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# PRIVATE MUSEUMS AND POP-UP EXHIBITIONS ARE NOT THE ONLY MODELS TO GO IN PRESENTING PRIVATE COLLECTIONS. SATINDER GARCHA AND HARPREET BEDI LEAD THE WAY WITH HÔTEL VAGABOND.

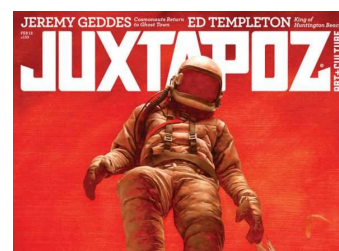
In Singapore, art collectors and hotel owners Satinder Garcha and Harpreet Bedi share their private collection, show their commitment to culture and shake up the art and cultural ecosystem through their newly-developed property, hôtel vagabond.

Private museums and pop-up exhibitions are not the only models to go in presenting private collections. Satinder Garcha and Harpreet Bedi lead the way with hôtel vagabond – a property designed by celebrated French architect and interior decorator, Jacques Garcia. The hotel serves as home and vessel for sharing their collection of over a thousand contemporary art pieces including works by Julia Calfee (in residence at the property during its opening in January 2016), Marco Lopez, Franck Le Rey and Michael Platnic with a wider audience.



Discover the stunning collection, which includes Michel Platnic’s After “Three Studies for Portrait of Lucian Freud, 1965”, 2013

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Satinder Garcha and Harpreet Bedi firmly believe that art needs to be dynamic and in conversation with the society around it, so hôtel vagabond is also the first hotel in Singapore to initiate an Artist-In-Residence program, welcoming artists, musicians, writers and creatives from all over the world. Shortlisted artists are invited to stay in tenure for periods ranging from a weekend to up to three months in a fully-equipped artist atelier. Artists are selected based on the prerequisite that “they have to tell an interesting story,” as told in a conversation we had with Harpreet Bedi, “in a language we all understand”.



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Stay in any one of the suites of the Hotel, and you'll be surrounded by an amazing array of contemporary art pieces

Like all good art, this is an on-going and highly experimental process. Harpreet shared an experience with hosting salon sessions with a Frenchspeaking- only artist in residence – “didn't really work,” as well as they'd hoped. Her creations were beautiful, but in the absence of a translator, the narrative was less compelling for guests, and one-sided rather than an exchange. Still, Harpreet's vision of pushing boundaries, creating new content and experiences (or trouble), and encouraging connection has not abated. Guests and creative cognoscenti on visit are welcome to schedule business meetings during the daily Lady Boss High Tea (3 – 5 pm, SGD10 nett for walk-in visitors but complimentary for staying guests) hosted by Harpreet herself.



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There is also the chance for all who visit the hotel to interact and engage with artists in residence every evening; to spark rounds of heated discourse on art anytime – all at the Vagabond Salon.

Enjoy a cult film at Vagabond Salon every weekend

The Salon as a spatial concept is dynamic – one moment seating may be arranged in theatre-style for a film-screening or a talk; another moment the seating is set cluster-style for dinner or positioned in rows for a fashion show.

Harpreet is welcome to new ideas and initiatives at the Salon, and deciding what's next often occurs as a collaborative process. What you can look forward to – a scintillating, immersive dinner theatre experience called “Expect the Unexpected”, which has been designated an official event on the Singapore Grand Prix calendar by the Singapore Tourism Board. Harpreet, ever the visionary, hopes this will pioneer a thriving dinner theatre scene in Singapore.

Opulent and sensual, hôtel vagabond is the perfect playground for the theatrical and fun-loving – Artwork by Julia Calfee

Be wowed by the vision of world-renowned designer Jacques Garcia

There is not a dull moment at hôtel vagabond. During the two hours that we were there, we 1. almost made a decision to book the entire property; 2.were interrupted by an alarm that went off that originated from a tampered safety vault a former accountant had stolen money from; 3. established that anything that could happen would happen at hôtel vagabond.

Adapting to change, exploring new possibilities, and going beyond personal comfort zones to nurture the hotel's artistic and social stakeholders, seem to be the strategies that the hôtel vagabond team perceive to be essential in moving the cultural scene forward – but not without a generous dose of passion and fun, which are intrinsically embodied at the heart of the values that hôtel vagabond and the three other upcoming Garcha Hotels share.

The way we see it, the anchorage of hôtel vagabond in the Central Heritage District at the intersection of Little India and Kampong Glam, in addition to her promotion of world-class cultural (even boundary-pushing) content and programming, and the engagement with her community has helped contribute to Singapore's cultural capital by placing the city on the global map by exceeding expectations as a warm host and cultural ambassador in the competitive tourism sector. These indicators reflect well of Singapore's climatic condition for experimentation, innovation and growth in her pursuit of striking a balance between economic development and cultural development.

**Veronica Neo**

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