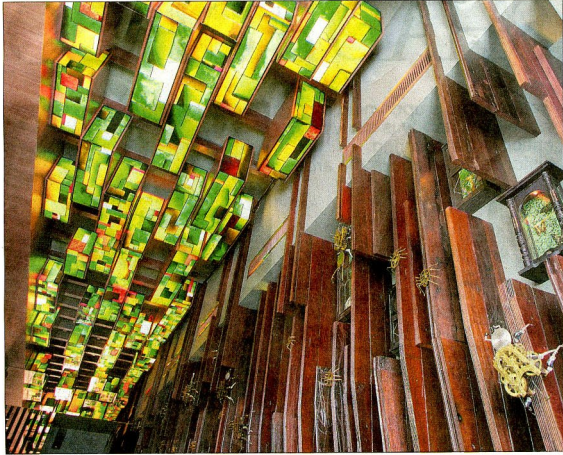


Artist Features: Zadok Ben-David (Israeli, London-based)  
Source: The Straits Times, Life! 22 September 2007, Page 12

The Straits Times Saturday, September 22, 2007

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Life!Design



JUNGLE LOOK: Artist Donna Ong's wall installation by the first-floor entrance, which mimics a tree trunk, is accompanied by artist Yuki Chong's stained-glass ceiling aimed at evoking a forest's canopy.

## Trunk call

The next time you check out The Majestic Bar, don't be surprised to find tree's company

Adeline Chia

THERE is a new permanent "resident" at The New Majestic Hotel. The 7.6m-tall outdoor steel sculpture of a man is mounted on the outside wall of the Chinatown hotel, but is actually part of the decor of its newly opened sister bar next door, The Majestic Bar.

The new watering hole, housed in a three-storey, 3,000 sq ft colonial shophouse in Bukit Pasoh Road, has been open for business since two weeks ago, but will be officially launched only towards the end of the year.

An atmospheric new addition to the street, the bar is an eclectic mix of contemporary art by Singaporean and international artists, all built around the theme of trees.

The design and artist selection was done by design studio Annex A and art consultancy Asian Art Options.



BUG ON BARK: This insect artwork made from the mechanical parts of a clock is among the smaller art pieces dotting Ong's wall installation.

sign studio Annex A and art consultancy Asian Art Options.

Artists commissioned to decorate the bar's interior include Singaporeans such as Jason Lim and Donna Ong, and acclaimed Israeli-British artist Zadok Ben-David, who did the outdoor sculpture.

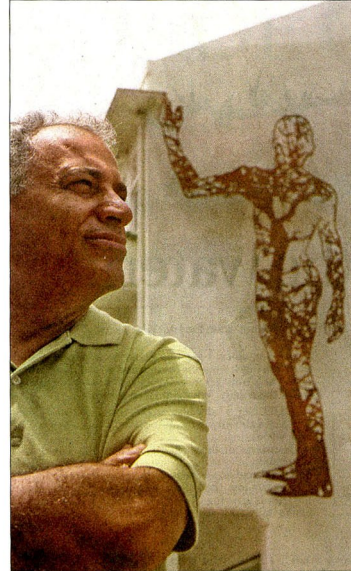
Owner Loh Lik Peng, 35, says he spent "more than \$1 million" buying the shophouse, but would not say how much the artworks cost.

He chose the tree theme because he was partially inspired by the "romantic sight" of a ficus tree growing into the building, which had to be removed as it was threatening the structure.

He says: "I hope that the bar will awaken the child in people, having such whimsical, fun elements."

One of the bar's most eye-catching elements, undoubtedly, is the outdoor sculpture which was

Continued on facing page



STEEL BEAUTY: The blood vessels of Israeli-British artist Zadok Ben-David's human-figure sculpture are actually outlines of tree branches. The artwork is part of the decor of The Majestic Bar.



BRANCH STORY: Styled after tree branches, the second floor of the bar features plywood booths that have tree-inspired table centrepieces and customised oak-leaf panel walls.

## It figures

From previous page

shipped in from Portugal, where it was made, on Thursday.

True to the organic theme of the bar, the sculpture is made of corten steel, a metal that rusts when exposed to the elements, but which also develops a protective layer to prevent it from crumbling. Over time, it will evolve from its present yellowish hue to a deeper shade of orange.

Sculptor Ben-David, who is based in London and Tel Aviv, often works with landscapes and human bodies in his flat, metallic works.

On why he chose to work with figures, the jovial artist, 58, says: "First of all, I'm a human being. People start from points of familiarity."

Some of his other works are large tree sculptures which, upon closer viewing, are made up of many small human figures functioning as "branches".

For the Majestic Bar sculpture, it is the reverse. The human form has arteries "growing" within it. The blood vessels are actually outlines of branches of trees he photographed in parks in North England during winter.

"Branches, trees or blood vessels, it's ambiguous. That's what makes an artwork interesting," he says.

> chiahta@sph.com.sg



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THE STRAITS TIMES SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2007

Architects are divided over the design merits of the wave-like canopy that will be the centrepiece in South Beach. This is the billion-dollar development that will spring up on a site that includes the former Beach Road Camp. TAY SUAN CHIANG reports. **page 11**

# MAKING WAVES



## Tree scape

A 7.6m steel sculpture of a man stands outside the new The Majestic Bar in Chinatown. ADELIN CHIA speaks to Israeli-British artist Zadok Ben-David about his stunning work.  
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The Straits Times, Life! Cover

131 Devonshire Road Level 2 Singapore 239887

T: +65 6372 0357 F: +65 6372 0356 info@asianartoptions.com www.asianartoptions.com