


HYPE



ISSUE 29 AUG-OCT 2009

LADYGAGA

QUEEN OF ELECTROPOP

BAYBEATS 2009

DJ INQUISTIVE

FASHION WORD NARCOLEPSY

SHERLOCK HOLMES

FROM PRINT TO SCREEN



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#03-105/106, #04-116/117
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ION Orchard, #B3-45/46
Jurong Point, #03-05, #03-47/48
Parkway Parade, #02-26
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Yishun 10, #01-04

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FOURSKIN

The Heeren, #04-33

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Crystal Jade Restaurant)
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Serene Centre, #01-03

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Tower 1, #04-01

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#01-04

TIMBRE@THE SUBSTATION

45 Armenian Street

THE FIREPLACE@CHINATOWN

268 South Bridge Road

WALA WALA CAFE & BAR

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EDITOR'S NOTE



PHOTOS BY CHEONG JIAHUI

All editorial and design requests for the February issue of hype should be received by 18 Dec 2009.
All advertising bookings and materials should be received by 1 Jan 2010.

LOVE on first bite: & a piece of peace



The simple, tranquil and rustic charms of rurality have long been forgotten; skyscrapers and posh restaurants now dot the streets of our tiny island. **Amber Chan & Isaac Tan** bring you two places in Singapore that are quietly tucked away from the flurry of our cityscape. Perfect for chomping away and romantic dates.



SUNSET GRILL AND PUB

Hidden within the East Camp in Seletar Airbase, sitting quietly beside a fenced up airstrip is Sunset Grill and Pub, also home to magnificent sunsets.

With its humble decor and mismatched furniture, this is one place for lovers to go on an unpretentious date. Off the beaten track, this restaurant has none of the snooty vibes most fancy restaurants ooze; the food and setting actually feel like part of home. Be sure to arrive around 6pm to catch the sunset in time.

APPETITE

■ Spicy Buffalo Wings (\$17.50)

Start your meal with the spicy buffalo wings that Sunset Grill and Pub is famous for. There are ten levels of spiciness to choose from. The first level of wings looked and smelt absolutely lethal. They were greasy mounds of crispy redness that seemed to glow. Don't mind their appearance, for they will get you hooked. Juicy, flavourful and pretty spicy, the heat builds up with each bite you take. Add \$0.50 for each subsequent level up.

There is even a mystery level 30 for gutsy diners where, if reached, they get to sign their names on certificates to prove they've tried the spiciest wings. These certificates are pasted on the 'Hall of Flame' wall inside the restaurant. Remember, though, that potential side effects include severe stomachaches, swollen lips and fainting spells. You have been warned.

■ BLT Sandwich (\$11.50)

Imagine long, juicy strips of bacon tucked between fresh lettuce and salty melted cheese. This divine combination is then sandwiched between three slices of fresh, perfectly-toasted bread. Served with a side of fries and salad sprinkled with pepper, the BLT sandwich is worth every cent.

■ Beef Lasagna (\$17.50)

The serving is too big for one so you can share it with your date. The layer of cheese covering the pasta is crisp on top, thick and gooey underneath, and leaves stringy strands when eaten. The pasta and beef are average at best, but its fresh and flavourful cheese sets it apart from other lasagne.



SUNSET GRILL AND PUB

Address: 140B Piccadilly, Seletar Airbase, East Camp, Singapore Flying Club
Contact: +65 6482 0244

OPENING HOURS

Open from 4pm – late, closed on Tuesdays



PHOTOS BY ISAAC TAN



PRIVÉ BAKERY CAFÉ

Sunrises nestle gently against the cradling waves as you take time to revel in the astounding beauty of your surroundings and your date. Enjoy great food in the luxurious comforts of the elegantly designed Privé Bakery Café with amazing scenery that is just too good to be true.

The journey to Privé starts your date on a crescendo. A nice stroll along Keppel Bay Drive reveals the beauty of the Marina at the end of the road.

Every step along the colossal Keppel Bay Bridge transports you further away from the bustling concrete jungle to a relaxing postcard-worthy backdrop. Take time to soak up the sun, drink in the salty sea breeze and soon you'll forget all that's unimportant in life and focus on the star of the night - your lovely date.

And as the night beckons, Privé starts to come alive. The beautiful tealight-lit atmosphere sets the mood for good dinner conversation. With great food, comfortable seating and one of the best views in Singapore, who could really ask for more?

PRIVÉ BAKERY CAFÉ

Address: No 2 Keppel Bay Vista, Marina at Keppel Bay

Contact: +65 6776 0777

OPENING HOURS:

Sun to Thur & PH: 9am - 12mn (last order 11.30pm)

Fri, Sat & eve of PH: 9am - 1am (last order 12.30am)



APPETITE

■ The N.Y Burger (\$32.00)

The succulent taste of 200g of Wagyu beef lightens up your taste buds. As the food is served, you can't help but appreciate the aroma of freshly baked bread. After all, Privé Bakery Café is a bakery. The portion is decent and the burger buns are soft and sweet on their own. Along with the tangy tomato relish, Wagyu beef and cheddar cheese, the dish is immensely satisfying.

■ Tiramisu (\$7.00)

Although small in serving, the cup of tiramisu sure packs a punch. After the first few tastes, the warmth of the coffee liquor creates a fuzzy feeling in your throat and soothes you into a languid, relaxed state without making you foolishly drunk by the end of the night. The soft but rich texture of the mascarpone layer, the delectable sponge cake and the intensity of the coffee liquor in the small glass makes this sweet treat sinfully luscious.

■ Slipper Lobster Linguine (\$25.00)

If you are up for seafood, this will be a good pick. The lobster meat is fresh, the meat holds together and is nowhere near flaky. Chunks of lobster can be found in proportion to the pasta as well. Also, the light tomato base does not overpower the lobster meat nor leave you feeling too full. That said, the fishy smell of the crustacean may not be liked by some.

■ Peanut Butter and Jelly Milkshake (\$11.00)

Probably one of the best items on the menu, the clever transformation of the sandwich into a milkshake (without the bread, of course) is pleasantly appetising. The sweet and savoury peanut butter does not overpower, while the jelly remains sweet. We suggest taking a large sip and let your tastebuds caress their way through the delectable slush. Due to its large portion, it's a perfect drink for you and your date to share.

Move aside, Dempsey, here's the real deal

Call it a social enterprise, a piece of art, or even a stroke of genius; Food #03 can be whatever you like. Chee Hui Ming shares this hidden gem.

Entering the inconspicuous café that is tucked away in a corner of Little India on a sweltering Sunday afternoon, I was greeted by the non-air-conditioned, yet strangely breezy interior of Food #03.

Complimenting the atmosphere is the café's deconstructed look of exposed red bricks, bare walls, minimal lighting and the décor, paired with chill-out music, creates an unpretentious ambience. Think Dempsey Hill without the high prices and upper-class swagger.

The quaint furnishing somewhat creates itself when the most colourful of people filter in through the steel doors. Regulars range from artists to social activists and like-minded people from all walks of life. Artist Mark Thia, 27, is appreciative of Food #03 for "engaging and bringing the community together", and providing a unique open space for the ultimate bonding activity in Singapore – eating.

Their simple menu printed with their mantra on top: "No GST, No Service Charge, and No Microwave Oven" brings cheer, considering the exorbitant prices some places are charging.

Resident chef Woo Tien Wei would usually recommend their signature Tempeh Burger (which even has its own Facebook group), but the burgers were out when I was there. Still, the following are just as good, if not better:

Order a "Chin-Chai" with Linguine (\$8.50), which is served with the freshest mix of vegetables, tossed with a light tomato sauce and a sprinkle of pine nuts. Expect a side of crisp lettuce dressed with vinaigrette and plum sauce. You'd presume pasta to be carbohydrate-heavy, but this is proportioned to near perfection, both size and taste-wise.

If that's not for you, try the thin crust Pizza with Oyster Mushrooms and Asparagus with mozzarella cheese or vegan tofu (\$12.50). Tien makes them from scratch and serves them fresh. He's even considering letting patrons make their own pizza upon request.

If you're feeling a tad more adventurous quenching your thirst, go for the Post-Museum Pour with Rum (spiced tea, apple juice, mint, lychee) or Vitagen Vodka (both \$7.50). If not, get the safer, refreshing Post-Museum Pour (\$2.00) or Raw Vegan Nut "Milk" (\$4.00), which is a delicious blend of almonds and dates served over ice (no dairy). Both are perfect for a scorching afternoon.

The only downside? It took 30 minutes for the first dish to arrive and one and a half hours for the entire meal although the place was visibly vacant. But that's where the rest of Post-Museum comes in.

Try not to visit Food #03 starving as you have got to leave some energy for exploring Post-Museum's two floors of exhibition space, especially during events (check their website for listings). Be sure to at least attend the Really Really Free Market, held once every two months.

A third of the profits from Food #03 actually fund Post-Museum, according to sole proprietor Jennifer Teo, who sees hope for the future of this "independent arts and cultural space" despite recurring financial difficulties.

To her, Food #03 is "a piece of art that's literally living and breathing", and she hopes it won't die if she and Tien (they're married) ever decide to hand it down.

That aside, she feels that the place is truly owned by the community. She even turned down a photo, asking for patrons and volunteers to be featured instead.

If that doesn't make you go 'awww', a stranger, who was also a diner there, came up to my table halfway through the meal with a chilled jug of water and offered to fill my glass. Now that's what I call community spirit.

So you know what? Forget rating Food #03 as just another tucked-away café, because it definitely deserves way more credit than a couple of shaded stars.

Check out <http://post-museum.org>



PHOTOS BY CHEONG JIAHUI

NOTES TO SELF:

- * Food #03 only opens Tuesday to Sunday
- * Closest MRT: Farrer Park (NE8)
- * Buses that go there: 21, 23, 64, 65, 66, 67, 131, 139, 147, 257, NR6

Be sure to bring my Standard Chartered card next time to receive a 10% discount (with minimum spending of \$30). Offer till Feb. 28 2010! Terms & Conditions apply.



Culinary break

A restaurant chain with an attitude, Eighteen Chefs Trattoria prides itself as an equal-opportunity employer for young people – especially for ones who've had more than their fair share of the bitter taste of life. By Liu Hongzuo

You might have heard of Benny Se Teo, the 49-year-old owner of social enterprise Eighteen Chefs Trattoria, and ex-intern from Jamie Oliver's London restaurant, Fifteen.

Now it may begin to sound like yet another Yellow Ribbon Project commercial, but Eighteen Chefs Trattoria is so much more than that. Benny truly believes in giving delinquents and individuals who have traversed the darker path one more shot at life to – and has taken a bold step of action to do so.

The third branch of Eighteen Chefs Trattoria recently opened in Yishun to cater to youths in the North, and it promises an identical menu, atmosphere and concept like all its predecessors at Simei and Fusionopolis@one-north – but with double the floor space.

Named so because '18' has a strong connotation of secret societies in Singapore, Eighteen Chefs Trattoria is famous for its crew of employees, most of whom have found new meaning in a life without affiliations to the underground. Their tattoos and piercings are colourful reminders of their past, while their humble service represents who they've become. For one, they sure cook a lot better than most people double their age.

Since the restaurant's first branch opened in Eastpoint Mall, Benny has been actively helping out ex-delinquents who seek a second chance by ignoring the stigma of society and teaching them what he knows best: cooking.

Victor Lim, 17, a chef at Eighteen Chefs Trattoria, is the epitome of what Benny means by a second chance. Having worked there for only six months, he is slated to lead the Yishun branch of Eighteen Chefs Trattoria.

This had not come easy for the unassuming teenager, who has been through a dark and troubled past. Victor mixed around with gangsters when he was just in primary school, which eventually led him to drop out of Sembawang Secondary School at the mere age of 14.

Street fights were common to him, until he met with one that left him with six scars and a change of heart. During his recovery period, Victor's mind was a mess and he locked himself at home and reflected for months.

It was then, through his school counsellor, that he discovered Eighteen Chefs Trattoria.

"[The counsellor] asked me what my interests are. I said I like cooking," says Victor, and as he flails his arms excitedly, you can see his tattooed arms that reveal a darker past.

And that began the next step of his new life. Just six months under Benny and, with the previous chef as his mentor, the humble chef has now found his calling in the kitchens.

So this is our recommendation: Go for the heart, but return for the food.

ALSO...

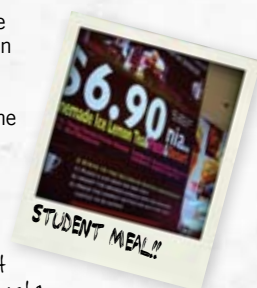
The must-try at all Eighteen Chefs Trattoria branches is their student set meal. At \$6.50, it delivers not only in variety, but taste as well. The sets include a choice of pasta (we'd recommend a satisfyingly rich cream base), homemade iced lemon tea, and usually a scoop of mint ice cream to cleanse your palate. The chef doesn't sting on ingredients, which is a pleasant surprise for this price.

If you choose to wander away from the set, the menu provides an extensive selection of side dishes (\$3 to \$6). If not, try the other main courses (\$7 to \$12) if you're feeling a little more generous. To top your meal off, be daring and give one of their sinful ice cream-based goodness a go.

Check out <http://eighteencheffs.com> for more.



PHOTOS BY LIU HONGZUO



lady gaga music's almost accidental icon

A proud idol to the deviants, misfits and outcasts (well, mostly), Lady Gaga aims to bring glam electro-pop to a whole new level. Whether she'll be usurping Madonna's throne remains to be seen – because that's where the test of time will come in.

By **Chee Hui Ming**

Interview courtesy
of **Universal Music Publishing**

Assuming her outfits were any indication of her personality, then we've almost got Lady Gaga down pat – or so we thought.

Skinny, tall, blonde and heavily made-up, she's definitely hard to miss as she saunters into the press room at Mandarin Oriental, donning a full-body newsprint leotard paired with a dramatic origami brooch made out of actual newspaper pages, and, of course, oversized shades. In town for the SingTel AMPed private showcase, she is speaking to an endless, tiresome trail of media fractions at the roundtable interviews.

And in a mere 20 minutes that was over in a blink of a heavily lined and shadowed eye, Lady Gaga reinforces her feisty image, and proves that she has never been, and will never be, a pushover or manufactured pop star. Amazingly still sustaining that young, unbridled ambition, she speaks of her success and future as though she has had a long, arduous thought process behind every minute of her life.

That is, once she's finally done handling the media frenzy and her assistants quickly usher her away to face another slew of questions.

Having drawn frequent comparisons to (the one and only) Madonna, Lady Gaga quickly remarks that considering oneself a future music icon isn't very "ladylike". Still, she's rather flattered, but declares, "I'm more concerned with doing this the rest of my life, because it

makes me happy. But if my second album fails, I would still be playing music in bars, I wouldn't give up and become a... librarian or something."

But if we dare say, she's the modern-day diva – leader of the anti-MTV generation and pop music's almost-accidental, but definitely present day, icon. Her racy tracks, "Just Dance", "Poker Face", "LoveGame" and "Paparazzi", are now staples on radio stations and clubs worldwide.

She once described her style as very "New York" – tough on the outside, and well, even tougher on the inside. But now, as she's riding the wave of electro-pop hits with that touch of rebellion, some fans are starting to get bored of what they take to be just another product of a marketing gimmick from the music industry. If it were true, Lady Gaga's selling point would definitely then be that eccentric, Andy Warhol-esque style and attitude towards life.

Except, she'd probably throw daggers at you with her eyes if you even dare suggest that she is anything but genuine.

For fans looking for her to change things up, be excited for her sophomore album, because from the tongue-in-cheek lyrics of her debut album, Lady Gaga hopes to take just a slight step out of her crystal-studded box with her next release. "If you listen to The Fame, there is some painful sentiment



“So the person that
you’re talking to
in this room, today,
is 100 percent the
real me. And the girl
that I was until all of
this – was dead.
She was a lie.”





that is always kind of masked with something humorous. Even *Brown Eyes*, which is a very sad kind of glam, 70's record. It's kind of... funny," she muses.

Similarly, one of the hardest things to do as a celebrity would be to break from a certain image, especially if you have been commercially viable because of it all along.

Meanwhile, Lady Gaga is ever ready to challenge herself to stop hiding behind humour and start telling people how she really feels through music. "I actually find most of my piano-based song writing to be very emotional. I always end up crying and there's eyeliner all over the keys."

On the other hand, she'd gladly continue her stint as the acerbic yet peculiar "pop cultural Mary Poppins", while acknowledging what people want and need to see. Perhaps that's Lady Gaga's formula for success: just the right mix of sugar and spice – we're not so sure about 'everything nice'.

In a good way, she's also a control freak – on making the "Paparazzi" music video, she talks of her own exhausting perfectionism, and how her involvement in her career isn't "just about getting dressed and singing in front of the camera while rubbing her tits".

She adds stubbornly, "I don't make videos to be played on MTV. I make videos for my fans. If they don't want to play my video, well, I don't care. I have YouTube, I have Yahoo!, I have whatever Internet engine I can get my hands on that will play it for me. I have Perez Hilton."

Appreciate Lady Gaga's fierce honesty, because that's definitely one endangered trait in the entertainment industry. She's far from even considering mincing her words during interviews, and certainly wouldn't ever get a child-friendly rating.

Still, as this unlikely role model, out and proud for the unpopular, she brandishes that feisty attitude like she owns it. Though she may come off cold and pretentious initially, listen to her speak, and you will be hit by her passion for her "art", as she calls it.

Criticise her success, laugh at her fame, or even her apparent refusal to wear pants, but don't expect her to be who you want her to be. In all 23 years of her life, she's gone from rat holes to royalty, but it hasn't been easy.

"I stopped trying to change who I was, and just accepted who I am. I like to wear avant-garde clothing. I prefer sequins to sneakers. I much prefer to sit at home by myself all day to write music than to party with a bunch of celebrities and then doing coke in the bathroom."

Perhaps that's why living like a queen would not be at the top of her list.

"So the person that you're talking to in this room, today, is a 100 percent the real me. And the girl that I was until all of this – was dead. She was a lie."

