



# Out of the Box



Four boutique graphic design firms make their mark with offbeat and cutting-edge multi-disciplinary works and campaigns. Here's what you need to know about them.  
By Terry Ong

**Its philosophy:** "We started out as a group of like-minded people with a desire to better life by creativity," says Ong. "We didn't deliberately set ourselves apart by deciding to be a certain way. On the contrary, we were open to possibilities—creativity unlimited by medium. In essence, this creates an environment of discovery, experimentation and collaboration."

**What it's most well-known for:** Over the years, fFurious has done many groovy ad campaigns for the likes for Style Asia and Centro 360, among many others. Most recently, the group's visual graphics and interactive touch screen experiences for National Museum were the talk of town. fFurious's art contributions to last year's *Fiction@Love* exhibition at Singapore Art Museum and *Spotlight Singapore* in Tokyo are also noteworthy.

## &Larry

**Where it is:** #04-01, 74 South Bridge Rd., 6536-0332.

**Who it is:** Led by creative director Larry Peh and Yeow Yeong, this tight newbie was formed only in 2005. But their clean and simple ad campaigns and designs have come a long way.

**Its philosophy:** "Our works are all about observing all the important trends—ranging from design, fashion, architecture to art—understanding them, taking them very seriously and totally ignoring or forsaking them in search of the most honest ideas and solutions that go beyond answering a brief," states Peh. "Our designs boast a modern, timeless appeal, with each project meticulously crafted to achieve a seemingly effortless design."

**What it's most well-known for:** Movie buffs will identify with &Larry's sleek, simplistic yet effective design for the movie poster of Royston Tan's *4:30*. But its most prominent project to date is last year's Christmas ad campaign for iFourum, which attempted to ditch the Martha Stewart D-I-Y approach for something simpler, focusing on the beauty of the imagination. It was an instant hit.

## Bunch

**Where it is:** 72 Monk's Hill Terrace, 6734-9752.

**Who it is:** Greater than the sum of parts, Bunch brings together a group of collective talents from various corners of the world—with Singaporean Chris Lim and Portuguese Paolo Silva based in Singapore. Its nine individual members offer distinctive approaches to design and diverse areas of design expertise, with two other offices in London and Zagreb.

**Its philosophy:** "Our broad client base, which comprises clientele such as Sony, Coca Cola, BBC, and Diesel, is witness to our nature of design," says Lim. "It underscores the diversity which creativity calls for. By not sticking religiously to a house style, as is the fate of many a design group, we have managed to remain versatile over the years; as opposed to falling into any particular industry, product, discipline or aesthetic. Bunch live work and play in a global fashion. So often is the case, a brief, big or small, will come back from all three corners of the world with vibrant takes on it each time. This enables us to deliver within borders what's needed without pandering to any cultural trends."

**What it's most well-known for:** The recent Promax UK 2006 Conference & Awards. Bunch's print, interactive mailers and set designs for the conference and award ceremony created a consistent and striking identity for the event. Other notable clients for the group include Resfest and DHR.

## Asylum

**Where it is:** 22 Ann Siang Rd., 6324-2289.

**Who it is:** Led by creative director Chris Lee, this nine-member outfit comprises a design firm and retail space located at Ann Siang Hill. Considered one of the hippest and forward-looking design firms, partly because of its various fashion and contemporary art ventures with brands like Fred Perry, Mihara Yashuhiro and Hooked Clothing.

**Its philosophy:** "I wanted a boutique company that could create great works for a multitude of clients because being in a big agency means that you only work for big clients," says Lee. "I guess the big difference is that we are truly cross-disciplinary. Our projects at any one time spread from graphic to interior to interactive to environment to packaging to music, etc. We also consciously look for small interesting clients or generate projects on our own to keep us sane."

**What it's most well-known for:** Too many to name, but some of Asylum's most prominent projects include the interiors of alfresco bar Loof, and cutting-edge designs for Microsoft and Nike. Meanwhile, hipsters love Asylum's retail store that combines high fashion, artworks, cool mags, rare furniture and other knick-knacks.

## fFurious

**Where it is:** 32A Sago St., 6225-0887.

**Who it is:** Led by creative director Little Ong, this six-member outfit works from a small office in Chinatown. Originally comprising just four members, fFurious has gone on to bigger things, and is even a resident artist for 72-13, TheatreWorks' forward-thinking multi-media arts platform.

