



# SINGAPORE Let's talk fashion: Homegrown designers gain recognition in retail scene

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KEEPERS: Singapore Designer Collective and the Digital Fashion Week are some of the platforms that showcase Singapore designs. Local designers say more of their products are being showcased in department stores, and they are also seeing higher sales volumes.

PHOTOS VIDEOS



KEEPERS: Singapore Designer Collective, located along Orchard Road. (Photo: Keepers/Facebook)

SINGAPORE: More homegrown fashion designers are attracting attention in the retail scene.

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KEEPERS is Singapore's largest retail pop-up store. Launched in September last year, KEEPERS aims to spotlight Singapore designers and raise their profile - not only among Singaporeans but also visitors.

Said Ms Lynette Lee, CEO of the Textile and Fashion Federation (TaFf): "The intention of setting up KEEPERS is really to house the biggest collection of Singapore designers in a prominent location so that both tourists and Singaporeans alike can have access to the amazing design talents that we have."

"From the first five months of operation, more than 100,000 visitors have visited KEEPERS, and out of these visitors, more than 80 per cent have indicated that they would like to see this as a permanent concept store," she added.

According to co-organiser TaFf, KEEPERS also enables the designers to hone their business management skills. Homegrown fashion brand Aijek said it saw a 50 per cent jump in monthly sales volume after being showcased at KEEPERS. It was also picked up by local department store TANGS.

### INCREASE IN REVENUE, RECOGNITION

Over at Carrie K., the artisan jewellery brand saw a jump in both revenue and recognition.

Ms Carolyn Kan, founder of Carrie K., said: "Year-on-year between 2013 (and) 2014, we have seen a 42 per cent increase in revenue and I would say that a large proportion of that has been a result of our brand awareness going up. I have had customers who walked in saying that they spotted us at KEEPERS and we have seen an increase in our website sales as well."

A recent survey by the Singapore Tourism Board showed that 85 per cent of those who had been to KEEPERS became more aware of local designers - and more than 60 per cent said they would be more likely to patronise them in the future.

Meanwhile, 80 per cent said they would like to see a similar concept on a more permanent basis in the future.

Second Minister for Trade and Industry S Iswaran announced on Tuesday (Apr 7) that KEEPERS would be extended for another 11 months to January 2016, to raise awareness of local designers and broaden the range of shopping options available to locals and tourists.

Digital Fashion Week, which live-streams fashion shows, has also been an exciting platform for local designers to reach out to both the local audience and beyond.

Held in collaboration with the British Council, it has supported more than 50 local fashion designers since its debut in Singapore in 2012.

- CNA/dl