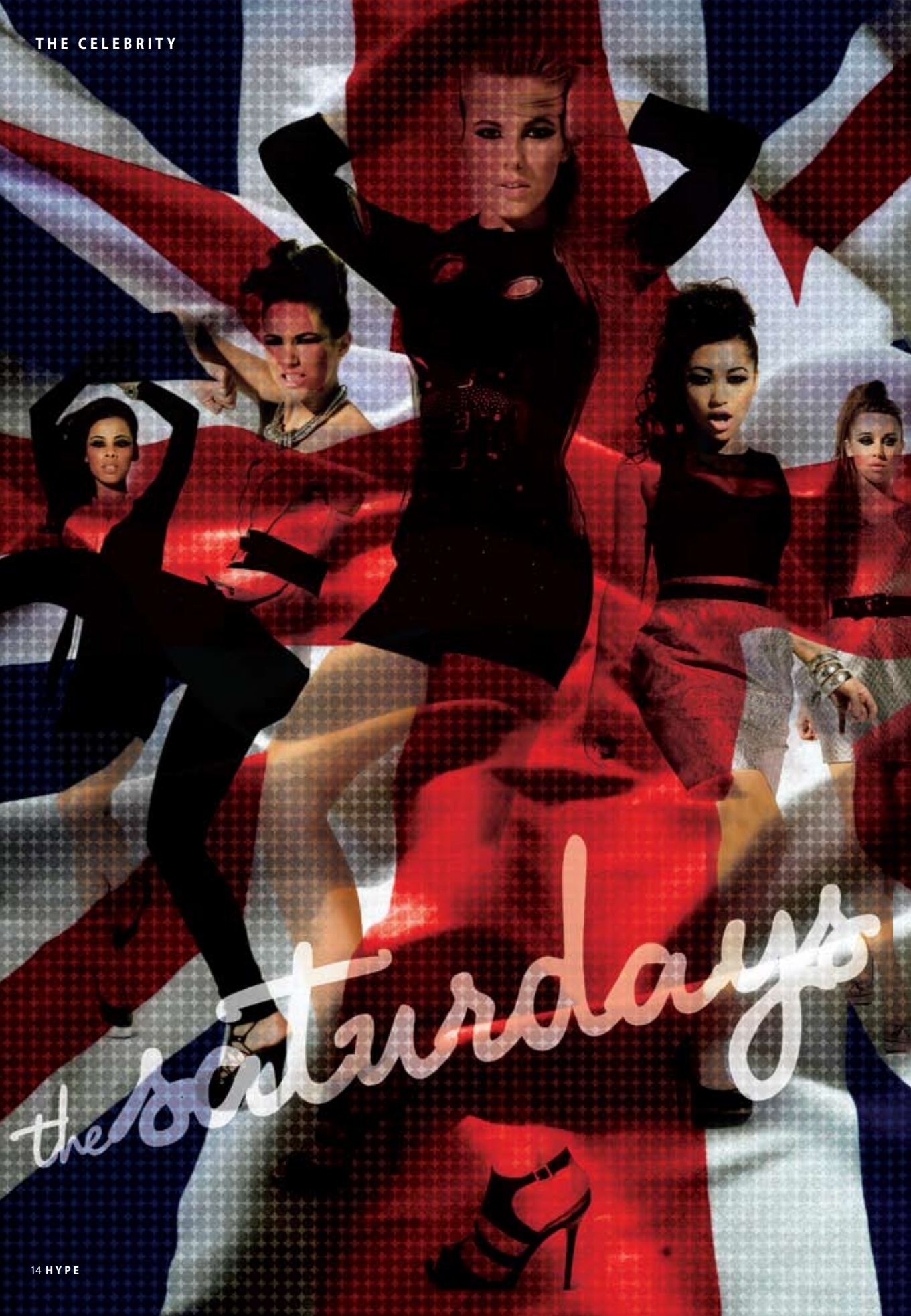
Without a doubt, Lady Gaga is tomorrow's Princess of pop, and a worthy successor to the coveted throne. Madonna is still Queen until she finally decides to give it a rest and Britney Spears is now the Grand Duchess. But let us put our hands, and dancing feet, together to welcome music royalty's newest addition. Let us give credit where credit is due, because frankly, today's overcrowded music market is teeming with overstated "artistes" whose only claim to fame is either a sex tape or a heavily-processed pop track.

The race to the top of the pops is long and contentious. Starlets can rise through the ranks in a matter of months and fall from grace in a matter of minutes. But for those whose artistry is the real deal, the reward is legions of fans and a place in music's history books. Perhaps one day, 10 or 20 years from now, we'll see Lady Gaga take her prize and her place.

Until then, we can expect her to be ever dancing, ever singing and ever shocking, and doing what she does best – the kind of stuff icons are made of.

Lady Gaga returns to Singapore for a one-night only concert at Fort Canning Park, 12 Aug 2009.

THE CELEBRITY





WHEN SATURDAY COMES

By Revathie D

Image & interview courtesy of Universal Music Publishing

With raving reviews and a sell-out debut tour, it is no wonder that The Saturdays are the new face of pop music, and possibly the biggest girl group since the Spice Girls. hype puts Rochelle Wiseman of The Saturdays in the hot seat to reveal the work, the fame and the dirt.

hype: Pop seems to be making a big comeback, with acts like Girls Aloud and you girls making big waves in the scene. That is a pretty huge responsibility to handle. How are the girls holding up?

Rochelle Wiseman: We're not doing too bad, thank you! We're working so hard that we don't often get time to sit still and absorb everything. It's been such a crazy year and so much fun. It's so cool that there's now a stack of new pop acts on the scene. No one takes themselves too seriously and it's just great music to put you in a good mood!

Are The Saturdays bringing back the song-and-dance acts of the Spice Girls and S Club?

We're definitely trying to bring a bit of pop back into the charts. It all went pretty indie for a little while so we're trying to get people dancing again.

Along with your current success, The Saturdays are coming up with a clothing line. That must be exciting! How is it coming along?

We designed a line for Rare, which is a great young label. We did two dresses each and it was so much fun. I wanted to design something for girls with curves like me, but still want to wear something tight and fashionable.

And your upcoming tour, The Work Tour sold out at every venue within a matter of days! How does that feel?

So amazing! We couldn't believe we were doing our own headline tour so early in our career and for it to sell out like that was so exciting.

The Saturdays spent close to a year on your debut album. Was it hard to keep working on the same project?

I think, because we genuinely love the tracks, we haven't really got bored yet. It's the type of music we'd all listen to even if we weren't in the band, so to be able to put your own vocals to the tracks is great. We were all so happy with how well the album has done. No one could have expected it.

Your debut album 'Chasing Lights' was well-received by both the critics and the public. What can we expect in your next album?

It's going to be amazing. We've actually been co-writing on the new album so it's much more personal. We're still complete pure pop but it will have a few surprises.

Time to dish out the dirt! What's it like working with four other girls?

We have so much fun. We all really get on and work really well together.

Being known as the mother figure of the band, do you feel like you always have to keep the girls under tight control?

Haha! I think I'm known as the mummy because I'm pretty organised. I'm the one who grabs the diary in meetings to make sure we all know what to do. We all have to be pretty organised though, as we're always going to different places throughout the week.

Lastly, what would you like to say to your Singaporean fans?

I just want to thank you for supporting The Saturdays. It means so much to us. We can't wait to come visit and meet all our Singaporean fans in person!

Visit <http://www.thesaturdays.co.uk>

CELEBRITIES

BEHIND THE SCENES

Bored of the typical scene and heard Hollywood starlets, hype brings the spotlight on the local celebrities with the real deal. Often behind the scenes, they can be summed up in three words: audacious, astute and avant-garde. Let the fandom begin.



NO JUGGLING ACT

Veteran radio programme consultant Jenny Teo gives us a sneak peek into how she delicately juggles family and work. By Cheryl Tan

Dressed to the nines in a suit and glasses and seated behind a desk swamped by computers and papers, you'd never guess that Jenny Teo is the brain behind all things radio.

Currently a programme consultant for SAFRA Radio, Jenny has been in and out of the radio industry for 29 years due to family commitments. Having handled all aspects of radio, even the setting up of SAFRA Radio, her strong affection for the craft is no secret.

"Radio is in my blood. I'm very passionate about it," she says.

Although she left the radio industry for 11 years, the offer to return was just too hard for Jenny to resist. Now, she sees herself as a juggling act, being involved

in a variety of roles including monitoring the station and helping in the planning of programmes for Power 98 and JIA 88.3 FM.

On what drives her passion, she says, "I want to impart whatever I learnt in my years as a broadcaster to the new jocks, so that we can compete and improve as a radio station."

"We are kind of like a family here, where I get to be in touch with the people on the ground."

Work aside, Jenny puts family first, and is a self-confessed "true-blue mother".

To ensure that she has enough time for the family, Jenny officially works four and half-hours each day at SAFRA radio.

"I don't have much free time but I try to schedule my time around my son. When I get home, I switch my hat, and when my husband gets home, I wear another hat."

However, if her son stays back in school for co-curricular activities, she gladly uses the free time for her second love: radio.

When she chatters about her involvement with radio, delight and dedication evidently swell up in her voice. For Jenny, the most gratifying part of her job is "the opportunity to see the whole radio station in macro view and be able to identify where problem areas are and how to rectify them and improve them". To see her radio station brimming with success has naturally become her pride and joy.

After all, like how every juggler wants a perfect balance of all their props, Jenny has put her heart and soul into nurturing her two babies – her son and radio – so that they may mature into big and healthy boys in time to come.



PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN

MY SASSY JAYINE

She has been Zoe Tay's personal assistant, arranged music and props for Phua Chu Kang The Musical and Cabaret (by Toy Factory Theatre Ensemble), written for local magazines like Teenage and Maxim and once dreamt of becoming Hollywood's first Asian superstar. But Jayine Chung thinks her current job is her most colourful.

By Melodie Lee

At just 25 years of age, the copywriter at local advertising firm Religion is the woman behind the recent saucy Carls' Jr. print advertisement that reads: Some like it long. But most love it thick.

Currently working on campaigns for Burger King, Jayine is also the one responsible for the latest controversial Super Seven Incher and Topsy Turvy burger advertisements, which had people writing in to TODAY newspaper, to protest the raunchy text.

She laughs sheepishly and covers her face before saying hastily, "I'm sorry if I traumatised anyone!"

Dressed in a quirky getup of knee-length black-and-white striped leggings and a chilli red cardigan, topped off with a head of curly shoulder-length jet-black hair, she does not look like a local. She reveals that she is Korean, but says that having lived here most of her life, she feels "totally Singaporean".

Amid her smatterings of 'lah's, Jayine trills excitedly about her short stint back in 2005 as Zoe Tay's personal assistant.

She recalls that it was tough, getting up at 6.30a.m., "giving Zoe morning calls and hauling loads of clothes and bags around". Of course there were the perks, which included truckloads of freebies. "I think Zoe and I were one of the first in Singapore to wear Crocs before they got popular here!" she says gleefully.

Seeing as she has always been doing work behind-the-scenes, does she sometimes wish she were out there in the spotlight? Her eyes flicker up toward the ceiling, lips pursed, before she replies that she likes it this way.

Then she looks down and sighs dramatically. "But my childhood dream was to be an actress! I wanted to be the first Asian in Hollywood!" she gushes. "Then I realised I had no talent, so I decided to stick to doing behind-the-scenes work."

Jayne feels that working for television is "too physically demanding" and uninspiring; theatre work is mostly part-time and she doesn't like the idea of her hobby becoming her job.

Hence she found the perfect solution. With absurd demands of creative juice involved and wacky colleagues, copywriting in an advertising agency became her way to go.

"I love naming new products, especially the burgers," she says with a grin.

So what does she see herself doing after this job?

"Ask me in 15 years. Maybe I'll have finally broken into the forefront and set up my own advertising agency."

She adds cheekily, "Then I'll get to boss other people around!"



PHOTO BY ARELL ANG

WEAVER OF NARRATIVES

Writer-producer Tan Wei-Lyn gives the lowdown behind 'trifle' story writing. By Daniel Ong

Behind popular local shows like *Police and Thief*, *Sayang Sayang*, *Parental Guidance* and the recent blockbuster *Red Thread*, 38-year-old Tan Wei-Lyn lives and breathes the eventful role of scriptwriter and producer, and lets on that Singapore has room for better writers.

But before you triumphantly claim "Aha!", don't be quick to judge as she shares how scriptwriters play a crucial role in crafting out captivating stories that keep television viewers glued to their seats.

To get the ball rolling, we ask, "What's the difference between what you do and say, writing a storybook?" Unruffled, she says that while storybook authors get complete control of their characters and storylines, a scriptwriter has to consider various production aspects as well.

She pauses for dramatic effect and says, "Do the actors say their lines properly?"

"Sometimes actors are more dramatic in a different way and you have to take into consideration what the director feels. It's not how lines are said but how best it comes across onscreen."

True, but does that mean that a scriptwriter's job is to just sit passively in the background? To this suggestion, she quickly asserts, "A scriptwriter cannot be in the back. The best team is when the writer is very clued into what everyone else is doing. We're part of the huge process."

Yet, while she does an excellent job, we can't help but ask, "Does Singapore need more talented writers?"

"Not just Singapore," she replies. "I think in general the world needs better writers. For whatever reason in Singapore it has been overlooked but people think that they can write when they can string a sentence together."

"Because unlike foreign studios, we don't have the budget to do explosive car chasing scenes or action scenes. We rely on clever writing to bring the viewers ratings in."

It sounds like hard work, yet Wei-Lyn remains pleasantly chatty and affable in person. She reveals that she draws on life for inspiration "because a lot of it is writing what you know". The self-confessed TV addict has written several well-received shows like *Sayang Sayang*. Her latest piece, *Polo Boys*, will be coming out this year.

So how did she begin her career?

Wei-Lyn explains that back when *Under One Roof* had just begun airing, she was an aspiring lawyer. The turning point came when she caught the local comedy and was inspired by how a television programme could be put together. This compelled her to sign up for a writing class, which saw a scriptwriting job offered to her at the end of it.

Since then, Wei-Lyn has risen through the ranks to become an executive producer with MediaCorp. Although she isn't in a position to comment, it is a sore point for her that, while credit goes to the producers and director, the scriptwriters take the fire if there is any. She prefers "if it's good, the entire team should take the credit, and if it's bad, everyone should share the blame as well".

As the interview draws to a close, we get her to offer some advice for budding writers waiting for her words of wisdom.

She pauses once more before replying, "It's to keep writing and to have humility. To be confident and yet be humble with what you do, because you won't know everything. If you don't have the ability to be critical about your work, you stop growing as a writer, so it's a tough one - not to react negatively when you get criticism but to take it and make something positive out of it."

And with a note of finality, she says, "You just have to keep going."



PHOTO COURTESY OF ADELE CHAN

Seated on an all-too-familiar viridescent plush wing chair at a branch of the world's most famous coffee joint, sipping a hot latte, is one of the supercool from the publishing industry: Adele Chan, editor of CATALOG magazine.

The monthly publication has not only been doing well with their own work, but has also won numerous contract publications for government bodies and shopping malls because of their unique editorial musings, cutting-edge designs and acute fashion eye.

The exchange with Adele was nothing short of enriching.

"When it comes to publishing, timelines are always tight, and once you're done with an issue, the next one comes along. You pretty much have to find joy in what you're doing or you'll burn out really quickly," she says.

Before her editorial position, Adele was in marketing for a renowned cosmetics line. She describes the switch as "seamless" because "it's all about running a successful business and managing projects".

One wonders how a pint-sized lady like her keeps track of the many tasks on her plate, and still have the stamina to churn out a competitive magazine every month. "I have documents to keep track of who

OVERSEER OF THE PAGES

Behind every thriving publication lies a good editorial and design posse. So where does a magazine like CATALOG get its inspiration from? By Airell Ang

does what. When the assignment is due, I conduct meetings to discuss strategy and direction. I feed them – a hungry team is an angry team," says Adele.

She adds, "The effort and the work going on behind a magazine is tremendous. I know the stress my subordinates are going through, partly because I've been there and done that."

"I know the deadlines are tough. That's why I try to make things different by easing on the pressure, and becoming their friend instead of their superior. And we have more fun this way."

If you're an aspiring editor, Adele spills "the traits that are most welcome: meticulous, particular and sociable. Needless to say, you need to have an excellent command of the English language as well."

As she sips her latte, she talks about her typical day at work.

"It's busy. It really is. I respond to emails, plan editorial content, assign articles

and projects to team members, then subsequently chase them for submission of work, edit articles, check page layout for text errors and design."

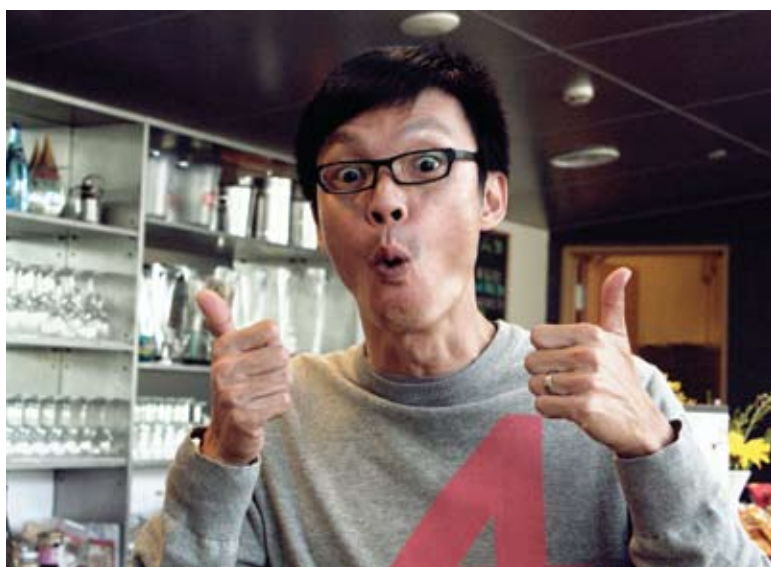
As she ponders over the interview questions, she shuffles her Maison Martin Margiela ankle boots, depicting the usual anxiety any managerial person would face, and of course, that immaculate fashion sense.

So what is it about CATALOG magazine that puts them at the forefront of Singapore's fashion scene?

"I've got a brilliant team of people who are already in-the-know of the scene in Singapore. They are all very receptive to oncoming trends from the powerhouses like Paris, London, and of course the capital city that epitomises anti-fashion, Tokyo," says Adele, brimming with pride.

Unlike the editors of other successful publications, Adele differentiates herself by being more relaxed.

"I don't take things too seriously. Just lighten up!"



PHOTOS BY DAPHNE KOH

MARK

AND HIS

MAKINGS

By Eunice Ng

Mention the name Mark Lee to most teenagers today, and their reaction will most likely be a less-than-impressed shriek, as the image of a tall, scrawny, chatty man with a pockmarked face comes to mind.

Although the 40-year-old funny man may not have a fan club of the teenybopper variety, it has not stopped him from becoming Singapore's most famous self-professed Ah Beng on local television.

Sitting atop a bar stool at the Drama Centre Theatre for his interview with hype and dressed in a grey T-shirt with a slogan screaming "I got it 4 cheap" and a pair of light brown skinny jeans, Lee looks out of place in the "high class" location of his latest stand-up comedy.

As he licks his Häagen-Dazs ice cream, the confident comedian explains that the inspiration behind Mark Lee Rally 2009, his debut stand-up comedy staged at the Drama Centre Theatre from 11 to 14 June, was to celebrate his 20th anniversary in showbiz.

"Variety shows, drama series, sitcoms, movies, music albums - I've done all those before. So on my 20th anniversary, I wanted to do something I had never done before."

The performance, sponsored by the National Council of Problem Gambling, explores issues from the perspective of "a

hardcore Singaporean *Ah Beng*", covering topics such as "the difference between a Singaporean *Ah Beng* and a gangster", government policies and gambling in Singapore.

"Gambling with our lives all the time"

It is hard to imagine the average-looking man carving out a career for himself in the superficial and fickle entertainment industry, much less remain a regular fixture on the small screen (and also, in recent years, on the big screen) for two decades running.

Speak to him and you'll realise that Lee, known for his crazy antics and ridiculous wisecracks on screen, is actually much more profound than he appears. He does not find it a joke when it concerns his own life, though his own foray into show business appears to be nothing more than a gamble, to say the least.

When he signed up for an acting class back in 1987 at Jack Neo's production company, J Team Productions, Lee never thought that he would go on to play a talking rubbish bin – a role he initially hated – on the popular Mandarin variety show *Comedy Night*, which would be his claim to fame.

"If you had a choice, would you want to be born into a rich family or a poor family? We've got no choice, right? We are gambling with our lives all the time," he says.

"When I decided to follow Jack Neo, I didn't know if I would become successful, because at that time, Jack Neo wasn't considered successful either," he reasons.

Never would he have thought that 11 years later, he would be acting as Ong, a main character in the groundbreaking movie *Money No Enough* in 1998, which remains Singapore's highest-grossing film to date, alongside Jack Neo and fellow colleague Henry Thia.

Sighing resignedly, he says, "If I could have a choice now, I wouldn't follow Jack Neo. Working with him is very *mafan* (troublesome in Mandarin). It's stressful, because he's a perfectionist. He demands a lot from himself."

