

Sculptural loop of 1,200 'butterflies' sets NTU campus aflutter



[Video](#): Loop is the latest sculpture on NTU's Campus Art Trail.

A new sci-art sculpture imitating the fluttering of butterflies on the lush green campus of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore (NTU Singapore) was unveiled today.

Comprising 1,200 magenta and purple butterflies mounted on aluminium and that move with the wind, Loop is a 4.5-metre tall work that evokes the mathematical infinity sign.

It is the latest addition to a growing collection of eco-friendly installations on the university's Campus Art Trail, and was commissioned following a gift to the university from the late Dr John and Mrs Dorothy Cheung, both former NTU faculty members.

Loop is displayed at the Arc, NTU's learning hub, and was designed by NTU students to complement the Arc's sleek flowing outline.

NTU President Professor Subra Suresh said, "Loop is a wonderful combination of art and science that blends beautifully into our green campus. I can't think of a more fitting way to represent the support of the arts at NTU by John and Dorothy Cheung. We are truly grateful to them for the legacy they have left us."

The 'butterflies' on the Loop flutter in the breeze as they are made of aluminium, a light material. The sculpture is named after the Möbius loop, a one-sided surface with only one boundary in mathematical concepts.

In a 2017 class assignment to design an art piece suitable for the Arc, students from the School of Art, Design and Media (ADM) Kerin Ng, Ker Ziyi and Jassmine Ng (all of whom have since graduated) came up with the idea for the "Loop", and developed it under the supervision of Fabrizio Galli, Visiting Artist and former faculty member of ADM.

Loop is the latest addition to NTU's Campus Art Trail which now consists of more than 50 artworks all over the campus, including artworks located at the National Institute of Education.

Loop is also part of NTU's collection of interdisciplinary artworks that is sustained by nature. Other artworks in this collection include Bloom, an interactive art piece where LED lights change colour according to weather conditions, and Dandelion, a seven-metre tall light installation, both powered by solar energy. Another is Fern, a bench shaped like a fern equipped with photovoltaic panels to allow users to charge their electrical devices.

Besides the Campus Art Trail that was launched last year, the university has also previously announced the NTU Global Digital Art Prize, a biennial competition that encourages the use of digital art and creativity to illustrate Industry 4.0 and its opportunities and challenges. The winners of the inaugural Global Digital Art Prize are expected to be announced at the end of 2019.

Professor Suresh said, "Art provides a platform to challenge boundaries and traditions. It is a way of expressing, communicating and exploring the human condition."

Donation by late former faculty members

Fabrication of Loop was made possible by a gift of over S\$100,000 from the late Dr John and Mrs Dorothy Cheung to the "Public Art on Campus" fund. The couple had also supported other arts activities at NTU, such as the Dorothy Cheung Art Appreciation Series, which included talks, workshops and exhibitions by arts academics; and the Dorothy Cheung Concert Series where local and international musicians perform in lunchtime concerts.

For their donation to the NTU Museum, Dr John and Mrs Dorothy Cheung received the 2018 Patron of Heritage Award by the National Heritage Board.

Ms Doreen Lye, sister of Mrs Dorothy Cheung, said, “John and Dorothy have always been ardent proponents for the arts when they were in NTU. They both are convinced of the healing benefits the arts bring to individuals. I know their admiration for students who take up the arts, and that the students will always gain their support. Knowing that their support is bearing fruit through the launch of the Loop is wonderful, even if they cannot be with us to celebrate this launch. I am glad that their legacy lives on.”

Both avid lovers of the art, Dr John and Mrs Dorothy Cheung were former faculty members of NTU’s School of Mechanical and Production Engineering and School of Civil and Structural Engineering respectively from the 1980s to 2000s.

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