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ADVERTISING FEATURE



Opening Day

Ribbon cutting ceremony at Aberdeen Centre attracted hundreds of people and dozens of local dignitaries. Aberdeen, the brainchild of Thomas Fung, marries eastern Asian concepts with western sensibilities. Aberdeen features the first North American Daiso store, below.



Aberdeen Centre architect Bing Thom, right, chats with Fairchild TV news director Winnie Hwo while checking out the bargains at Daiso during grand opening of Aberdeen Centre.



New lease on life

By MICHELLE HOPKINS
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Aberdeen Centre's architect Bing Thom feels like a woman who just gave birth.

"After 18 months of labour, the dream is realized," said Thom, at the grand opening Friday of the new and improved 380,000-square-foot Asian mall on Cambie Road.

"This mall is more than a mall ... it's a community centre that welcomes everyone."

Thom said the concept behind the mall's \$100 million renovation is to celebrate movement, rather than trap customers inside a static centre.

To accomplish this, the project demanded a close-knit team approach.

"The art was first to have a strong concept and to build on that," he said.

Amidst the fanfare and pomp, Thomas Fung, chairman and CEO of mall owner, the Fairchild Group, was praised for his vision and for setting standards that, all agreed, are world class.

"When we built Aberdeen Centre back in 1989, our goal was to create the first truly Asian shopping experience in the Lower Mainland," Fung said.

"Our success has inspired us to look beyond cultures, to recreate and redefine a new type of retail mall and entertainment experience."



DEAN BROUGHTON/RICHMOND NEWS

Cutting the ribbon Friday, Mayor Malcolm Brodie, left, was joined by Aberdeen Centre's owner Thomas Fung, third from left, and dignitaries from Daiso, the store's major commercial anchor.

Fung said his vision was to embrace the best of East and West, and build a mall that typifies multiculturalism.

To that end, Fung has travelled the world to bring together the best retail merchants from around the world.

On Friday, guests were treated to the sight of a singing waterfall, similar to the Bellagio Hotel's in Las Vegas.

This one, though, dances to the sounds of O Canada.

Then Fung and a number of local and provincial dignitaries, including Mayor Malcolm Brodie, MLA Joe Peschisolidi, former MP Raymond Chan, and city councillors, together cut the red and gold ribbon — officially opening the centre for business.

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