"I have a limit"

Mention gambling and Lee gets serious, because that is one of the things he remembers of his late father who passed away from cancer 10 years ago. His father, who used to own a barbershop, would bet on horses that eventually cost him his landed property in Bukit Timah.

"If not, I would be a millionaire now, you know. Bukit Timah /eh, not Bukit Batok. All the rich people stay there," Lee laments matter-of-factly.

And it is like this that the seriousness you thought you saw in this jokester suddenly vanishes, and he is back to his usual wisecracking self.

Despite his penchant for gambling, Lee is quick to point out that while he does gamble, he "(has) a limit".

"I bet on soccer and 4D," he reveals. The secret, he says, is never to increase your bets, not even when you lose.

Referring to betting on English Premier League (EPL) matches, he says, "If you

bet \$100 to \$200 every week for the whole nine months of EPL, but only on one team, you'll find that you win every season, really."

"You study mathematics, right? You must know how to calculate!"

Learning on the job

Looking at Mark Lee now, he has come a long way from who he was in the past – a lowly educated, playful *Ah Beng*. The 'O' levels-holder, who admits he "went to McDonald's more than to school", makes up for his lack of education by learning all his skills on the job.

"Whatever people are doing, I watch and learn. When they are editing, I learn. When they are composing music, I learn. It's not something you can get from reading a book," says Lee, who wishes to direct his own movie in the future.

Despite having come such a long way, he still feels the heat from people who "don't accept (his) style".

Recalling back in 2000 when he didn't win anything at the Star Awards, but was ironically the "most busy that year", he says, "I don't know why, but at that time, it seemed like everybody wanted to throw stones at me."

Perhaps it is the fact that people do not take this funny man seriously.

Allowing a little self-pity to set in, the non-drinker laments, "When I tell people I don't drink, I get scolded. They say, '*Chao* (which means smelly in Hokkien) *Ah Beng*, you tell me you don't drink? Don't lie to me!"



A GAMBLE ON THE AUDIENCE

Despite his confidence and animated delivery, Mark Lee's jokes lacked mass appeal.

WHAT: Mark Lee Rally 209 (NC-16)

WHERE: Drama Centre Theatre

WHEN: 14 June, Sunday, 3pm

It's almost impossible to get everyone to laugh at your jokes, and this fact proved evident for the most part at Mark Lee's 100-minute stand-up comedy performance on 14 June at the Drama Centre Theatre.

The "heartlander" comedian appealed more to the middle-aged crowd, using a mixture of English, Mandarin and dialect to poke fun at various government policies, *Ah Beng* culture, and recent news such as the Indian *rojak* incident.

While the jokes told in Mandarin drew laughs from the majority of the audience, the younger theatre-goers were left scratching their heads when Lee made wisecracks in Hokkien, while members of the older generation sat uncomfortably when Lee related detailed accounts of his sexual exploits with his wife in their attempts to have a baby.

All in all, the veteran actor and comedian deserved applause for his bold attempts at milking the laughs from such a wide audience, but to appeal to the younger lot, he should brush up on his language skills and leave his moral lessons at home.



PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN

Fans of actor-cum-host Randall Tan probably just caught him on a Father's Day Special telemovie, *The Angel*. But underneath his cheeky boy exterior and bad boy characters, the 36-year-old is a real family man.

He tries as hard as he can to spend time with his close-knit family, and even though he has been married to actress Melody Chen for more than a year, they are still deeply in love.

Not only are stories of their married life all over his open blog and frequent tweets, they are often spotted at malls looking happily in love.

It comes as no surprise, then, to find out that, out of the eight tattoos he sports, his favourite is a large guardian angel tattoo made in the image of Melody. He got it as a birthday present after getting discharged from hospital two years ago after his battle with the Guillain-Barre Syndrome, which is a sickness that affects one's peripheral nervous system.

"I felt that at that time, Mel was my guardian angel who was always looking after me," he says.

The disease not only left him fighting for his life but cost him his job for five months. In the course of all that, he had to relearn simple things like feeding himself, standing and walking again. He has since fully recovered, gotten married and has a different outlook on life.

A disarming smile readily spreads across his face and the workaholic who used to lead a life of "work, earning money, and getting as many jobs" has now learnt to take the time to enjoy his new lease of life.

RANDALL'S

PHRASES FOR LIVING

Since appearing as that handsome boy in Channel 5's hit teen series *Light Years* six years ago, Randall Tan has played a string of baddies onscreen, battled with a life-threatening disease and married his longtime friend. **Josceline Foo** finds out how the boy has grown.

"To me, the cup is always half full now. I'm very thankful for what I have and I'm very contented. If I lose a job, I lose a job. The illness changed my outlook on life," he says.

He takes each day as it comes but is constantly aware that he can "no longer play around like an 18-year-old. There are bills to pay and a family to support". In his free time, the boisterous fellow enjoys a variety of activities – cooking, grocery shopping, running, tanning – and at other times, he simply "vegetates".

"I'm actually very simple. Life is too short to dream about the impossible. Whatever I get, I take and I don't ask for more." But whenever he talks about his job, the slight hint of his old workaholic self seems to appear once again – be it the fun in modeling, the energy from hosting, or the passion that he feels for acting.

But one thing he has to clarify is that he isn't like most of the characters he plays on screen. "I'm not a playboy, I don't sleep around, I don't sell or traffic drugs," he insists.

"I'm really a one-woman man!" he says with mock-indignation.

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HYPE

HEADLINE: (not) Attention whores

Young people who post their outfit photographs online say they only want to "inspire others" and show the world "their style". Paige Foong takes a closer look.



She smiles coyly into the camera, wearing a 20-year-old black jumpsuit that once belonged to her mother, a pair of chunky Steve Madden brown wedges and a black studded belt that is twisted around her waist.

Meet Becks Ko, 20, a recent Ngee Ann Polytechnic graduate who religiously posts photographs of her outfits almost every other day, either on fashion community sites or her personal blog (<http://camerafilmmroll.blogg.se>).

Becks is just one of the growing number of youths who are joining websites like the widely popular Chictopia.com and Lookbook.nu. These websites gather looks from members in their communities and are starkly different from fashion magazines, where the models are waif-like and clothed in overpriced apparel carefully handpicked by professional stylists.

In Lookbook, one can only become a member of the community through an invitation by a current member. Upon acceptance, users can upload their daily fashion experimentations for other users to comment and rate.

Becks, who will be attending Lasalle College of Arts in August, says that she started posting her photographs late last year to share her experimentations with other fashion enthusiasts, and to also get feedback on her dressing.

Sndy Klare Leo, 20, a student from Nanyang Polytechnic, agrees and claims that she started uploading her photographs because she loves dressing up and sharing her outfits with others to "inspire one another".

Too much to handle?

Sndy recalls receiving mixed reviews when she posted her first outfit online. The business student says there was an especially memorable commenter who remarked that she dressed like his granny, to which she simply replied, "I would love to meet your granny".

Currently, she puts up her photographs of her outfits on her personal blog

(<http://sweetarrow.blogspot.com>), which boasts a readership of nearly 30,000 since she first started.

Although these websites encourage users to offer constructive advice, hate mail is inevitable. Melanie Lim and Leanne Teo, both 20-year-old undergrads and co-owners of their personal blog (<http://superbiagirls.blogspot.com>), have suffered backlash from their first outfit post on local online fashion community Runway City (<http://runwaycity.livejournal.com>), where the vivacious duo dressed up in sexy La Senza fishnet stockings, biker tights and snake print leggings, to which one commenter harshly remarked, "Very nice. How much?"

Attention Seekers

Singapore Polytechnic student Shauna Lee, 18, thinks that these websites only cater to "materialistic and bimbotic girls". The confident teenager also states that she does not need the reassurance from others to prove that she is part of the "in crowd".

Still, she admits to enjoy reading some of the websites, as "they are a guilty pleasure". She recalled an unforgettable post by a girl on such a site who said that she "needed advice for her poor dressing, but not to comment on her face or figure as she was fat and ugly".

Part-time waitress Natalie Tan, 19, shares the same opinion as Shauna, saying that she would never post photographs of herself online, because she does not want "others to rip off [her] style".

Subjective Not Objective

Sndy, Leanne and Melanie all agree that criticism on such accessible sites is inevitable, but they make a point to note that style is subjective.

They believe that as long as they remain levelheaded and positive, they can continue taking such risks to experiment and upload. Melanie says, "At the end of it, we're just girls who never grew out of dress-up."



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LOOKBOOK.NU & THE KIDS ARE OKAY

A picture is worth a thousand words, but a lomograph brings you two decades of history. By **Daniel Ong**

When Retro started making rounds in the scene, it brought along with it a friend - Lomography, which is the art of taking photographs with a Lomo camera and also the latest craze to hit Singapore's photography scene, capturing the hearts of camera buffs and the mainstream crowd alike.

Leningrad Optical-Mechanical Amalgamation, or Lomo, is a manufacturer of optical products and medical equipment in St. Petersburg, Russia. In 1982, the company created the Lomo Kompakt Automat, a camera originally created as an espionage tool for field agents. Due to the quality of images produced by the camera, the company sold the technology to the public instead. It was their fans that began calling the photographs taken with the cameras 'Lomography'.

Production of the camera would have declined and stopped in 1996, if not for Viennese students Matthias Fiegl and Wolfgang Stranzinger. While holidaying in Czechoslovakia in 1991, they picked up the camera at a junk shop and started taking pictures of the city. When the photographs were developed, what they saw forever changed their lives.

You see, the characteristics of photographs taken by Lomo cameras include oversaturated colours, light leaks, blurring, distortions and overexposed film, which were unheard of during their time.

The photographs inspired Fiegl and Stranzinger, and upon disassembling the Lomo (425 parts in total), they discovered that the cause for all those characteristics lay in the camera's 32-mm single lens. Its sensitive light meter kept the shutter open until the image was sufficiently exposed.

Their milestone discovery and fervent passion drove them to start the Lomography Society International - the world's

biggest lomography community to date. Starting in 1992, Lomo exhibitions have piqued the public's interest and propelled its cult following. Fans include ex-Formula One driver Michael Schumacher and the Dalai Lama.

By 1996, its demand had grown so big that St. Petersburg's deputy mayor then, Lomo-enthusiast Vladimir Putin (and Russia's Prime Minister) agreed to restart production.

Thereafter, Lomo cameras revolutionised all photo-taking ideologies. Arty pictures became the name of the game and the new golden rule was "shoot first, think later".

But not everyone is convinced. Lomography is often criticised for its unreliability, amongst other reasons.

Nonetheless, Fiegl and Stranzinger, being the exclusive distributors of the camera, still rake in the money and are laughing their way to the bank, as Lomo cameras don't come cheap. The most basic Lomo camera will set you back at least \$50 and good ones can cost up to \$500. On top of that, they are not very easy to lay your hands on and most of them have to be pre-ordered from specialist camera shops or bought online.

As Lomo aficionados are strong advocates of individualistic creativity, many have branched out into other forms of the art, such as underwater lomography. Some take it one step further and only take pictures of a certain subject, such as dogs or even legs (yes, *legs*).

So if you're looking into lomography, stake out websites like the Lomographic Embassy of Singapore, Lomotion Singapore, Lomography Asia, or perhaps even the Lomographic Society International itself.



LOMO-EASY

For those who don't want the camera but still want the pictures, here's how you can get that Lomo-feel digitally. It's not as good as the real thing, but it's pretty enough to show around. All you need is some form of image editing software (Adobe Photoshop is probably the best choice).



1 Choose a picture to edit, preferably one with a distinct background and foreground.



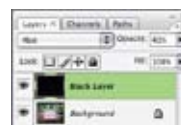
2 Use your lasso tool (80-90px feather) to create a vignette. After creating it, inverse the selection.



3 Convert the selected area into a layer and adjust the Levels to make the borders dim. Merge the layers.



4 Play with Curves to make the dim parts darker and the lighter parts brighter.



5 Create a new layer and fill it with black. Change the blending mode to "Hue" and decrease the opacity to about 40% (it's really up to you though)



6 At this stage, you'll probably have something like this.



7 You can make your image more appealing by sharpening the image (use Unsharp Mask, under Filters)



8 THE FINAL PRODUCT!

This nifty photo-editing trick is sure to come in handy next time you want to impress.



THE TROJAN SERIES



INVASION of the TREXIS



On its way to taking the world by storm, the locally-made Trexi got us hooked and is a perfect reminder of why we love toys in the first place. By **Lin Zicheng**

Let the drums roll, raise the curtains and put your hands together to welcome Trexi, the flagship toy of Singapore-based company Play Imaginative that is currently being sold in more than 30 countries.

The cutting-edge action figure has received international acclaim from various artists and designers, such as Italian maestro Simone Legno and British artist Jon Burgerman. Available in three different sizes - 1.5", 3" and 10" - the toy's main attraction lies in the fact that its head is able to be rotated to show different faces and expressions.

So how did Play Imaginative manage to come up with such a toy? In an exclusive interview with *hype*, Business Development & Marketing Director for Play Imaginative Jacky Teo tells us more about the conceptualisation of the million-dollar idea.

"In 2003, I was distributing two products here in Singapore. So I approached the Singapore Tourism Board to do a National Day toy for them with the two toy products that I was distributing here," says Jacky.

However, he was flatly rejected because STB wanted a locally-made toy. When asked if he had anything made in Singapore, the question sparked a few ideas in the man. Jacky hurriedly proposed his concepts to a partner freelance designer, and together, they channeled their creative energy into the form of a toy. Within a month, Trexi was born.

For two to three months, the duo spent all their efforts marketing their then unheard of toy. Their breakthrough finally came in the form of "a lot of orders from overseas buyers". Using these orders as evidence of the toys' profitability, the pair convinced a financier to fund the setup of Play Imaginative, which became the sole producer and distributor of the Trexi. In 2004, the deal

finally passed and Play Imaginative became the parent company of today's hot-selling Trexi toys.

The first Trexi series appeared at a toy convention organised by SGCollect.com for local toy enthusiasts in 2005.

"The response was very good, which was partly because of our marketing efforts before launching it," says Jacky. As if the toys needed any more affirmation, international designers began submitting their designs for the Trexi. Coca Cola, Singapore Tourism Board and even fashion brand Flesh Imp formed the first batch of designs.

Assured by the toy's commercial success, Play Imaginative capitalised on the growing trend and launched their second series only six months later.

The Trexi is estimated to have sold about one to two million pieces globally, with Singapore forming a decent 10 percent of the total market share. Global brands like Creative Technology, Nike and Motorola have since jumped on the bandwagon.

Gek Ling, a designer at Play Imaginative, says, "The Trexi is great because it offers the designer a lot of room for customisation. This makes designing it much more fun and interesting, because every design can be different in so many ways."

Just recently, the company took the Trexi to the next level by producing a thumbdrive for Canon in the form of the signature Trexi toy design. The toy's head can be pulled off to reveal a compact thumbdrive inside.

With a wide smile on his face, Jacky adds, "We've had so many designs that we simply lost track."

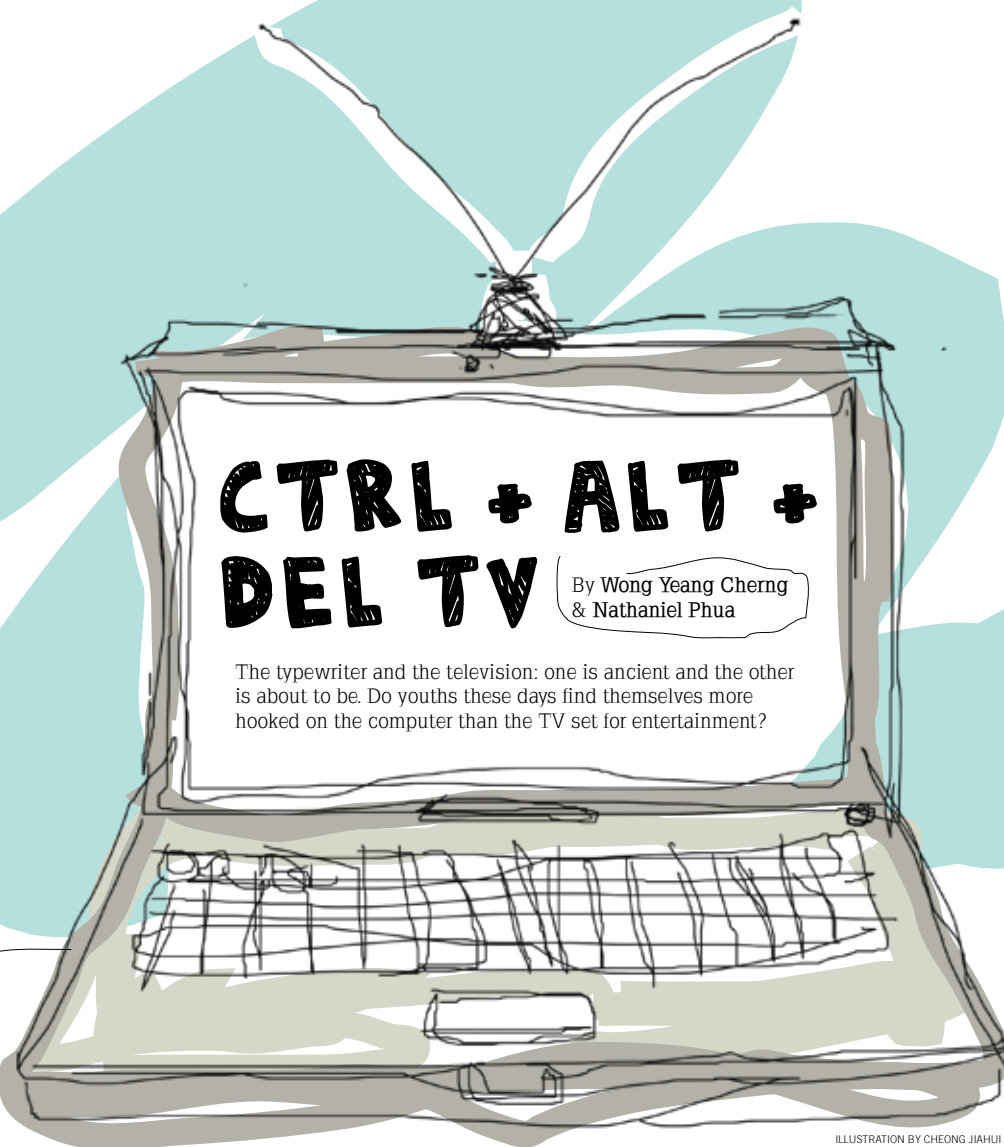


ILLUSTRATION BY CHEONG JIAHUI

It started as a harmless tool for speeding up the process by which we source for information.

When online messaging was popularised, all our conversations, or most of it at least, were taken to the virtual world of online chatrooms and MSN. Then, it happened to our music and now, the Internet has taken over our television viewing habits as well.

Okay, so maybe flipping through today's papers might get your hands dirty, and chatting online allows for more than one conversation simultaneously. But trading off the good ol' times we spent on the couch with a bag of chips and the trusty television set for the Internet? Now, what happened there? Don't get us wrong. Young people still

adore their beloved shows like *Desperate Housewives* and *Survivor*. Everyone still watches television, just not on the actual set anymore.

To find out the extent of the phenomenon, hype polled 100 young Singaporeans, of which 67 percent indicated that they streamed shows from the Internet more than they watched them on the television. The remaining 33 percent of them preferred the television because of its better sound and picture quality.

Brian Heng, 19, a San Joaquin Delta College graduate says, "I don't really need to watch television as I can just stream the shows online for free. No need to pay for cable, pay-per-view or anything like that."



CONTROL TV

To many, the Internet is like a reservoir of entertainment where users can fish for their favourite TV shows. According to the editor of Singapore Press Holdings Razor TV Jonathan Ng, the Internet has completely refashioned the video viewing habits of youths.

