

## Wallpaper\* Handmade

A quirky lamp by a young Singaporean demands that users play with it to switch it on.

The harder you squeeze its ball-shaped knob in a series of pumping motions, the brighter the lamp glows. The light slowly fades when a plug at the rear is pulled.

The idea, says its creator Edmund Zhang, 26, is to design a responsive device that “gives the user some kind of relief”.

“I like the idea of injecting an animated quality into daily devices. I don’t see objects as inanimate. I feel they are alive in a way,” adds the recent graduate, who came up with the lamp for his final year industrial design project at the National University of Singapore.

His prototype, dubbed the Squeezy Lamp, came up tops last December in the Wallpaper\* Handmade Next Generation Designer competition, which is organised by the international design, fashion and lifestyle magazine Wallpaper\*.

It is the first time Singapore designers were invited to contribute to the London-headquartered magazine’s 2018 Handmade exhibition.

The Squeezy Lamp was chosen from pieces by more than 40 up-and-coming Singapore designers from fields such as architecture, fashion and product design.

The prototype is made from resin plastic, silicone rubber and electrical components such as a micro-



controller, light-emitting diode, and pressure and proximity sensors. It cost him around \$500 – most of which went into purchasing the electrical components and 3D-printing the lamp’s resin plastic body.

Zhang, who is now doing freelance design work, tells *The Straits*

Times he is “fascinated” by the gesture of squeezing – there is something “quite satisfying” and therapeutic about it.

Take, for example, squeezing a baby’s hand, playing with a stress ball or juicing a lime.

This is a lamp that does its job, but users will be hard-pressed not to

appreciate its cheeky side.

“There were a few sexual jokes (from my friends),” he adds sheepishly. “One of my professors was quite amused by it.”

Wallpaper\* will partner him with a specialist manufacturer, who will produce a fully functional Squeezy Lamp in time for the Wallpaper\*

### VIEW IT / WALLPAPER\* HANDMADE RETREAT

WHERE: Gillman Barracks,  
9 Lock Road

WHEN: Thursday to May 31,  
noon to 7pm; closed on  
Mondays

ADMISSION: Free

Mr Edmund Zhang with his Squeezy Lamp, which lights up when the user squeezes its ball-shaped knob in a series of pumping motions. ST PHOTO: LEE JIA WEN

**ST** SCAN TO  
WATCH  
How Edmund  
Zhang’s Squeezy  
Lamp works.



Handmade show at the Salone del Mobile Milan furniture fair next month.

In June, the lamp will return to Singapore as part of the Handmade on Tour exhibition.

Meanwhile, it is one of seven Singapore works that will be on display at the Wallpaper\* Handmade exhibi-

tion at Gillman Barracks from Thursday. The others are by established creatives who were invited to take part: Studio Juju, Stolen, The-seus Chan, Olivia Lee, Gabriel Tan Studio and Woha.

In line with the exhibition’s 2018 theme of “Wellness and Wonder”, their pieces range from Fruit Altars consisting of steam-bent beech, each fashioned to hold a specific fruit; to Meridian Mettlach, an arrangement of walking tiles inspired by the Chinese art of reflexology.

The rest of the show will feature Wallpaper\* Handmade Classics – a collection of specially commissioned pieces that made their debuts in Milan and became big hits.

Wallpaper\* Handmade was launched in 2010 to encourage talented young designers, craftspeople and makers from around the world to create beautiful and one-off pieces – by commissioning these items of furniture, fittings, fashion and more. This is the second year the exhibition is coming to Singapore.

“With Singapore now on our radar as one of the fastest developing design destinations, Wallpaper\* looks forward to showcasing and celebrating the city-state’s dynamic and creative spirit,” Wallpaper\* brand and content director Tony Chambers says.

Ms Agnes Kwek, executive director of DesignSingapore Council, says Zhang’s winning piece will “show the world that Singapore designers are capable of combining functionality and whimsy to create innovative and meaningful products that can make our lives better”.