Be inspired by French design and aesthetics

You may wonder, as you wander into the National Design Centre in Middle Road, if you are at a furniture showroom pop-up or an art and design exhibition. The lines might be blurred at the showcase, No Taste For Bad Taste, but there is no mistaking what it conveys — how art and creativity can be an intimate part of one’s life through objects of design.

The exhibition showcases the best of French design as part of the Voilah! France Singapore Festival. Presented by the Embassy of France in Singapore and supported by Singapore and French Institutions, the Festival presents the best of France-Singapore collaborations in areas such as culture and lifestyle.

The French design exhibition, launched in 2017 in Milan, has travelled to more than 10 cities and Singapore will be the only Southeast Asian stopover for the show. It features 40 design masterpieces by maestros such as Philippe Starck and Mathieu Lehanneur, as well as works by celebrated Singapore designer Nathan Yong for Ligne Roset.

The works are set in mini scenes that bring out aesthetic qualities such as *art de vivre*, panache and savoir faire. Read on for our pick of top five design pieces in the show that offer inspiration for life and living.

*Art de vivre* in French means the “art of living”, and which part in your home would you associate this quality with, other than the living room and its quintessential centre piece – the couch? This couch, named Ploum (2011), by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, is made of stretchable fabric, a poetic reference, perhaps, to the flux and flow of life.
This lamp, Forêt Illuminée (2011) by Ionna Vautrin for Superette, shines with a glow that might remind you of fairy tales of old. The intricate pattern on its lampshade casts shadows in the space, which create a transporting environment and invites you to let your imagination run free.

Why settle for a purely functional chair when it can also evoke angelic innocence and the romance of bucolic gardens? The back of the chair, Ange (2008) by Jean-Charles de Castelbajac for Fermob, features two winged cherubs, and on its seat is a poem inscribed in French.

Sustainability is a pressing issue and our homes can make a statement for it in style. The Andrea Indoor Air Purifier (2009) by Mathieu Lehanneur uses indoor plants, rather than artificial filters, to clean the air. The thoughtful design, which integrates living plants in a man-made vessel, turns the idea of man over nature on its head and instead, celebrates man with nature.
Unique to the Singapore leg of this exhibition is Break Stool (2006) by Nathan Yong for Ligne Roset. The chair, an experiment in form and function, shows how art in home design can serve as a conversation-starter and also as an expression of the owner’s personality.

Details about NO TASTE FOR BAD TASTE, so Starck, so Bouroullec… so le French Design here.

(Photos: Tate Anzur, Ligne Roset, Felipe Ribon, Fermob, Mathieu Lehanneur, National Design Centre)