"It's the nature of the web to supply information on demand and with the slew of video content on the web, it's the obvious place to go," he says.

ALTERNATE TV

"Research has shown that most young people are unaware that file-sharing is illegal and that it's stealing," says Mr Boey, a lecturer at Ngee Ann Polytechnic's School of Film & Media Studies.

Evidently, the ambiguity and accessibility of the Internet makes it an excellent avenue for downloading television shows for one's viewing pleasure. According to BBC news, a typical episode of TV show 24 "was downloaded by about 100,000 people globally". Just imagine how many criminal offences were made for the entire season!

DELETE TV

Which brings us to the next inevitable question: Does this spell the death of the television set?

Darren Ho, 27, director of MGX Communications, says, "Yes, there is the possibility of [television services] one day becoming passé. But, of course, as for all major monopoly businesses, they will find a way to integrate and work with [the Internet] rather than against it."

This particular trend is not unique to Singapore. A recent survey of young Americans by the International Business Machines Corporation showed that 60 percent preferred to stream shows on the Internet, which corresponds to the survey conducted by hype in Singapore.

As an effort to integrate television with the Internet, American media companies like NBC Universal and Fox Entertainment Group have already begun working with Internet providers to set up an Internet-based video site,

For many like National Technological University student Jamie Phua, 20, the Internet gives them more authority to dictate their viewing habits, unlike the television where the television company schedules the programmes.

He says, "With such an irregular school timetable, I tend to miss out on the shows that I want to watch. Streaming it from the Internet actually means that I'll be able to watch it whenever I want to."

The consequences do not stop there.

Since viewers no longer watch their favourite shows on television sets, revenue from television viewership is stemmed and broadcasters no longer have the budget to produce higher quality shows.

"Illegal file-sharing and downloads will erode the quality of the programmes and movies... And if broadcasters are cut out of the equation, the revenue stream stops and so will good quality programming eventually," says Jonathan.

Hulu, which provides free videos from various American networks and studios.

Perhaps the resulting model could be like popular online music store iTunes, where people can download music legally and music publishers still earn the money.

Until that happens, all evidence seems to indicate that trading the big rigid screen for the flexibility of the dot com is the only natural thing to do.

Nonetheless, an entire world that revolves around the Internet does not seem logistically and commercially viable at this point of time.

"I think it isn't possible right now because there's a generation gap. Our older generation never believed in going into the Internet. But once this generation moves on, it's going to be different," concludes Darren.

MSN: MULTIPLE SOCIAL NETWORKING

By Isaac Tan

For users of [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Friendster](#) and even [Flickr](#), there is new cause for celebration as hype shows you the new generation of social networking tools that promise to make your busy virtual life a breeze.



"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind" is a revolutionary phrase that has left generations in awe of the advancement of technology. However, if the first landing on the moon happened today, that phrase would probably appear on Twitter faster than anyone can say Neil Armstrong.

Indeed, the world has changed since man first landed on the moon. The invention of the Internet and social networking sites has altered our methods of communication.

From the traditional snail mail, for which people could write endlessly, the new methods of communication require senders to be more succinct. Our initial "limit" of 160-characters in text messaging and Facebook status updates has since downsized to a mere 140-characters with the introduction of Twitter.

It is no doubt then, that Twitter and Facebook status updates are the new means to keep up with your friends. The increasing pace of life on this sunny island has demanded instantaneous responses from our peers.

This phenomenon has since given rise to a new way to social network known as multi-platform social networking systems.

Randy Yeo, 28, says, "I don't really tweet often but I find it helpful that I can check on all my updates within a single page without having to toggle through multiple windows."

The more complex ones, like OrSiSo, which stands for organise, simplify and socialise, play host to a larger variety of social networking sites. OrSiSo, for one, allows a user to manage eight different social networking sites from Facebook to Friendster, even MSN Messenger.

With its simple platform that can be easily modified to suit your preferences, OrSiSo is one of the best platforms to accommodate all your social networking needs.

The only bad thing about it lies in its unstable system. There are still occasional programme hiccups like an unusual need to keep re-authorising your accounts and delayed status updates. That said, OrSiSo still does a pretty decent job in fulfilling your social networking needs.

However, if you're a minimalist who only bounces between Facebook and Twitter, then TweetDeck may be your cup of tea.

Well-organised and labelled columns build the framework for this entire program. Twitter and Facebook updates can be easily seen with an additional bar that can either appear above or beneath the columns.

Moreover, merely the option to update both your Facebook and Twitter status is a click of the mouse. You just have to make sure to designate the site that the update is meant for. But don't expect anything more than status updates though, since the simple programme does not allow user to chat or upload photographs to the sites.

When it comes to technology and gadgets like these, users are often spoilt for choice. The deciding factor is your preference, because really, there is no good or bad, just what suits you more.

Derrick Lim, 21, agrees, "I think having multiple systems in a single window just makes life easier but it takes some time getting used to and finding the right one to suit your needs."

The invention of multi-platform social networking systems has increased our ability to multi-task. It is no doubt that people will increasingly want to be able to do more at a faster rate in the simplest way. Who knows, one day, we may just start twitting with just our brain waves.

Until then, I guess this will do.



PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN

FROM LEFT: MELVIN, SHARON, PAMELA & DARYL

Dancing their way

Follow Lee Dion as he catches up with dance maestros Melvin and Sharon to find out about their quest for a place of their own.

What do you do when you've reached the top of your game and it isn't much of a kick anymore? Why, you start all over from the basics, of course.

For the undefeated champions of the Dancesport arena, the learning never stops. Melvin and Sharon, both in their early 30s, have been dancing competitively for about 10 years and come August, they will be celebrating the anniversary of their partnership with the birth of their dance academy at the Chinese Swimming Club.

Plans were first announced when they participated in the dance reality show *The Dance Floor* in 2007. Their goal was to win the competition and open a dance studio with the grand prize money of \$50,000.

Even though that plan fell through, their dream has finally materialised two years after. "It's always our dream to have a place of our own, a place where we can share our passion and build up a pool of talent," shares Melvin, who adds that "there is certainly potential in Singapore for more dance talent".

Sharon reveals that their dream was first conceived "within two to three years of coming together as dance partners". She adds that their journey thus far "has been a rather steep learning curve but we've managed well". Her answer shows the pair's shared spirit of perseverance.

Apart from the opening of their dance studio, the pair is kept busy with their coaching duties at schools like Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) and Hwa Chong Institute.

Their engagement with students has also provided them with an opportunity to groom and introduce fresh blood to the sport, traditionally taken up by mature couples only. The pride of Melvin and Sharon must surely lie in Daryl, 22, currently serving in the army, and Pamela, 21, who is currently pursuing her degree.

Both are graduates of NP and did not have a background in dancing previously. It was only upon joining NP's Dancesport club as freshmen did their journey really begin.

"I've always wanted to dance since young but my parents were against the idea. I still went ahead to put my name down at the Dancesport booth," recounts Pamela. On the flipside, Daryl adds that it was his childhood dream "to be dancing in tailcoats".

Obstacles aside, Daryl and Pamela stuck to their passion – spending time, effort and money for a sport that they love and eventually became competent in.

"You could say that we started as amateurs in NP and left as professionals," says Daryl.

As a sign of their success, Daryl and Pamela will also serve alongside Melvin and Sharon as dance instructors at the new dance academy for students between ages 16 and 25.

"Having trained under Sharon and myself for three years and won several regionals, I have absolute faith in Daryl and Pamela," says Melvin.

Having come one step closer to their dream of a school where they can nurture aspiring dancers, is there anything that Melvin and Sharon would have done differently?

"Yes, on hindsight, the prize money would have just been a bonus. We (already) had the resources then and we should have just opened the academy earlier," says Sharon.

OPENING SPECIAL! Flash this page at Melvin and Sharon's dance academy to enjoy one-for-one introductory classes.

Also, get other freebies such as discounts for shoes, merchandise and practice nights!

Email tda@thedancesportacademy.com to find out more. Promotion is valid from 11 August to 31 December 2009.

twilight

presents

raving mad or really misunderstood

By Paige Foong

Welcome to the new world where vampires are swoon-worthy and to-die-for, where pretty Tinseltown stars like Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart rule the kingdom of screaming, rabid pubescent fans.

Since its movie release in December last year, the Twilight syndrome has plagued the world faster than the H1N1 virus, not even sparing the typically conservative Singapore.

If you are unfamiliar with names like Bella Swan or Forks, here is a quick low-down: 17-year-old Bella Swan moves to a small town called Forks in Washington where she meets and falls in love with a century-old vampire, Edward Cullen. Their love story develops throughout the Twilight series, where werewolves and vampires, both good and bad, live among the human race.

The US\$53-million (S\$76.4 million) movie adaptation stars Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson. There was initial uproar over the casting of Robert Pattinson as Edward Cullen for fear that he would not be able to live up to the ethereal protagonist who is described in the books as having "a face any male model in the world would trade his soul for".

Nasyita Mashuni, 19, a nurse, recalls the first time she saw that "funny-looking man on the website", she was unsure "whether he could [personify] Edward".

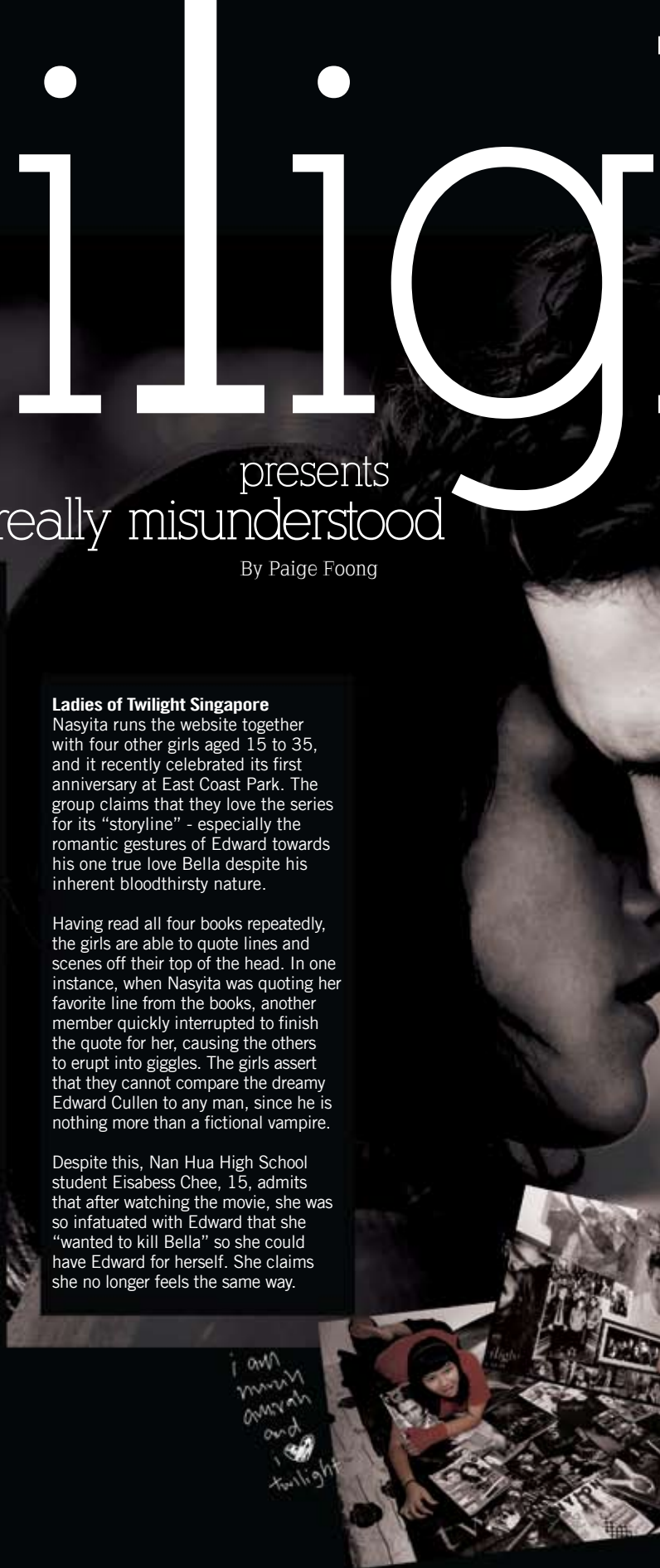
However, since watching his portrayal of Edward, she agrees that he is perfect for the character, and set up Singapore's first and largest Twilight fan site, Twilight Singapore (www.twilightsingapore.com).

Ladies of Twilight Singapore

Nasyita runs the website together with four other girls aged 15 to 35, and it recently celebrated its first anniversary at East Coast Park. The group claims that they love the series for its "storyline" - especially the romantic gestures of Edward towards his one true love Bella despite his inherent bloodthirsty nature.

Having read all four books repeatedly, the girls are able to quote lines and scenes off their top of the head. In one instance, when Nasyita was quoting her favorite line from the books, another member quickly interrupted to finish the quote for her, causing the others to erupt into giggles. The girls assert that they cannot compare the dreamy Edward Cullen to any man, since he is nothing more than a fictional vampire.

Despite this, Nan Hua High School student Eisabess Chee, 15, admits that after watching the movie, she was so infatuated with Edward that she "wanted to kill Bella" so she could have Edward for herself. She claims she no longer feels the same way.



ht

VAMPIRIC BITES

1. 2 June 2003 – the date when Stephanie Meyer dreamt of the story that grew into Twilight.

2. For the role, Robert flew from England to audition at director Catherine Hardwicke's house. It was his first time meeting Kristen Stewart and they had to practice a kissing scene on Hardwicke's own bed. It was that scene and chemistry between the two stars that landed Robert the coveted role.

3. In the movie, a scene at the cafeteria salad bar shows Bella dropping an apple that Edward promptly picks up and cradles in his hands, mimicking the cover of the Twilight novel. Catherine Hardwicke said it took them 13 takes to get it right.

4. Did you notice that when Bella and Edward were lying in the meadow scene, the sunlight coming through the trees made a heart between them?

5. In the movie, when Carlisle bit Edward, he whispered into his ear something that the audience could not hear. The first time it was "I'm sorry", followed by "My son". During the fifth take, Carlisle said, "You're sexy".

Haters to the left

Of course, there remains a good number of Twilight sceptics, like Ngee Ann Polytechnic student Illias Mohammad Iqbal, 19, who thinks of Edward Cullen and Bella Swan as nothing more than overrated girlish fantasies.

When asked about their bad reputation, local Twilight-ers say that they are nothing compared to their extreme Western counterparts, who are known to manhandle and stalk Robert Pattinson.

Nasyita thinks that the few bad apples give other Twilight-ers a bad name, and is the reason Twilight Singapore receives so many spiteful comments from haters.

One anonymous netizen commented on the website that the series "is an insult to literature". Another criticised Edward for being "an abusive, controlling, demanding boyfriend and a 108-year-old stalker – and a paedophilic rapist to boot".

While the girls from Twilight Singapore try their best to ignore such derogatory comments, they feel that people should not judge Twilight fans based on a few overzealous ones.

Nonetheless, 19-year-old Aishah Al-Rashid from Twilight Singapore says her support for the franchise grows when she defends it, because it reminds her of why she fell in love with the series in the first place.

Haters aside, the girls of Twilight Singapore are looking forward to their upcoming event, New Moon Fiesta, where fans can gather to celebrate the movie adaptation of New Moon, which is slated for a November 2009 theatrical release.

Check out <http://www.newmoonmovie.org>

Number One Fan

If Twilight had an entire awards ceremony to itself, St Hilda Secondary School student Nurul Amirah, 16, would strut down the red carpet as the hot favourite to win the title of Number One Fan. She claims to have watched the movie "practically every day" since it first hit the theatres, with the last count to be about 110 times.

Enter her room and you'll see battered copies of the Twilight series lying around beside scattered photographs of the latest scenes from the upcoming sequel, New Moon. She wears bracelets identical to the ones Bella has in the movie and her mobile ringtone is from the movie soundtrack.

She concedes to spending at least \$300 on Twilight memorabilia, and still scours Ebay for more items she can buy.

PHOTO BY ZELDA SUIN

FROM PRINT T SCREEN



Film adaptations of best-selling books are a common sight in Hollywood today. Hype brings you four books that will make their way to the big screen in the months to come. Grab them before they fly off the shelves!



Henry DeTamble is an average librarian who lives in Chicago, save for one thing: Due to a genetic disorder, he gets swept off to another chapter of his life at fate's whim every once in a while.

Translation: He is an unintentional time traveller.

Told through the viewpoint of his faithful wife Clare Abshire, readers are pulled into a heart-breaking tale of two lovers whose romance is put through the fire by the whimsical, and sometimes cruel, manipulation of time.

The book is a compelling page-turner. Emotions run high and Audrey Niffenegger has a way with narratives that sucks you into the very essence of Henry and Clare, whose emotional depth is revealed through their thoughts and choices.

Finally, after a two-year delay, fans will be treated to a silver screen adaptation starring Eric Bana (*Troy*, *Star Trek*) as Henry and Rachel McAdams (*Mean Girls*, *The Notebook*) as Clare, and directed by Robert Schwentke (*Tattoo*, *Flightplan*).

Judging from the trailer that was released early June 2009, expect a melodramatic picture, which Entertainment Weekly describes as "*The Notebook* crossed with *Benjamin Button*".

As with all film adaptations, the hardest to please are the loyal fans of the novel, and already there have been many gripes about how much of the book has been and should be left out.

However, McAdams has since put the fears regarding the movie to rest.

"(Robert Schwentke) really explored the relationship and how you carry on with the love of your life when you have this imposition," she said in an interview with Collider.com.

Perhaps the biggest shocker is the omission of Henry's old girlfriend Ingrid, who many fans deemed important in Henry's life and his outlook on love. According to Rachel, in the same interview, the film is a lot more focused on the romantic tussle between Henry and Clare.

Aside from that, the movie looks set to garner its own group of fans – hardcore romantics.

THROUGH THE EYES OF TIME



By Josceline Foo



WHERE THE WILD THINGS ARE



STORY AND PICTURES BY MAURICE SENDAK



By Tanya Lai

WILD THINGS IN ALL OF US



In just two minutes of the trailer, Clare and Henry run into each other's arms twice and make out at least three times that. Still, the movie tackles the same themes of love and faithfulness as the book, all set in picturesque Chicago.

So who knows what the future holds? Henry probably does, but for us mere mortals, we will just have to wait in anticipation to find out what happens to Henry and Clare.

Or perhaps just read the book.

The movie will be released in all major theatres in Singapore on 17 September 2009

What if you had to turn a 10-sentence children's book into a full-length feature film?

Seems like an impossible job only meant for overachievers and the brilliantly creative, doesn't it?

That brilliant and creative overachiever arrives in the form of Spike Jonze, whose directorial credits include *Being John Malkovich* and *Adaptation*. Known for his unorthodox interpretations and perspectives, Jonze has managed to magically transform the widely-popular children's book, *Where The Wild Things Are*, into a feature film.

Costume designer Casey Storm says that Jonze "has a great imagination and a strong link to kids' creativity", and the book's author Maurice Sendak was only felt comfortable handling the project to him.

Sendak wrote the original story way back in 1963 as a picture book starring Max, a mischievous boy who is sent to bed without supper after he misbehaves yet again. Angered by his punishment, Max deals with his emotions by imagining another world where he rules as king among monsters he calls Wild Things.

The massively successful children book paints a riveting and unusual story and won the "Most Distinguished Picture Book of the Year" in 1964. The film adaptation has not fared too badly either; Firstshowing.net predicts that the movie "is bound to win a most creative or most unique award".

