

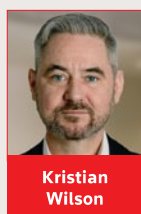
## ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS

# SINGAPORE FIRMS TO WATCH 2023

As Singapore's economy continues to grow and diversify, there has been an increasing demand for niche legal services. Boutique firms have been able to capitalize on this trend by providing specialized expertise and personalized attention to their clients. In its annual list, ALB is spotlighting such firms that have stand out in the crowd and continued to make an impact on the market. The list is in alphabetical order and some firms have been profiled.

LIST BY ASIAN LEGAL BUSINESS, TEXT BY BINGQING WANG

**BEDELL CRISTIN**  
**BIH LI & LEE**  
**BLACKOAK**  
**BLACKSTONE & GOLD**  
**BTPLAW**  
**CHP LAW**  
**DAVID LLEWELYN & CO**  
**DUXTON HILL CHAMBERS**  
**ENG AND CO**  
**EUGENE THURASINGAM**  
**FOCUS LAW ASIA**  
**FULLERTON LAW CHAMBERS**  
**GATEWAY LAW CORPORATION**  
**GLORIA JAMES-CIVETTA & CO**  
**ICON LAW**  
**JOSEPH LOPEZ**  
**JOSEPH TAN JUDE BENNY**  
**JURISASIA**  
**KING & WOOD MALLESONS**  
**PK WONG & NAIR**  
**PROVIDENCE LAW ASIA**  
**RAJAN CHETTIAR**  
**REMY CHOO CHAMBERS**  
**REV LAW**  
**RUBICON LAW**  
**WTS TAXISE**



Kristian Wilson

### BEDELL CRISTIN

Bedell Cristin is a leading offshore law firm with expertise in Jersey, Guernsey, Cayman and BVI law. Its Singapore office was opened in 2012 to strengthen its presence and commitment to the wider Southeast Asia region, and is currently led by Kristian Wilson and Joanne Verbiesen supported by local non-fee earners and colleagues in the wider group.


Besides several significant, senior and strategic hires across all its areas of practice, the firm has also increased headcount in its non-fee earning team in anticipation of future expansion in the current year.

During its ten years in Singapore, Bedell Cristin has skillfully assisted its clients to navigate the substantial changes in the international and offshore regulatory environment in a considered and commercial manner. It offers legal assistance to manage and avoid issues related to shareholder disputes, business failures, and complex transactions in the virtual assets space, arising from the challenging global economy.

Bedell Cristin has is distinguished by its strong corporate practice, having advised on a number of joint ventures, financing transactions and large M&A deals in the region as well as providing technical regulatory and legal advice to clients including listed companies.

Many of these deals have been commercially significant. For instance, the firm acted as BVI counsel (supporting White & Case) to Gopher Investments in relation to its \$250 million acquisition of Finalto, the financial trading division of Playtech, an AIM listed company. The firm also acted as counsel to Blue Ocean (a subsidiary of Ying Peng Hui Kang Fund) in its capacity as a 65.4 percent shareholder in Global Cord Blood Corporation (an NYSE listed company) in relation to a winding-up petition, injunctive relief, and related proceedings in the BVI and the Cayman Islands.

The Singapore office of Bedell Cristin is notable for its partner-led approach, with fee earners who have real offshore experience, as well as experience from leading law firms and commercial entities. This distinguishes the firm in terms of the quality and experience of its staff and the caliber of their advice. The firm has a strong connection to the wider community, having been in Singapore for ten years, and is involved with several local projects and industry bodies.

Bedell Cristin is also recognized for the collegiality of its lawyers and their cross-border collaboration. This approach amplifies the position of the Singapore office as it is a gateway to the wider firm and has strong support from all offices. 

media and telecommunications, shipping, international trade, commodities, mining, oil and gas, construction, engineering, and F&B.

Building on the longstanding expertise in shipping and maritime, building and construction, international trade, in particular commodities, and energy matters, the firm has worked with its worldwide associates to assist clients across numerous jurisdictions by providing them legal, commercial and strategic solutions across multiple continents.

In the recent year, the firm has considerably expanded its clientele in the European and American markets and set foot in a wider range of practices beyond its traditional competency, such as crypto-related issues and insolvency proceedings in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic.

