Sands. Since its opening in February 2011, ArtScience Museum has staged large-scale exhibitions by some of the world's major artists, including Leonardo da Vinci, M.C. Escher, Salvador Dalí, Andy Warhol and Vincent Van Gogh, as well as exhibitions that explore aspects of science and technology – including particle physics, big data, robotics, palaeontology, marine biology and space science. For more information, please visit [www.marinabaysands.com/museum.html](http://www.marinabaysands.com/museum.html)

### **About SL Experiences**

SL Experiences is a one stop Entertainment Design Entity, with the intent to bring the online world offline and into a larger than life reality, through immersive entertainment experiences.

As a subsidiary under SPACElogic Group, the entity covers licensing, production, business models, partnerships, curation, sponsorships and operations. We aim to craft and engineer the optimum experiential journey - not just for consumers but for all Key Partners and Stakeholders as well.

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The stalwart internal ecosystem of our Entertainment Design Entity allows for cohesive collaboration with Key Brand and Intellectual Property owners, whilst committed to the safeguarding of your brand integrity and core values.

## **About Gushcloud International**

Gushcloud International is a global technology-driven creator and entertainment company, focused on Influencer Marketing, Entertainment, Commerce. We connect audiences and brands to influencers and content creators through representation and management, brand strategy, marketing and activation services, media production, sales and distribution, licensing and co-creating significant IP in the content, media and event spaces.

The company has four units: Gushcloud Agency, Gushcloud Entertainment, Gushcloud Studios and GC Live. With more than 250 employees, Gushcloud International operates in 11 offices globally including Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Greater China, Australia and the United States of America.

## **About SPACElogic**

SPACElogic is a one-stop solution provider that specialises in interior, permanent gallery and museum fit-out projects. SPACElogic has built a strong foundation of trust and an excellent track record to deliver high standard services. SPACElogic collaborates with experts from various disciplines to co-create spatial stories, integrate visual aesthetics with technology, and in doing so craft out meaningful and engaging experiences. As thinkers and doers, SPACElogic thrives on ideas and solutions to create enthralling encounters in museums, commercial spaces and artistic environments.

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**For hi-res images, please click [here](#).** (Credit images as indicated in the captions)

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## Appendix I – Full list of participating creatives and contributors

US	Local
Adam Fu	Aeropalmics
Ben Fearnley	HURUHARA
David Kaul	Inkten
James Haunt	Jahan Loh
Jonas Never	JJ Lin
McFlyy	Josiah Chua
Michael Murphy	Juls
Mimi Yoon	Kiat (SYNDICATE.SG)
Ron Bass	Kristal Melson
smoluk	Mandeep Chopra
Steve Harris	Mr. Sabotage
Tommii Lim	Pek Shun Ping (ALIVEFORM)
Tyson Park	PHUNK
	Sam Lo 'SKLO'
	soph O
	Tell Your Children <i>*co-designer of Activity Space</i>
	tobyato