The movie features a slightly unknown cast, save for Mark Ruffalo (*Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind*) who plays Max's mother's love interest and voiceovers by Forrest Whittaker (*The Last King of Scotland*) and Catherine O'Hara (*Home Alone*).

The one thing to look out for in the film is the depiction of the Wild Things. Storm explains that the monsters in the film were "foam walkabout costumes with people inside of them". The movie combines suitmation with animatronics (use of electronics and robotics in mechanised puppets) and computer-generated imagery to create monsters that look somewhat out-of-this-world and yet oddly realistic.

Filming began in 2005, but studio executives deemed the final cut by Jonze too dark. Their creative differences almost caused an entire reshoot, which led to a postponement of the film to 2009; the film was originally slated for an October 2008 release. Total production and marketing costs have soared past US\$100 million since then.

Still, it seems like the extra time and money has paid off. Judging from the short but telling official trailer, the stunning and wildly magical movie is all geared up for an experience of a lifetime. The movie is perfectly summed up in the trailer's own words: "Inside all of us is hope. Inside of us is fear. Inside of us is adventure. Inside of us is a Wild Thing."

Despite its seemingly childish exterior, *Where The Wild Things Are* is possibly one of the best efforts to combine elements of dynamic puppetry manipulation, outstanding voiceovers and a stirring plot, making it a truly beloved piece for every generation and those to come.

Where The Wild Things Are will make its silver screen debut on 26 November 2009



COLOUR MY WORLD GREY

By Wong Yeang Cherng

If you wake up to a world devoid of life and stained grey from hopelessness and death, would you rather die or carry on with life?

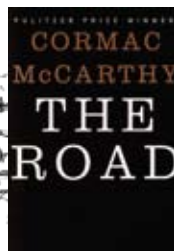
Brace yourself to ponder over this question when you watch the film adaptation of Pulitzer prize-winning novel *The Road*. Written by Cormac McCarthy (*No Country for Old Men*), *The Road* is about the lives of a man and his son who wake up to a post-apocalypse America.

The ominous tale is told through the eyes of two survivors – The Man and his son, The Boy – after a global disaster reduces the world to nothing more than pathetic ruins. What unfolds is an epic story of a journey across charred landscapes to a perceived “salvation” in the south. Along the way, the pair meet with numerous obstacles such as the threat of cannibals and surviving the harsh wasteland that the world has become.

Set to hit the screens this year, *The Road* captures the essence of the human spirit and the ultimate fight for survival in a seemingly hopeless and bleak world.

Taking the role of The Man is Viggo Mortensen, who played a similar role as the noble, grimy-faced Aragorn in the wildly popular *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, though in vastly different settings. Accompanying him is Australian actor and winner of the AFI Young Best Actor Award 2007 Kodi Smit-McPhee for his role in *Romulus, My Father*.

With the critically acclaimed and delicate nature of the story, the director of the silver screen adaptation is set up for a gruelling task. However, a sneak peek from the official trailer of what the director John Hillcoat (*The Proposition*) has done seems to point to a classic film in the making.



Esquire magazine has called it “a brilliantly directed adaptation of a beloved novel”, even going as far as to name it “the most important movie of the year”.

Fans of feel-good movies will not be too pleased to know that Hillcoat has promised that the film will stay “faithful to the spirit of the book”, which means that one can expect horrific, grim and revolting images of the half-dead, kept imprisoned in ghastly conditions and only winding up eaten by cannibals, as portrayed in the book.

Fans of the book will delight in the emotional depth and compelling storyline that the film promises to bring. And you are kept at the edge of your seat rooting for father and son to make it through the daunting trials and tribulations.

But for those who know better, *The Road* is deeper than the average violent/horror flick. The movie is, in its own right, a tear-jerking, heart-wrenching and heart-warming narrative of a father's unconditional love and the unwavering desire to survive in a bleak world that encapsulates death itself.

The Road is slated for a worldwide theatrical release on 16 October 2009



SCREENING THE MOON

By Lin Zicheng

If you thought that Stephanie Meyer's *Twilight* series is all about a steamy fairytale romance between a perfect vampire and a regular teenage human girl, *New Moon* will definitely make you think twice.

Compared to its fluffy romantic prequel, *New Moon* is driven by the internal turmoil and paranoia that faces Bella when Edward leaves her abruptly after the fact that Edward and his family are endangering Bella.

Shortly after, Bella sinks into a brooding depression for most parts of the book, where she befriends a werewolf Jacob. The complicated relationship results in a messy love triangle between Edward, Bella and Jacob.

Instead of Catherine Hardwicke, the film adaptation of *New Moon* will be directed by Chris Weitz (*The Golden Compass*) due to "time restrictions". Fans of the first movie will be thrilled to know that both Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson reprise their roles as Bella and Edward.

Also, Taylor Lautner rejoins the cast as the werewolf Jacob Black, after much confusion when his name was not listed in the initial official cast list. Due to Taylor's underdeveloped frame, he was deemed unable to physically portray the transformation of Jacob to a werewolf. That has changed since Taylor began working out and putting on the pounds.

Another member of the cast to look out for is Dakota Fanning, who is the latest addition to the vampire brood as she plays the Volturi guard Jane with the ability to torture people with illusions of pain.

So with stellar additions made to the original cast, what can fans expect in this sequel to the phenomenal *Twilight* film, which grossed almost US\$400 million worldwide since its release in 2008?

There will be action from both werewolves and vampires. Chris Weitz has promised in an official press release to protect the characters, themes and story that captivated fans in the first place. But it remains to be seen if *New Moon* will bring something more to the game, or just be another one of those sequels that are in it for the fans' money.

Fans were quick to point out one tiny problem though: How would Edward be portrayed in the upcoming film, since he plays a minor role in the book, appearing only to Bella in short dream sequences? In a nod to Robert Pattinson's star power, the director has responded to this by extending those dream sequences to give him more screen time.

Still, you have to admit that with such attractive leads, a big budget and a commercially viable storyline, *New Moon* is pretty much guaranteed a top spot at the box office. So while you wait for the arrival of one of the most anticipated movies of the year, be sure to get your daily vampire fix by reading or rereading the books that started it all.



New Moon will hit the silver screens on 20 December 2009

By Daniel Ong, Nicholas Lee & Anand S/O Sasangan

FANATICISM MY DEAR WATSON

Yes, fans of Sherlock Holmes will probably roll their eyes out at this headline.

For those not yet in the know, “Elementary, my dear Watson” was never a phrase coined by Sherlock Holmes author Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, as any faithful fan would tell you, and perhaps maybe more.

No one can completely comprehend the superstar fandom, and with the beloved detective scoring countless devotees worldwide, it wasn’t long before hype caught on. Consider for a moment the passion and dedication displayed by fans in the December of 1893, when the detective was killed off in “The Adventure of the Final Problem”; copious springs of pressure from undeniably upset fans arouse and eventually drove Conan Doyle to resurrect the hero.

And with such fervent followers, hype investigates the upcoming film adaptation and interrogates two die-hard fans of the mega popular detective.

A Guy's Vision of Sherlock Holmes

With the numerous adaptations of the world's famous detective, there is no definitive version of Sherlock Holmes that everyone can agree on. This Christmas, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's mastermind creation is set for yet another big screen reinvention.

Sherlock Holmes, directed by Guy Ritchie, will star Robert Downey Jr. as the titular character. Jude Law (*The Talented Mr Ripley*, *Cold Mountain*), who incidentally had a minor role in the Sherlock Holmes television series in 1991, will play Holmes' partner and ally, Dr Watson.

There is little dissent among fans about the casting of Jude Law as Watson, since they are both English. Unfortunately, that cannot be said about American actor Robert Downey Jr. as Holmes, who recently starred in *Iron Man* (2008).

However, Downey has been well received by British audiences previously, having won a BAFTA award for his role of Charlie Chaplin in *Chaplin* (1992).

Die-hard Sherlock Holmes fans may be disappointed that this particular adaptation is not based on any of Doyle's works. Instead, the plot is based on a yet-to-be published graphic novel by Lionel Wigram. According to the film's official website, the upcoming movie is a "dynamic new portrayal" that will see Holmes "battle as never before to bring down a new nemesis and unravel a deadly plot that could destroy the country".

Not much is known about the actual plot itself, but through some deductive reasoning, as Holmes would put it, and from bits of the official trailer, it is safe to conclude that the mystery nemesis is a certain Lord Blackwood who will be played by Mark Strong (*Fever Pitch*, *Oliver Twist*).

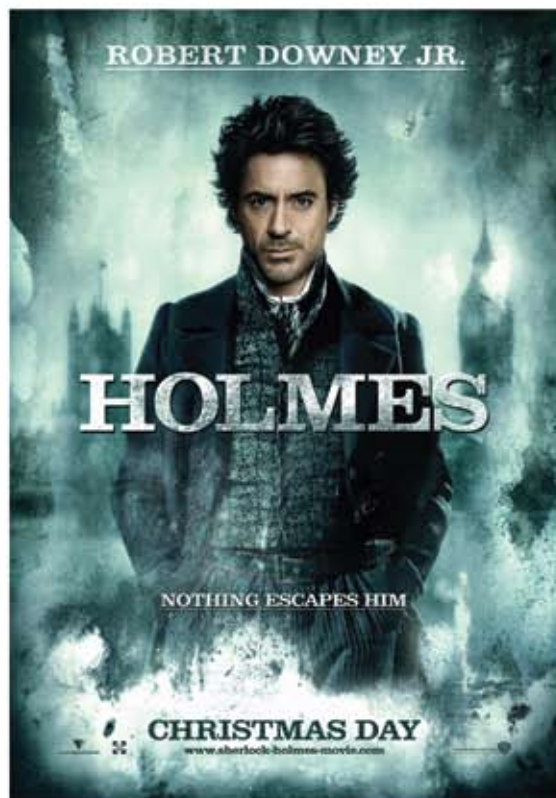
While Blackwood may be a new character in the movie, there will be some familiarity in the form of Irene Adler (played by Rachel McAdams), who Holmes has referred to as "The Woman" in the novels.

With the adored Sherlock Holmes brought to screen yet again, one cannot help but wonder how this version will be approached.

Director Guy Ritchie shed some light on the issue, saying that the film will reveal Holmes' "fighting skills". Ritchie adds that he will also be showing off Holmes' "skills as a boxer and a sword-fighter".

In an interview with Entertainment Tonight, Downey also offers some insights. He says, "I think the reinvention is actually a return to the idiosyncrasies that Arthur Conan Doyle had in his books that people hadn't paid much attention to."

Judging by from the positive buzz and fresh direction of the film, one can expect an action-packed adventure picture. But in true Holmes fashion, the only way to find out about the standard of the film will be "when you have eliminated the impossible, and whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth".





When friends of Low Hong Wei, 19, mentioned that the Chemical and Biomolecular Engineering student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic behaves like Sherlock Holmes, they set us hot on his trail. What would interest us more than a modern day Sherlock Holmes?

What is it with you and Sherlock Holmes?

I like Holmes because he's inspiring. He doesn't just use intuition; he actually finds a reason for everything and uses minor details to understand how something happens.

Intellect, observational skills, inference reasoning, which would you say is most 'Sherlocky' about you?

Observational... I would say a combination of all actually! (laughs) I was born to behave in such a way... Maybe it's the personality, I'm more curious and inquisitive by nature.

Let's test it with a riddle, "Two mothers and two daughters go shopping. They have \$21, which they split equally between them. (At this point, he answered before I could even finish) How can this be possible?"

Seven... I heard of it before and I remember it. I always remember these small little details. My friends often always ask me why I remember things from like six months ago.

Awesome! Try this then, "A black dog was in the center of the road in a town where everything was completely black in colour. The dog was in the path of a driver traveling at full speed. Somehow

the driver was able to stop in time avoiding an accident, how is this possible?"

Broad daylight.

Excellent. Is there a particular character that you always remember?

Lestrade. He always looks down on and underestimates Sherlock Holmes, but Holmes doesn't really care about what others think of him.

Does that somehow parallel your life?

Yeah obviously, people like Lestrade are everywhere. Just like Holmes, you do not need to care about them and focus on the ones who are really important. After all, the superintendent is not going to affect him and he's just an extra character.



Another huge fan of the detective, Odelia Koh, 19, is interested in all things British. Her venture into the world of Sherlock Holmes came as a fortunate discovery. At 10, "good fortune" came upon her as she was finishing a series of Hardy Boys at the library and happened to notice this "beautiful set of black hardcover books just above the Hardy Boys books," which she describes now as "appropriate" for a 'Sherlocky' feel.

What is your favorite title out of the Sherlock series and why?

I think it is the Adventure of the Dancing Men, because the dancing men makes the story so much more sinister, and also, I think there's something fascinating about codes.

I understand you have a collection of Sherlock Holmes works. What does this (self bought) collection include?

My books include Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Novels and Stories (Bantam Classic) Volume I and II, Return of Sherlock Holmes and Adventures of Sherlock Holmes (Wordsworth Classics), The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, The Letter of Mary and The Complete Sherlock Holmes (Geddes & Grossett).

As for my DVDs, I have The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, The Eligible Bachelor, The Return of Sherlock Holmes, The Master Blackmailer, The Sign of Four, The Last Vampire, The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes,

The Hound of the Baskervilles and The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, all starring Jeremy Brett. I also have Terror By Night, which stars Basil Rathbone.

Okay, so if you had to choose, will it be book or movie?

I would watch Jeremy Brett's screen version, as I believe that gives me a more complete experience. When watching, emotions that you get from books are translated into images that complement and enhance them. But I believe that this preference is a natural progression from reading the stories. If you are new to Sherlock Holmes, you should read first to feel for yourself who he is.

Lastly, if Sherlock Holmes was real and alive today...

I would like to hear his opinion on the ordinary everyday person. People behave in strange ways and it would be interesting to gain fresh insights into human behavior and everyday things that we often overlook. Of course it would be interesting for Sherlock Holmes to solve real crime cases that have baffled law enforcement officers for years.

HALL Of HOLMES

Unbeknownst to most, the character of Sherlock Holmes was first birthed in 1887, where his first adventure was titled 'A Study in Scarlet'.

The canon of Sherlock Holmes, which includes three other novels and 56 other short stories, was written Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The three other novels (in order of date published) include, 'The Sign of Four', 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' and 'The Valley of Fear'.

After about a hundred years later in 1999, thousands of fans (dubbed as Sherlockians) took part in a global survey to select the best Sherlock Holmes stories. 'The Hound of the Baskervilles' was the obvious fan choice, scoring a perfect rating on the survey.

Renowned writer and literary critic Wyatt James, or better known by his alias Grobius Shortling, described the story as "the Sherlock Holmes masterpiece. It's a classic like Robinson Crusoe and Gulliver's Travels." The survey also saw 'The Sign of Four' take second place, while 'A Study in Scarlet' and 'The Valley of Fear' took the bottom two spots.

As with all other classic novels, Holmes was soon brought to life on various other platforms. A book published in 1995 titled 'The Universal Sherlock Holmes' by Ronald B. DeWaal lists over 25,000 Holmes-related productions and products.

But Holmes' signature cape, hat and pipe first appeared in a 1899 play by William Gillette, who wrote, directed and starred in the title play. The look has since been synonymous with every production that stars Holmes, even the first big screen adaptation in 1990.

Numerous actors have played Holmes, but the one actor that has resonated with movie audiences has to be Basil Rathbone, having appeared in over 15 films and 219 radio performances.

Perhaps the closest in terms of an accurate portrayal of Holmes is television actor Jeremy Brett, who starred as the title character in the 'The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' television series from 1984 to 1994. While most critics have lauded Brett's and Rathbone's performances, fans of the series are evidently torn between the two.

In an online discussion board on Holmes, an anonymous fan declares, "Jeremy Brett was a genius but Basil Rathbone was also pretty good," while another fan, Dani Morell, asserts, "Jeremy Brett, of course!"

With a growing fanbase that has been around since the first novel in the 1800s, it is no wonder that the upcoming silver screen adaptation of Sherlock Holmes, directed by Guy Ritchie, has fans and critics keeping a close watch on Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law's performance of their beloved Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson respectively.

And why you may ask?

Why, it's elementary my dear Watson.



Basil Rathbone (left) as Sherlock Holmes and Nigel Bruce (right) as Dr Watson. The duo starred in 14 Sherlock Holmes movies in the early 1940's.




Basil Rathbone as Sherlock Holmes, fits the role perfectly as a tall, lean man with sharp eyes and a sharp nose and a strong chin.



Jeremy Brett (left) as Sherlock Holmes and Edward Hardwicke (right) as Dr Watson. The duo starred in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, a series of television films made that ran between 1984 and 1994.



Jeremy Brett, though not as lean as Basil Rathbone, is still very tall and possess all the other features of Sherlock Holmes. Edward Hardwicke plays Watson, and fits his description as a middle-sized, strongly built man with a square jaw a thick neck and moustache.



Junida Binte Jamel
*Bachelor of Computer Science
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University of Wollongong*

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What the DICKENS!?



CURSE WITH CLASS

By Rachael Nonis

It's unlikely that any of us would sit back to think about the gazillion words and phrases we use on a daily basis, so what more the overrated profanities that hang so precariously from our lips? Pull up your socks and learn a thing or two from English poet and playwright William Shakespeare when it comes to controlling our temper. This quick guide will teach you to behave like royalty when someone gets on your nerves and, slowly but surely, you'll master the lovely mix of swear and style.

"What the dickens" - *The Merry Wives of Windsor*

Used in replacement of "What the devil" or the infamous four-letter swear sword, Shakespeare describes the annoyance of forgetting someone's name. Despite another famous author with the surname Dickens appearing years later, I'm pretty sure Shakespeare wrote this curse without any pun intended. So the next time you forget anything at all, you should be wondering what the dickens it was.

"A sorry sight" - *Macbeth*

Shakespeare laments Macbeth's murderous hands as a pathetic sight, rotten to the eyes and miserable – just like your friend's hideous outfit. Only you don't want to be mean and tell her it looks retarded. Instead, bring her to a mirror and say, "Oh darling, you are such a sorry sight..." But do try to make it up to her by bringing her for an awesome shopping spree afterward.

"A blinking idiot" - *The Merchant of Venice*

In order to get Portia's hand in marriage, the prince of Arragon has to find a basket with a portrait of her in it. Instead, he finds a portrait of a stranger, and in his anger and frustration, calls it a portrait of a blinking idiot. Surely he couldn't have meant that the portrait was blinking, but it sure makes for the nicest adjective to compliment the word idiot.

"A plague on both your houses" - *Romeo and Juliet*

Used to curse the feuding Montague (Romeo) and Capulet (Juliet) families, this curse translates to something like "damn them in any way possible". So next time you're stuck in the middle of a love triangle where things get out of hand and you're thinking of calling the spiritual forces on her/him, this line will be perfect. You'll be surprised at their surprise and feel surprisedly better after that.

"The most unkindest cut of all" - *Julius Caesar*

When Brutus stabs Caesar, Shakespeare calls it the most unkindest cut of all, since Brutus' treachery and betrayal killed him more than the actual wound. In today's world filled with scheming backstabbers, look him/her square in the eyes, put on your most believable pout, and say the line. Believe me, that weasel will never forget it.

"Cudgel thy brains" - *Hamlet*

Two clowns are having a conversation. One is more confused than the other. The smarter one advises the other not to cudgel thy brains any more since it has been beaten up, and even thinking takes an extraordinary effort. This is perfect to describe someone who takes way too long to figure out the sum of one plus two.

"My dear lady disdain, are you yet living?" - *Much Ado About Nothing*

This was first used by Benedick when he bumps into Beatrice who later becomes his wife. Like all modern love stories, the two hate each other at first, constantly hurling insults at the other. Guys, it might just be the way to win over your long-time crush, although careful planning is needed. Ladies, try it on the she-devil in your life, and prepare to run.