One ongoing matter that the firm is handling is a Singapore-seated arbitration under the SIAC Rules on alleged breaches of a corporate guarantee related to two JVAs for complex financing arrangements valued at approximately \$121 million.

The firm represented and defended one of the largest Bruneian marine offshore support companies in the oil and gas industry against the claimant of a special purpose vehicle of a global investment manager based in the United States managing around \$50 billion worth of assets on behalf of almost 2,000 institutional clients and private investors.

The proceedings are still underway despite having commenced more than six years ago. The substantive dispute involves novel legal issues on guarantees that were only canvassed in very recent English case law. In addition, advanced post-evidentiary hearing procedural and jurisdictional issues are being dealt with by the SIAC.

Aside from setting aside and/or enforcement proceedings arising from Singapore seated arbitrations under the SIAC Rules in connection with transactions and ownership of shares amounting to multi-million dollars in total that the team expect to be involved in, the firm also continues to be engaged in trials for various cross-border commercial

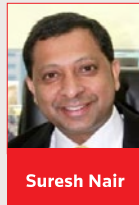
disputes, including a New York seated arbitration under the AAA Rules with a claim amount of almost \$70 million, a London seated arbitration under the LCIA Rules with a claim amount of over \$18 million, and a Singapore seated arbitration under the SIAC Rules in respect of a claim purportedly subject to insolvency under the Indian National Company Law Tribunal in India. <sup>ALB</sup>



Mark Wong

## PK WONG & NAIR

PK Wong & Nair is a premium, full-service law firm that traces its roots back to 1986 with the establishment in that year of the firm of PK Wong & Advani, later PK Wong & Associates, and the merger of that firm with Nair & Co LLC on 1 January 2020. The firm has since grown in size and capability and on 1 January 2023, PK Wong & Nair established its Joint Law Venture with Mayer Brown LLP (the "Mayer Brown JLV").



Suresh Nair

With the Mayer Brown JLV, the firm has been able to exponentially widen its international reach and service offering. This is the first Joint Law Venture in Singapore in nearly 7 years and enables the firm to work cohesively with Mayer Brown's global network of offices to offer clients practical and innovative legal solutions.

The firm's expertise has been sought after in a number of major deals, including the proposed \$750 million restructuring of Antanium Resources. This case has raised a number of novel issues, such as whether or not super priority is available for arbitration funding and whether a scheme of arrangement may impose new obligations on scheme creditors to make contributions to operational expenses.

Some other prominent matters that the firm has recently handled include acting for British Malayan Trustees as trustee of Unsecured Notes valued at S\$70 million (\$52.04 million) issued by Laguna National Golf & Country Club, and acting for the Singapore branch of Crédit Agricole Corporate and Investment Bank in a \$23 million dispute

involving English Law in the Singapore International Commercial Court in 2022.

The firm, led by Mark Wong, Suresh Nair and the team of accomplished directors, is committed, together with its joint venture partner Mayer Brown, to provide top legal and industry knowledge and expertise to all clients worldwide. <sup>ALB</sup>



Remy Choo

## REMY CHOO CHAMBERS

Incorporated in July 2022, Remy Choo Chambers is a boutique dispute resolution firm that prides itself on punching above its weight.

Despite having recently commenced operations, the firm has handled a number of notable disputes, including successfully acting for a Vietnamese HNWI in a dispute against two leading financial institutions involving an amount in excess of S\$34 million (\$25 million); successfully defending the founder of Indonesia's largest micro-financing companies in a commercial dispute involving over S\$14 million in the Appellate Division of the High Court; successfully advising a Fortune 500 company in resisting an invalidly exercised option to renew a contract valued at upwards of S\$20 million against a state-linked entity in Singapore; and acting for the founder and director of one of the world's leading cryptocurrency financial service providers in the General Division of the High Court in ongoing proceedings involving crypto-assets exceeding \$55 million in value.

The firm comprises a team of dispute resolution specialists who have acted for private clients and corporations in both commercial disputes and white-collar criminal matters. With seasoned trial and appellate litigator Remy Choo at the helm, the team combines premier litigation solutions with personalized client care and nimbleness in execution.

One of its clients, the founder of a private wealth management company, describes the firm as a "best-in-class litigation firm" staffed by driven and strategically minded litigators who execute "like clockwork". <sup>ALB</sup>