"The serpent's egg" - *Julius Caesar*

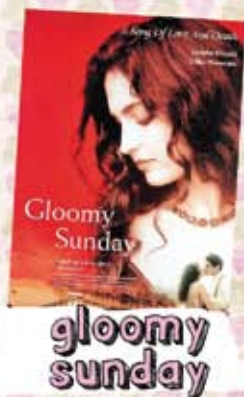
Brutus calls Caesar a serpent's egg, as though he was some evil waiting to be hatched. The modern adaptation of the phrase is something like "You son of a b*tch!". Now, learn some manners from the Bard and sound a little more civilised, will you?

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DEATH BY L♥VE

We would like to believe that love conquers all; that there is the happily-ever-after, but the overworked mind and cultural taboos can conjure up not magic but sheer mayhem. Eunice Ng explores four films that look beyond the fluff.



German Title: Ein Lied von Liebe und Tod
Rating: M18

Where to get it: Amazon.com

Rating: ♥♥♥♥♥♥♥♥

THE LOWDOWN

Set in Hungary before the tumultuous World War II era, this movie is surprisingly charming and sensual. The mesmerising Ilona (Erika Marozsán) leads a blissful life with her boyfriend László (Joachim Król), co-running a high-class Jewish restaurant in Budapest. They hire a talented young pianist, András (Stefano Dionisi) to complete their picture of the perfect restaurant, but the brooding musician falls in love with Ilona in the process. She inspires András to write his lyrical composition Gloomy Sunday, a song so sad that it sparks off numerous suicides all over the country. Things get complicated when the danger of war looms, and the recurring appearance of a young German Hans (Ben Becker) threatens the trio.

THE LOVE

The portrayal of a love triangle involving Ilona, László and András is peaceful beyond belief. There are no jealous battles and no underhand scheming. Instead, the two men happily share Ilona, as they seem to believe that having half of her is better than having none of her at all.

THE REST

Captivating right from the start, *Gloomy Sunday* moves with an easy flow, drawing the viewer more and more into the movie emotionally as it progresses. Although the strength and emphasis of the spoken German is sometimes lost in the English translation, the honest, open acting more than makes up for it.



he loves me... he loves me not

French Title: À la folie... pas du tout

Rating: PG13

Where to get it: Video Ezy, Amazon.com

Rating: ❤️❤️❤️❤️

THE LOWDOWN

Don't be fooled by the cheesy title and chick flick-esque DVD box cover. This movie proves that first impressions can be very wrong. Audrey Tautou, fresh from her role as the sweet, innocent girl in *Amélie*, plays Angelique, a talented young artist who is hopelessly in love with Loïc (Samuel Le Bihan), a married doctor. Angelique and Loïc seem to share a delightful extra-marital affair, until the whole movie rewinds and we start seeing things from Loïc's point of view. Be prepared to get chills down your spine when you find out the real truth.

THE LOVE

Not your typical single-girl-meets-married-but-unhappy-man movie, *He Loves Me... He Loves Me Not* has more to it than what the viewer first sees. With the use of the song "L-O-V-E" by Nat King Cole, and the

bright pink hearts that decorate the opening credits at the start, one is immediately sucked into the world of Angelique – that of blissful, not-a-care-in-the-world love. There is more than meets the eye though, and Angelique is not as angelic as we are led to believe.

THE REST

While not many movies succeed at the rewind technique, *He Loves Me... He Loves Me Not* does considerably well. The movie does slow down a little at first, but as it goes on, more revelations dawn on the viewer that allow him to see the movie from a fresh perspective. Writer-director Laetitia Colombani also does a good job of using different shots for the repeated scenes. The wholesome image of pixie-faced Tautou is also perfectly exploited for the role, making it a pure delight to watch.



the sea inside

Spanish Title: Mar Adentro

Rating: NC16

Where to get it: Video Ezy, Amazon.com

Rating: ❤️❤️❤️❤️

THE LOWDOWN

A calm, but thought-provoking film about Ramón Sampedro (Javier Bardem), the Galician quadriplegic who sparked off controversy in Spain in 1998 for his campaign to end his life voluntarily. The 55-year-old had been paralysed since he was 25 after a diving accident. Constantly fighting for his attention are four women – Manuela (Mabel Rivera), his sister-in-law who takes care of him, Gené (Clara Segura), a representative from Death With Dignity, Julia (Belén Rueda), his lawyer, and Rosa (Lola Dueñas), a single mother who visits him to share her problems.

THE LOVE

It is hard to understand why such an outspoken, visionary man who is loved and admired wants to end his life. Though hardly ever leaving his bed, Ramón's

eloquence, charm and determination manage to win the hearts of the ladies who visit him, and ironically encourages them to further embrace life.

THE REST

Because a large part of the movie is filmed in just one room, *The Sea Inside* may be too slow-moving for many. The movie will definitely not impress action and suspense junkies. Watch it though, if you're in the mood for a peaceful, yet clever piece that discusses the all-time taboo topic - death. While at it, be charmed by Bardem's remarkable acting. The Best Actor at the European Film Awards in 2004 has an unrivalled way of touching the hearts of viewers through his wide range of facial expressions and honest delivery, as seen here in his role as the bedridden Sampedro.



baran

International Title: Baran

Rating: PG

Where to get it: Video Ezy, Amazon.com

Rating: ❤️❤️❤️❤️

THE LOWDOWN

It's 2001 in Iran. Many Afghan refugees are moving to, and seeking work in, the country to escape the Taliban regime back home. Young Iranian Lateef (Hossein Abedini) has a cushy job at a construction site preparing tea and meals for workers. Life is not so easy for the many Afghan workers at the site though, most of whom are working illegally and paid much lower than the normal construction worker. When Afghan worker Najaf (Gholam Ali Bakhshi) falls and breaks his leg, he has no choice but to send his son Rahmat (Zahran Bahrami) in his place to work for the family. The young and weak Rahmat gets assigned to Lateef's job, which, of course, infuriates Lateef. He plays pranks on Rahmat until one day when he finds out that Rahmat is actually a girl!

THE LOVE

This film explores love of a different culture - one that is conservative and self-sacrificing but nonetheless exciting and touching. The young characters barely converse, but convey their love in other simple ways. It is truly an innocent and heartwarming romance.

THE REST

The film moves at a slow pace and requires patience from the viewer until the end. It is, however, tear-jerking at certain points as it emphasises the plight of Afghan refugees in Iran through the simple, unassuming romance of a young Iranian and Afghan refugee of contrasting social backgrounds.



the best, ninefold

Stand up, get your freak on and blast your music as **hype** brings you nine stellar album releases for the year of 2009. Absolutely no service charge included.
By Lee Dion, Liu Hongzuo & Nathaniel Phua



1 LILY ALLEN - *It's Not Me, It's You*

Talk about defining the times! Lily Allen's second studio album, *It's Not Me, It's You* is definitely one for our era. Highly satirical and insanely funny, singer-songwriter and occasional party girl Lily Allen tackles contemporary issues such as drug abuse and heartbreak with wit and charm in a way only her sassy attitude can pull off. Even a song that is meant to put down corrupt politicians ("F*ck You") seems interestingly light-hearted and fun with its short piano intro and bubbly tune. This is one of the few albums out there that you can pick up the lyrics and follow from start to end.

2 FALL OUT BOY - *Folie à deux*

Fall Out Boy's fifth studio album *Folie à deux* - loosely translated to mean madness shared by two - hits the airwaves with their signature harebrained lyrics and catchy choruses. Even with their amateur lyrics, Fall Out Boy still manages to capture the attention of their listeners with their choice of rhythm and beats. One particular track to look out for is "20 Dollar Nose Bleed". With less rock vibes, the song starts off with a jumpy piano riff and breaks off into an ensemble of clapping midway. If their previous album *Infinity On High* wasn't enough, this follow up will leave you breathless and hanging at the edge of your seat from start to end.

3 KELLY CLARKSON - *All I Ever*

Wanted After the commercial fiasco last year with *My December*, the original American idol came back with an outstanding release of *All I Ever Wanted*. With some of the best producers around on the team (Ryan Tedder, Max Martin), Kelly Clarkson has put out her best album to date. Amidst the usual radio-friendly anthems such as "My Life Would Suck Without You" and "I Do Not Hook Up", the pinnacle of the album lies in its quietly powerful ballad "Already Gone". Kelly's poignant delivery, is assisted by Ryan Tedder's haunting production style, resulting in pure pop perfection. With her signature big voice and charming personality, *All I Ever Wanted* will wind up on the shelves where only the best are kept.

4 U2 - *No Line on the Horizon*

Even after releasing 11 albums, the world's best-selling rock band does not seem to be wavering in style and technique with their 12th studio album release. With percussions on syncopation and distortion turned up high, lead vocalist Bono lets his vocals loose on *No Line On The Horizon*. The tracks are filled with the band's highly recognisable brand of rock - the sort that makes you rise to your feet, headbanging, with both fists pumping in the air.

5 WHITE LIES - *To Lose My Life*

For those who haven't already heard the sounds of White Lies, they are a three-piece English indie band that is relatively new to the music scene. With their debut album *To Lose My Life*, it seems that the band is set to give more established acts a run for their money. Upon first listen, the music may seem foreign to those who are accustomed to mainstream radio, but hit the repeat button and you will soon uncover some hidden gems. Captivating tracks to look out for are "Death", "To Lose My Life" and "E.S.T."

6 EMINEM - *Relapse* He's back. Marshall Mathers, better known by his stage name Eminem, has released another album similar to *Encore*, his previous riot. A rapper through and through, *Relapse* sees Eminem venture into dark themes like drug addiction and serial killer fantasies. Ardent fans will be pleased to know that he's still as crude and

rude as before. In this album, you'll also find danceable and catchy songs such as "Same Song & Dance". If you enjoyed his previous releases, you will love *Relapse*, with the familiar voice of Eminem, a stronger album concept, and befitting album artwork. But be warned, this album is rather lyrically explicit.

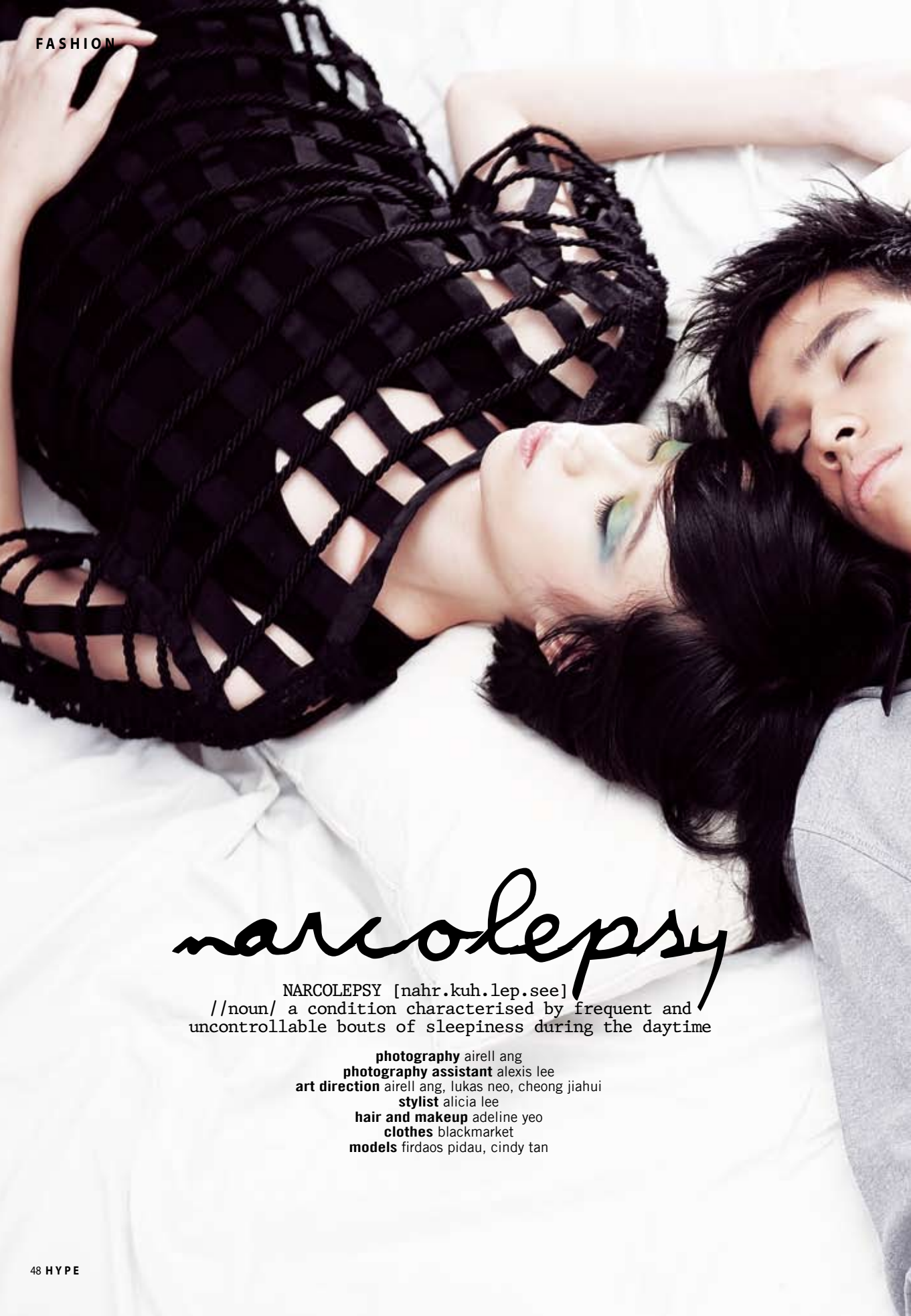
7 CAMERA OBSCURA - *My Maudlin Career*

Staying true to their unique whimsical sound and quirky lyrics, Scottish indie pop band Camera Obscura has released their fourth album titled *My Maudlin Career*. Accompanied by a playful mix of percussions and strings, this album will sail you through a myriad of emotions on lead vocalist Tracyanne Campbell's breathy voice, through dusty libraries, forests and sands, all within the comfort of your own home.

8 THE PRODIGY - *Invaders Must Die*

This is electronic music at its very best. The Prodigy, known for their rave tracks, has conjured yet another album for all you dancers to move to. With a varied mix of rock, rhythm and rave, banded with the extensive use of electronic sounds, *Invaders Must Die* is something all pop-dance music fans will die for. Look out for ear-pleasing tracks like "Omen", the trance-styled "Colours" and the house-like "Take Me To The Hospital". You'll be listening to this album over and over. Now, dance!

9 TAKE THAT - *The Circus* We all know that comeback bands don't often work out, but this isn't the case for Take That. This time, old is gold. The sounds of their latest album *The Circus* is quite possibly the best album the band has ever had. While longtime fans may miss Robbie Williams, who has since gone solo, Take That is now in a league of its own with *The Circus* whose pop tunes are crafted to appeal to both the young and the old. Teenage angst has now mellowed into a soothing listen. Just like wine, Take That certainly gets better with age.



narcolepsy

NARCOLEPSY [nahr.kuh.lep.see]

//noun/ a condition characterised by frequent and uncontrollable bouts of sleepiness during the daytime

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photography assistant alexis lee

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ON FIRDAOS hooked clothings black collar
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reckless ericka cowl shirt \$249



gian romano dark tank dress \$285, shito grand stander \$179



ON FIRDAOS **i never promised you a rose garden coal coil armour blouse** \$380
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ON FIRDAOS **hooked clothings black shirt** \$99

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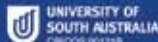
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A STUDENT'S LIFE

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FASHIONISTA POTENTIAL

By Nur Aini Jaffar

For most of us, fashion is another part of our life that either ends up as a self-indulgence or a bare necessity. But for fashion design student Janice Chua, fashion is her oxygen. Her unassuming and enthusiastic take towards the art is evidence that she's cut out to be a fashion designer.

More than anything else, Janice caught the fashion bug from her mum. "Since young I have always seen my mum watching fashion shows on television. So naturally, I also got hooked on watching them," says Janice.

While most of her peers were reading *The Famous Five* and other Enid Blyton books when they were young, Janice's favourite books were fashion magazines, because her mum used to buy plenty of them as part of her job in the local fashion scene.

"I would look at the models and be amazed by the pretty clothes they wear," reminisces the second-year student at Lasalle College of the Arts.

Though her first dream was to be a model, it was her fascination with cloth and design that eventually stuck. "There is more than just seeing that the clothes look nice. How the clothes are made and the process that goes into making them intrigues me more," enthuses the aspiring fashion designer.

With her bubbly and spirited personality, it doesn't come as a surprise to find out that Janice's favourite designs are those of prints and colourful fabrics. Her favourite fashion designer is naturally Diane von Furstenberg.

"Diane von Furstenberg is not afraid to play with bold prints, colourful fabrics... She knows how to play with layering; I love how her layering is often nice and soft," says the 21-year-old. She adds, "I also look up to Emilio Pucci who also likes to play with a lot of prints and use a lot of psychedelic colours. Another is Matthew Williamson who is very good at fabric manipulation."

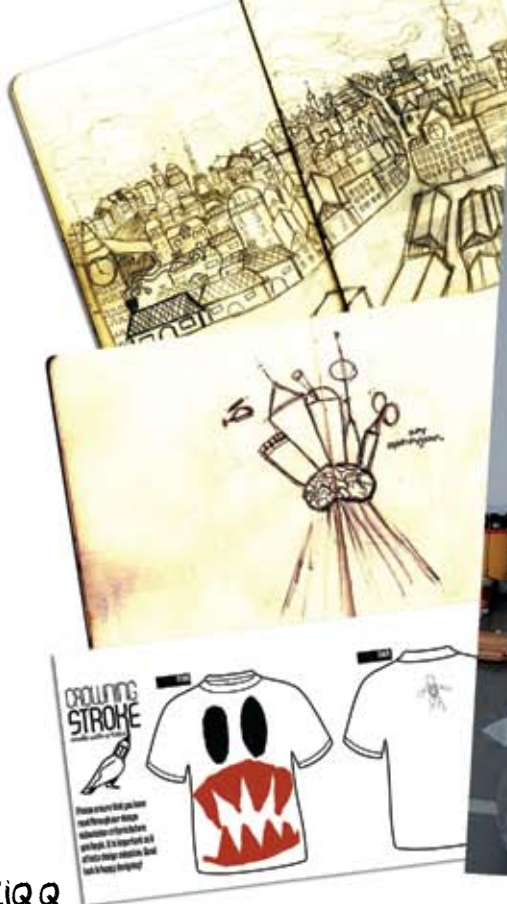
So what does the designer-in-training hope to achieve in the overcrowded fashion industry? Janice's mission is to have her own label and to give women more bold choices. She plans to set up a fashion empire in fashion capitals like London, New York and Paris, with bold prints and neon colours as her signature style.

"Bold prints and neon colours can be feminine. It depends on how it is worn. I want to bring up the feminine side of the colours so it is wearable."

"Singaporeans are just not daring enough. Everyone tends to wear the same thing and that is boring," she laments.



PHOTOS BY ZELDA SUN



PHOTOS COURTESY OF HAZIQQ

COOL ZIQQ

By Lee Dion

He started with doodles, “lots and lots of them” and “random ramblings”, as he calls his drawings and that has stuck with him since.

Haziqq, affectionately known as Ziqq by his friends, is an aspiring designer and his life is anything but planned – he “was thrown into it”. He stumbled into his current course of Design for Interactivity (DDI) at Republic Polytechnic because his ‘O’ level grades won’t take him anywhere else.

It was only during the beginning of his final-year that he realised it was all “a blessing in disguise” because he has found “no other environment that can stimulate” him better. But in recent years, Singapore has seen a surge in design schools to cater to the growing pool of creative talents. What then, sets Haziqq apart from the rest?

While most would expect designers to talk arty and assume full control, the 19-year-old student has always been “user-centric”.

“As a designer, you design not just as a form of self-expression, it should be realistic and practical. You should aim to give people what they need and want. It’s all about the user’s experience,” explains Haziqq. “Give them solutions to enhance the way they interact with the designs.”

His guiding design principles have certainly paid off; his present portfolio is nothing short of top grade. The sizeable collection is encapsulated online in his personal website that details all he has done. When asked if there is anyone that he looks up to, he replies almost instantly, “Chuan”, a reference to Dr Chong Li-Chuan, the Chairperson of DDI.

“Dr Chong makes you look at things with a fresh perspective. He takes you beyond the surface and probes you to go to the next level of thinking,” says Haziqq, whose hushed but intense passion and drive to succeed becomes evident as he speaks.

To succeed at what, you wonder? He grins before saying that he wants to return as a lecturer to inspire others, the way he was inspired. But before of all that, the aspiring designer wants to start out as a product designer with Apple because it “observes and creates products that work better”.

Having said that, Haziqq recognises that the journey ahead will not be easy. However, if anything, it will be his humility and willingness to improve that will help him to soar above the hurdles.

Perhaps it is his humble background that has taught Haziqq the value of pragmatism and clear-headedness; he deals with compliments almost nonchalantly. During the interview, he repeatedly downplays his works, often reiterating that there are others who are more capable, despite the fact that his school had chosen him to front the school in this interview.

“I’ve gone through a lot in my life. I’ve had my share of ups and downs and I do not think that I’m at my best yet because I can still improve, aim higher,” says Haziqq.

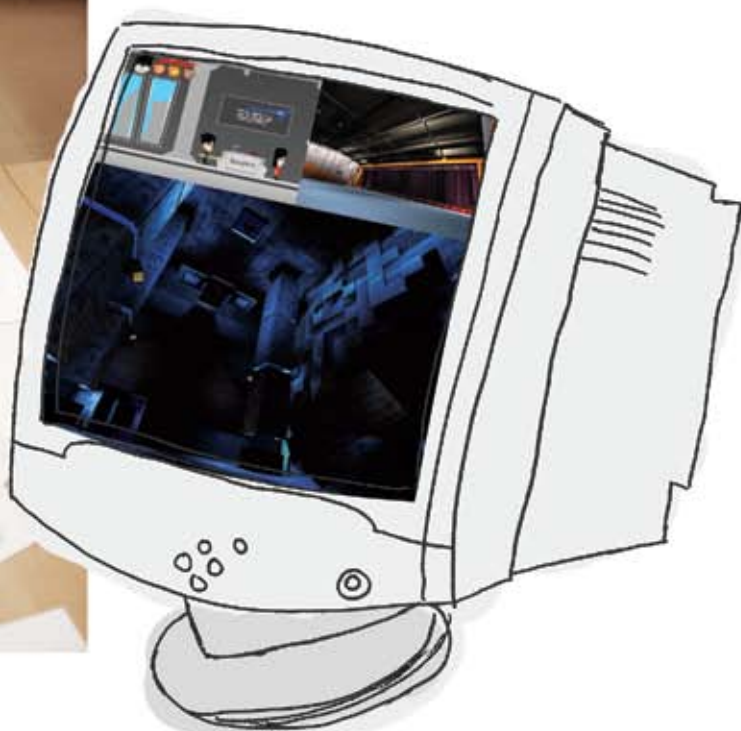
From his early days as a doodling toddler to a dreamy youth, to the present day design guru in the making, Haziqq has certainly walked a long and winding path. The next big project he is working on is an exhibition of his final-year project, entitled “Project Lumiere”. Haziqq wants to create a lighted statue “whose rays will reflect the love that is synonymous with the goodness,” referring to Venus de Milo, the Greek goddess of love and beauty.

“But why stop at just a statue when I can take it one step further and turn it into a lighted ornament?” he muses. With that, he picks up his pencil and paper and begins doodling all over, once again drawn into his pensive, contemplative and dreamy state.

Check out <http://projectlumiere.blogspot.com>



PHOTO BY AIRELL ANG



MASTER OF DIGITAL PUPPETS

By Liu Hongzuo

Although the traditionally accepted notion is that the pen is mightier than the sword, Ngee Ann Polytechnic final-year Multimedia Animation (MMA) student Cai Weiliang, 24, will tell you that the power of a pixel tops it all.

A pixel alone is nothing more than a miniscule capsule of information. But when it is put together with millions of its kind and programmed to a razor-sharp precision, the little squares transform into an array of visual delight, restrained only by the limits of imagination.

"I can make things beyond the wildest imagination and be part of it," says Weiliang, who currently specialises in Interactive Media.

"My passion is in creating computer games, because I'm given the ability to create things I can't normally do in real life."

They say with great power comes great responsibility. In the case of Weiliang, the onus is on him to master drawing techniques in 2D and 3D, understand complex programming codes that animate the pixels and finally bring their characters to life by imbuing them with a voice and a narrative.

Despite the rigorous technicalities required, the difference between those who are good at it and those who are great boils down to the amount of fervour for the craft. When hype visited Weiliang at his workspace, the walls were papered with countless sketches of anime and computer game characters.

And what is success without the gallons of blood and sweat poured into the project? Weiliang recounts, "Once for a 3D

modeling and animation assignment, I stayed up for two days to get my character properly animated without errors. To make a character fully animated, there are plenty of details to pay attention to, right down to the joints in their limbs."

He adds, "For many of the techniques, we need to learn by ourselves. Once I couldn't get the interactive process to happen in one of my previous games, it took me a day or two to get it right after searching for solutions online."

Since Weiliang is currently doing his final-year project, a day's work starts with a meeting, where teammates discuss standing issues and make plans for the day. Due to the scale of the project, the team consists of 10 members, ranging from the project manager, sound engineer, programmers, game designer, concept artists and the rigger, who is in charge of creating skeletons for animated characters.

As a student team, they are often required to take up multiple roles. In Weiliang's case, he is a level designer, and will be designing collaterals such as the box art for his team's action game in the later half of the year.

So what is the dream? The down-to-earth student wants to have his own design studio in Singapore. "I want to create a game that will rival the big games in the market," he says enthusiastically. He tells hype that the dream is not too far away.

To a person who wields the power of the pixel, although ridiculously small but potentially limitless, we say dream big. Because if you can imagine it, you can definitely create it.



ACE OF WORDS

By Nicholas Joshua Lee

The local community of playwrights, poets and novelists has always paled in comparison to bigger and more lucrative brothers like the engineering and biochemical sciences. Other than that, the small but surely growing group of logophiles and linguists remains exclusive and relatively unknown.

The newest addition to this group arrives in the form of a recent Ngee Ann Polytechnic Mass Communication (MCM) graduate Lavanya Kannathass, whose middle names include young, bold and passionate.

The 21-year-old's currently busying herself with various little projects, including producing a play, relief teaching and assembling a video for the United Nations Development Fund for Women Singapore. She does this while awaiting her term at the University of Queensland, Australia, where she will take a degree in Creative and Professional Writing come February 2010.

After getting her degree, the cheery Singaporean hopes to make her way back to local shores and achieve her "big dream". She enthuses, "I want to have a space somewhere, where people can come by and write or paint and do whatever they want, to express themselves, maybe I'll call the place 'Blank'."

"I want to do this because a lot of people have so much in them but they don't have a platform to be heard and express themselves," she adds.

Apart from taking up odd jobs to finance her dreams, Lavanya is avidly working on improving her craft to become a better writer. She recently submitted 10 poems for the annual Golden Point Award competition that is sponsored by Singapore Press Holdings and the National Arts Council. One of the pieces Lavanya sent in for the competition was a project for one of her final-year modules in MCM, Book Writing and Publishing.

"I really enjoyed this module, it was very experimental and it gives you a lot of freedom to express yourself. It is very good if you're an independent person," she says. But the bulk of Lavanya's learning came from her lecturer, Mr Desmond Kon, who showed her in timely fashion that she really wanted to be a creative writer.

"Most important, there was someone there to guide you, someone to give constructive comments, know what you're talking about, is open to interpretation and is not judgemental," she says respectfully.

Mr Kon, who conducted the class through online discussions as he was away at the University of Notre Dame in America, joins the ranks of Chilean writer Pablo Neruda, British novelist Jeanette Winterson and American poet Khalil Gibran in influencing Lavanya's ideal style of writing.

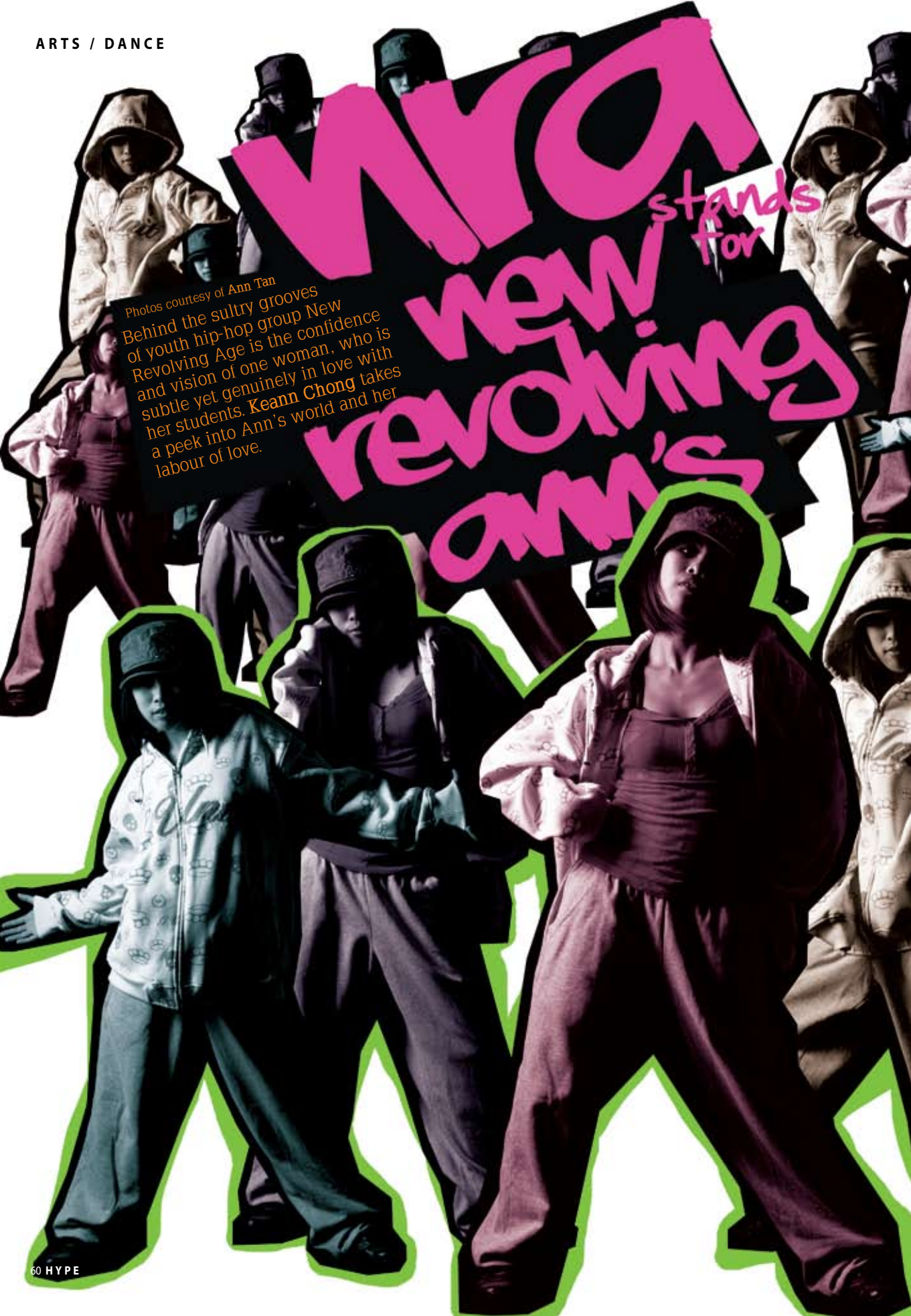
Ideals and ideas aside, aspiring writers like Lavanya are inevitably faced with the question of the Singaporean reality: How do you earn the money? "My parents were pretty apprehensive because poetry and prose is something that you can't see the tangible effects of. But in the end, they still want me to do what I really want to," she responds with a smile.


"I decided, rather than doing something that would satisfy me in monetary terms, I rather do something that will make me happy," she says in a reassuring fashion.

WVA stands for New Revolving Ann's

Photos courtesy of Ann Tan

Behind the sultry grooves of youth hip-hop group New Revolving Age is the confidence and vision of one woman, who is subtle yet genuinely in love with her students. **Keann Chong** takes a peek into Ann's world and her labour of love.





You can hear the sound of squeaking soles across the dance floor as members of Ngee Ann Polytechnic's New Revolving Age (NRA) pop their bodies to the beats of hip-hop. Chests heaving, they run through their moves for what seems like the umpteenth time under the relentless direction of their choreographer Ann Tan, 32, who has helmed NRA's choreography and training for the past five years.

The slick lines and jazz-fused lyrical hip-hop style that the club is known for? All her.

It is a weekend training session at a studio and although the teenagers are tired, no one complains because of just one reason: they are inevitably drawn to Ann's tireless fervour, and she to theirs.

And this is what makes Ann's NRA so special. In 2004, at the request of the previous director Yutaki Ong, she was chosen to take over the dance group after she led a class that turned out to be an audition that she did not know about. When asked to mentor and lead the club, Ann readily agreed and never looked back.

"I've always wanted to create a family," Ann says, smiling as she talks about her unquestionably favourite subject. "The first moment I saw them, I thought they were so cute, such a bunch of young kids. They really reminded me of my own university days when I was trying to juggle dance and school."

NRA had only eight to 10 members back then, which made it very easy for the National Technological University (NTU) Business Management graduate to befriend each one of them, and teach them in her own personal way.

"I would treat each of them like little brothers and sisters, which was really fun because I was the youngest in my family and suddenly I had eight to ten younger siblings!" she recalls with a laughs. "We went to Paris together once and spent a lot of time outside the studios just hanging out, talking on MSN, or talking about problems and BGR together. I want to know all the gossip, even now."

Five years on, even with the club having since burgeoned into one of the hottest co-curricular activities in NP with 300 members this year and 500 showing up for auditions alone, Ann still tries her best to get to know every single NRA freshman or at the very least, learn their names. She talks to them about anything under the sun and gets much more involved with her dancers than the average mentor.

"I want what's best for them, not just in dance," Ann says. "It's important that they be happy."

Rule #1: Learn to love yourself

"The rules I have in NRA are very simple," Ann explains. "Besides being happy, everyone must dance with their own identity. All of my students will be known for their own style, and must be called by their own names – I refuse for them to be known just as 'Ann's students'."

"To me, that is the most important, because dance is about expressing your own feelings and having freedom of expression," she continues. "The point is for you to become better than me. If not, there's no point teaching. I always tell my students that their best teachers are themselves."

This is why the ballet, jazz and hip-hop-trained dancer places much emphasis on "the basics", and on having her students learn how to "feel and understand" the different muscles in their body. This expands their options by allowing them to pick up any dance style in the world without the limitations of the physical body.

"How can a writer not know his alphabet?" Ann muses. "Only after you have learnt your alphabet and understood how to write properly with proper grammar and tenses will you then start to let your own identity flow into your writing, developing your style as you continue to write."

"I always use analogies like these to teach my students," laughs the self-professed philosopher. "I try to relate. If they like math, I'll use examples from math! If not they will say Ann very *cheem*, what talking her!"

Never let go

Unfortunately, words of wisdom may be all Ann has left to impart to the next generations of the NRA family. A back injury and a hectic work schedule, on top of recently becoming a newlywed, have resulted in less time spent with her students. Ann has already begun cutting back to prepare for her eventual retirement from the club, relying more on NRA alumni and seniors to run the show instead.

Will she miss them? Definitely. In fact, she already does so.

"They're all my children," Ann - or Mummy, as she's called affectionately by her charges - says after a pause. "I've watched them grow every step of the way, and I still feel very happy whenever I see any of them."

"Their love for dance and for each other, their creativity, their energy... Their tantrums even," she continues. "I love every single thing about all of them, my energizer batteries."

"But I'll never really leave, you know?" she says optimistically. "This is not a break-up. As long as the relationship is around, I will be around."

"NRA - they really are my life. It isn't just me who loves them, they love me too."

Visit <http://nradance.blogspot.com/>



PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN

Melodie Lee looks behind actress Selena Tan's bubbly facade.

As she reclined Cleopatra-like on her poolside divan, the larger-than-life Dim Sum Dollies star muses that she can be likened to a bamboo plant.

"I like the bamboo because it's sturdy and strong," the 37-year-old theatre director-performer quietly says when asked what kind of plant she is most like. "No matter how you bend it, it knows where its trunk is. It's pretty too, in an unconventional way."

Best known as one of the cabaret comic trio, Selena Tan is anything but conventional. She runs her own nine-year-

old theatre company Dream Academy Productions, which has produced blockbuster shows like Dim Sum Dollies and Broadway Beng.

She is also a familiar face on television, having acted in popular sitcoms such as Under One Roof and PCK Pte Ltd. She received the Asian Television Award for Best Actress In A Comedy Series two years in a row (2004 and 2005) for her role in Channel 5's Daddy's Girls.

And the lady shows no signs of slowing down.

Just in July this year, her brand-new wacky musical-comedy that she wrote, SING DOLLAR, began its run in the theatres. Selena plays Tiger Lily, a brash and "out-there" tiger beer aunty. The musical features some of Singapore's most notable comedians, including the usual suspects like Hossan Leong and the main cast of Dim Sum Dollies.



FUNNY MONEY BUSINESS

By Lum Xin Mun

When the financial crisis first hit Singapore, Selena wanted to reach out to her fellow Singaporeans and saw it as a good opportunity for a musical comedy, which had been brimming in her head for some time.

In her own time and fashion, Selena interpreted the situation as one with “a lot of interesting reactions, new possibilities and potentially hilarious situations to write about”.

After eight months of brainstorming and research, her first full-length musical comedy SING DOLLAR was finalised, drawing inspiration from local newspapers and the grapevine.

She says, “We’ve heard of people losing so much money.”

“So the musical is basically showing what Singaporeans are going through but with a little spice added.”

Based in Geylang, the storyline revolves around eight characters, some of which includes a moonlighting maid,

a retrenched banker, a Bangladeshi dishwasher and a Tiger Beer aunty – all of whom are non-fictional and based on Selena’s personal experiences in the red light district.

While writing the script, Selena interviewed prostitutes, foreign labour workers, domestic maids and others at Geylang to use as material to create over-the-top yet realistic and easily identifiable characters for her show.

Featuring an all-star cast of well-loved comedians like Kumar and Hossan Leong, Selena gathered the team at her production house Dream Academy to produce “a great show with high production value at a reasonable price”.

She describes the musical comedy as being a bit different from her usual stand-up comedies or cabaret shows.

“It is not very different from my other shows like the Dim Sum Dollies. The main difference is that the musical has a storyline. I would like to describe it as very Chicago.”

It is no wonder then, that she truly is one busy woman. Before the interview with HYPE, she bustles around her house and apologises before zipping off to run a “quick errand”.

During that time, you observe that her stylish bungalow, quietly tucked away from the city beside the cool, leafy Clementi Park, looks as if it were made for entertaining guests. With a poolside dining table complete with white deck chairs, a lounge divan set, and not to mention the glistening clear lap pool, you can picture fortnightly decadent dinner parties being thrown here.

Before long, you hear the slam of her car door, and she strides in, apologising profusely once more for the delay.

Unlike the outlandish characters she often portrays onstage, Selena is refreshingly natural, as she perches on her divan cross-legged, barefaced and clad in a minimalist grey top and plain white slacks.

You ask if there is anything she will never wear and she chuckles lightly for the first time in the interview. “Spandex! I will never wear bright pink spandex,” she says.

Other than that, she seems deep in thought throughout, and answers in a rather business-like and concise manner.

While fielding the interview questions, she whips out her compact case and begins doing her make-up, methodically

applying the full works with an expert hand. Seeing how she has been acting since she was 14, it is no surprise that she is used to dolling herself up.

As she layers the makeup around her eyes, you notice that she looks rather tired. When probed about what she is currently working on, she sighs and says, “Right now, we’re rehearsing for SING DOLLAR, along with countless workshops.” She pauses before looking up from her compact to meet your gaze. “Running a business at the same time is really tiring,” she says.

During the interview, music composer and longtime friend, Elaine Chan, walks across the hallway. Selena mutters an apology before turning to arrange meetings with her.

Despite her busy schedule, with all the rehearsals and interviews, Selena insists that she still manages to make time for her husband and their group of close friends whenever she can. “I try not to work on weekends because those are reserved for family,” she says.

But when you talk about her plans for the year, she seems to forget all her tiredness.

For the first time in the interview, her eyes crinkle as she breaks into a smile. “It’s definitely going to be a big year for us and we’re very excited. In these tough times, we’ve got many comedies lined up that are sure to cheer anyone up.”

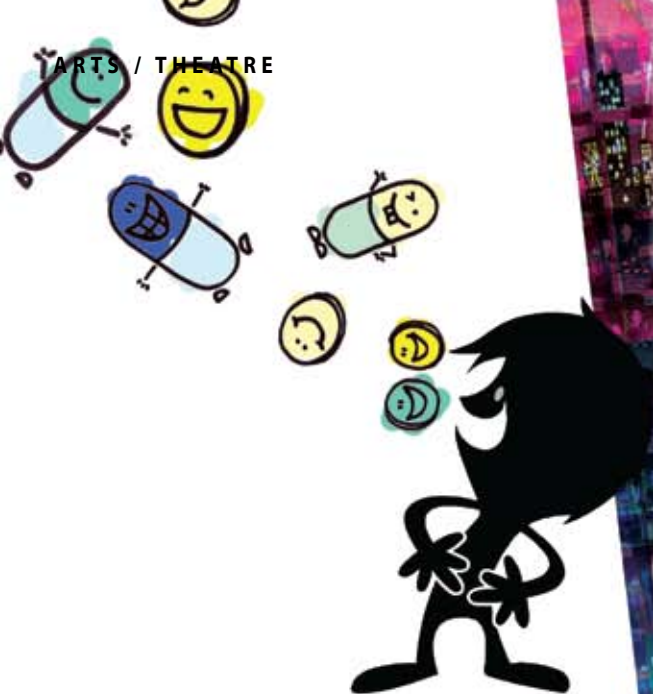


Illustration by Andra Chua

PERFECT JOY PILL

If laughter was the best medicine, then popular local comedian Hossan Leong would be the perfect happy pill. By **Amber Chan**

Imagine being a total *tai-tai*, lounging on a swanky beach resort. Imagine lying by a pool, sipping champagne from a gold-rimmed flute. Now imagine Hossan Leong doing all that, because, deep down, that's all he really wants to do. Although we share his sentiments, Hossan reminds us that all of us need to "wake up and smell the orchids!". It's just wishful thinking for the rest of us.

Beach resorts and champagne aside, 40-year-old Hossan Leong is arguably one of the most successful entertainers around, having won two Life! Theatre Awards and rave reviews for his acting chops, and starred in over 50 productions. To his credit, Hossan is a stage performer, television actor, radio deejay and standup comedian. He can even cook - lamb shanks in a red wine reduction sauce is his specialty.

While some entertainers are hilarious onstage but oddly detached offstage, Hossan isn't known as Singapore's funny man just because of his staged performances.

"I think, or would like to think that I'm naturally funny," he says. "I've always liked making people laugh. It makes me happy to see people happy. I guess what you see is what you get from Hossan Leong!"

In fact, Hossan is so good at bringing the funny that he used to give standup comedies, which are known to be notoriously difficult. His previous shows like *Singapore Boy* were completely sold out.



Also well-known for his roles in plays such as *Honk! The Musical*, Hossan has also directed a few himself. To him, it is as enriching as it is exciting. "Wonderful!" he exclaims. "Such joy watching the show go from page to stage and having a great team to do it with!"

Of course, what good is work without great experiences? He claims that the greatest moment in his career is "filming in Prague", for the movie *The Lost Empire* (2001) in which he plays a demon. "It was a wonderful experience to work with a professional film crew overseas," he says.

Stage acting, however, remains his first love, which brings us to his newest show, *The Hossan Leong Show*. The staged talk show will cover current affairs and guest "international celebrities" with Hossan's own brand of tongue-in-cheek humour. We ask him what to expect, and he does a teensy promotion of it. "Lots of fun! Come and participate, laugh, clap, sing, and go home with surprises!"

But what happens if he could no longer continue a career in showbiz?

The funny man says that he would like to join the staff at the renowned Club Med. "So fun! Spend days entertaining people from all over the world in a resort located in paradise!"

WIN! 2 tickets to *The Hossan Leong Show* on 1 October 2009. Send in your name, IC number and contact details to hype.midea@gmail.com

one night SHORT OF A PICNIC



Forget the incessant noise and bothersome drunkards at the nightclub as Lin Verena shows you where the real parties are.

When the word nightlife is mentioned, the first thing that comes to the mind of most is partying the night away at the latest club in town. Such decadent lifestyle may be novel initially, but it eventually leaves you bored and tired. Not to mention completely broke after splurging unnecessarily on cocktails and Martinis.

Shoestring budget in mind, some young people are redefining their night activities by kicking it old school with simple yet quaint picnics at some of the most scenic sites around. The night breeze, affordability and quality time with loved ones make picnics at night the better alternative to loud trance music at the clubs.

■ Marina Barrage

Made of nine 30-metre steel crest gates that are built over the 350-metre wide Marina Channel, the barrage includes a green roof, which doubles as a recreational space and is open to public access. The roof overlooks the city and its view is comparable to that of the Singapore Flyer.

Full-time National Service man Justin Kong, 20, says, "My girlfriend will bring the food and we will lay out a mat and just chill out. It is a nice place to relax and appreciate the city lights."

Besides the picturesque view of Singapore's skyline at night, the Marina Barrage is extremely breezy and surprisingly quiet, providing that much sought-after privacy in the concrete jungle of Singapore.

Singapore Management University student Ashwin Tiwari, 21, says, "People don't disturb each other and everyone is practically doing their own thing. It's surprising how much privacy you get."

Moreover, the barrage chalks up extra points for its high standards of cleanliness, appealing to students like Vanessa Lim, 23, who prefers Marina Barrage over places like East Coast Park due to its hygiene.

■ Henderson Wave Bridge

Found at the southern ridges, the bridge connects a nine-kilometre stretch of gardens and parks from Mount Faber Hill to Telok Blangah Hill.

The charm of the bridge is hard to ignore; it is made from Balau wood slats that are intricately cut and arranged, while undulating shells littering the snaking deck serve as sheltered seating areas. Colourful lights brighten up the place from 7pm to 2am daily, dressing the bridge in a ravishing and illuminating glow.

Rachel Lynn, 20, a Mass Communication student at MDIS says, "I find the bridge a work of art. It's even better than eating at restaurants because the ambience is wonderful."

The highest pedestrian bridge in Singapore, it stands 36 metres above Henderson Road, providing a bird's eye view of traffic below and an oddly satisfying sense of detachment from urbanisation as you sit at the apex of the bridge.

Dannel George, 20, a student from Singapore Polytechnic, regularly has picnics with his friends at the bridge for "its breathtaking night scenery", adding that they "always end up having a good time".

To spice up your picnic, bring along board games such as Monopoly, Twister or Taboo. Useful picnic equipment includes a battery-operated light, a packet of wet wipes, and a picnic mat big enough for everyone to sit on.

how
to
get
there



■ Marina Barrage

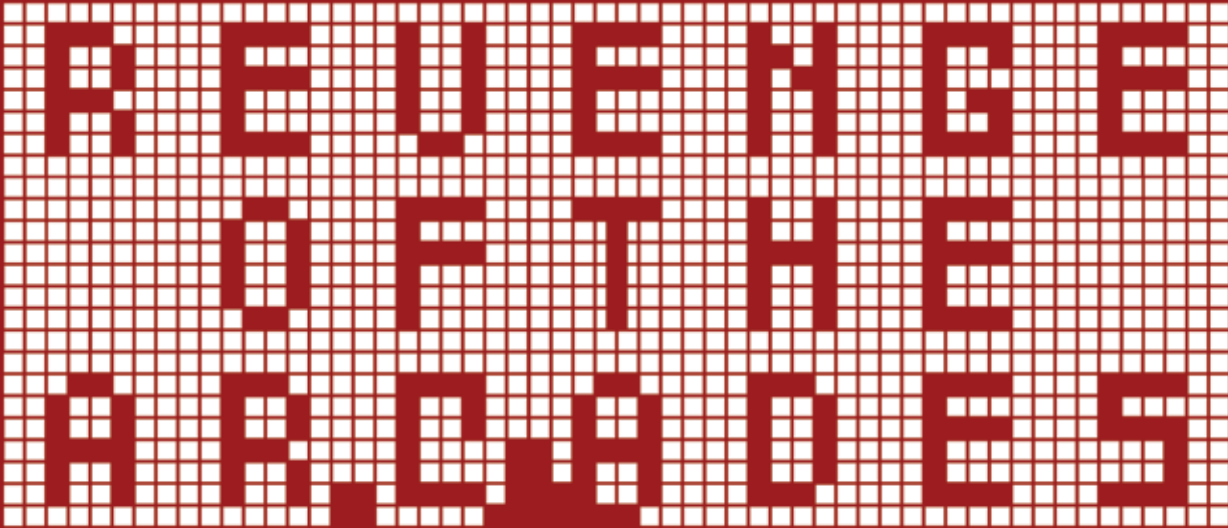
Public Transport: There is a free shuttle bus every 30 minutes from the Marina Bay MRT station. The last bus is at 6:30pm on weekdays and 8:30pm on weekends and public holidays.

Drive: Drive on the ECP. Exit at Marina Bay. Follow the signs to the barrage. Park at the entrance or next to the barrage-viewing pod.

■ Henderson Wave Bridge

Public Transport: Take bus service number 131, 145, 176 or 648 and alight at the bus stop along Henderson Road. Take the staircase up to Mount Faber Park.

Drive: Parking is available at Mount Faber Car park D and Telok Blangah Hill Park Car park 1 and 2.



By Michael Lum & Lin Zicheng



In the 1970-1990s: "Arcades was beginning"

Known for their notoriously high difficulty settings, arcades those days usually meant furious button-mashing on the arcade pad or weaving through complex mazes. Those were also the days where graphics meant nothing. Characters and cars were essentially blobs of heavily pixelated objects lumped together in a poor attempt to resemble something meaningful.

Due to technological limits, it was also that age where the video arcades experienced a boost in design, technicality and gameplay functions – qualities that kept arcade gaming alive with what seemed to be a never-ending supply of creativity and innovation.

Early 1990s: "All your arcades are made of FAIL!"

If the 70's-90's were the best years of arcade gaming, the early 1990s marked the end of that era.

The decline began when concepts from popular games were quickly copied and reproduced, resulting in the rapid flooding of clones or variations of certain genres, a trait which plagues even the arcades of today.

Technological advancement also meant that the arcades faced competition from home computers and video game consoles, which were quickly becoming cheaper and more powerful. Some consoles like the Playstation and the Nintendo64 also boasted technology superior to that of the arcade cabinets, like true three-dimensional graphics.

The increase in arcade-to-console ports was the final blow to the arcade game industry. With games available on more than one platform, coupled with the fact that home consoles offer the attraction of unlimited credits, gamers had little incentive to return to the gaming arcades. As 33-year-old James Clifton puts it, "Losing non-stop and continuing is like throwing money away."

The arcade rises again... Somewhat

Perhaps the fact that arcades are making a re-emergence should be an achievement on its own, despite its limited success.

And their comeback has heralded the return of the spirit of innovation, a fact that had not gone unnoticed. When hype visited a handful of arcades, the variety of games was impressive. While standing-shooters and 'sit-down' cabinets were still present, there was also a huge variety of UFO catchers and other kinds of machines like music-synchronising games and simulators.

For 23-year-old Kash Santago, an arcade gamer for 10 years, the differences are obvious. "The games today are much better: the graphics and sound are more realistic and there's greater variety," he says, explaining like how arcade games today are almost like playable movies.

Furthermore, unlike the arcades of the past that were mostly frequented by youths, today's arcades are attracting middle-aged and older gamers as well, an issue which James Clifton shrugged off casually, claiming that it was "to be expected".

"There is a high interest level in these places," he explains. "There have been surveys carried out before to see how the arcades can be more family-friendly, especially if they want to survive. And it's seen as a place by some families for bonding time."

While hype is not so sure about the "bonding" part, our investigations had us acknowledge the 'playable movies' bit, especially after spending an hour (and almost \$20 worth of credits) on the latest Initial D and Time Crisis machines under the pretext of "field investigation".



2 SPICY: TOO SPICY

A shoot-em-up developed by SEGA, it is unique because of its cover system and multiplayer versus mode. In 2 SPICY: Too Spicy, the pedal allows you to move in another direction for better cover. This means that the player can choose the location of cover and offense, making the multiplayer feature much more interesting. Apart from a weak storyline, the game is pretty much similar to others of its kind.

Rating: 3/5



ALIENS: EXTERMINATION

Released by Global VR, the plot is based on the popular sci-fi horror film series that sees the marines going back to the alien-infested planet to try to exterminate them again. Nonetheless, with the story based on the original series, you would expect a scarier, sinister kind of shooter game. The only saving grace of the game is probably its colourful graphics and variety of weapons like flamethrowers, force guns and grenades. Yawn.

Rating: 2.5/5



WANGAN MIDNIGHT MAXIMUM TUNE

Produced by Namco, the racing game series is based on a manga called Wangan Midnight and follows street racing on the highways of Japan. New features include new maps, an increase in horsepower and more vehicle variety. The handling of the car is smooth because the machine feels comfortable. The story mode is recommended for those seeking quality graphics and a high level of interactivity – both of which is lacking in the multiplayer mode.

Rating: 3.5/5

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THE WINNING FORMULA

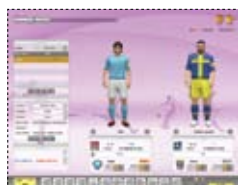
By Shaun David Martin

FIFA ONLINE 2

Since the FIFA series debuted 11 years ago with FIFA '98, the popular video game has definitely improved in terms of graphics and gamer control. Nonetheless, its closest competitor in football video games, Winning Eleven, always had the upper hand when it came to interplay and control... until now.

With FIFA Online 2, players are given the choice of playing against their peers and other gamers from all over the world. Although the option of playing against artificial intelligence is still available, the level of difficulty is raised when playing against your peers and is a recommended option for those seeking an adrenaline rush.

Moreover, FIFA Online 2 enables players to chat, connect and challenge one another using their own custom teams to earn experience points, items and reputation. Winners earn rewards such as energy drinks, medical kits, and uniform cards, which allow them to heal, refresh and add new players to their team.



Players can be bought and sold between gamers, simulating a real-life football community. With the additional features of playing online, trading players, multi-player modes, upgrading players and a league mode, the game allows for increased interactivity among gamers to discuss tactics, strategies, and player positions. For the game's relatively young age, the new features make the game a surprisingly good deal.

The controls are slightly different from previous editions of this series and it takes some getting used to. But with the game's training mode, it is a problem that can be easily overcome.

Perhaps the only drawback of the game is the graphics, which are identical to that of FIFA '07. This is strange considering that the manufacturers have already improved that in FIFA '08 and '09.

That said, we don't need cutting-edge animation for our football games. With user-friendly features and a community-like interface, FIFA Online 2 promises a good game for friends and fans alike.



WIN! When was the first FIFA game released?

If you think you know the answer, send it in to hype.midea@gmail.com with your name, IC number and contact details now and stand a chance to win more various prizes or a mystery hamper worth than \$50!

Head down to E2Max@Cine-L9 on 15 August 2009 and watch FIFA Online 2 players from Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic battle it out for the champion title of NP Cyber Soccer Cup and SP Cyber Soccer Cup.

INNOVATION'S
NOT LEFT 2 DIS IN
LEFT



LEFT 4 DEAD 2

So VALVE has announced a sequel to the L4D game, that is to be titled, well, Left 4 Dead 2. That would probably stink if you already own the first game, since it is barely a year old and instead of providing more downloadable content, out comes VALVE with the easy way.

Still, there are new features to look forward to in L4D 2 like:

- An all new cast of survivors with the likes of a conman, a reporter, a mechanic and a football coach.
- Better rewards like more ammo and health power-ups for taking risks like choosing a longer and more dangerous path to your destination.
- Melee weapons like an axe for chopping zombies up, a frying pan (which even sounds like one when it connects with a zombie's head), and the good 'ol chainsaw.
- Brand new Infected, like zombies donning fireproof suits, the Wandering Witch (don't worry because the old wailing Witch will still be around) and a brand new Special Infected, the Charger.



VALVE's latest zombie-themed game breathes new life into an otherwise dead genre. By **Michael Lum**

To be fair, zombie-themed games have been around for ages, and video game developer VALVE did nothing much to popularise the genre.

That credit should go to CAPCOM's best-selling video game, Resident Evil, which is arguably the most respected series in the realm of zombie-themed games. After all, nothing can be more fun than torching a zombie to kingdom come with a flamethrower, a promise that Resident Evil has never failed to deliver.

So just what is so special about VALVE's latest video shooter game, Left 4 Dead, which has reviewers and gamers singing its praises?

Dynamic Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Oddly enough, it was the game's unpredictable situations generated by a powerful and yet mysterious in-game mechanism which gained significant attention.

Aptly known as The Director, it controls every aspect of the game like the difficulty level, visual effects and locations of spawn points and items, based on every single action the player makes.

VALVE developer Gabe Newell explained in a recent magazine interview that the goal of The Director is to make the game more cinematic and unpredictable, thereby increasing replay value.

"The events are trying to give (the players) a sense of narrative," he explains. "We look at sequences of events and try to take what their actions are to generate new sequences."

"This is what makes procedural narrative more of a story-telling device than a simple difficulty mechanism."

With the zombies' role as pivotal characters to the game, most of the hard work was naturally reserved for the undeads to ensure that they looked as realistic as possible.

The need for realism ran down to the zombies' movement and facial expressions, as mentioned by developers Matt Campbell and Phil Robb, who explained why such efforts were made.

"We treat the infected horde as a major character, and spent a lot of time in making their movements believable," said Phil Robb, revealing that the animation for the zombies were motion-captured by a stuntman and integrated into the game's engine, allowing for greater realism instead of relying on simple ragdoll physics.

In addition, the zombies also boast some of the most advanced AI ever seen in such games, where they are usually depicted as mindless, bloodthirsty scum.

"We spent a great deal of time on the AI systems for the common horde," said developer Matt Campbell, elaborating that extra effort spent was to ensure that there would be no safe spots for players to hide where an Infected could not access, a problem which is common in other zombie-themed shooter games. The idea was to force passive players out of their comfort zones and into the carnage where they should be.

Unique gameplay

While The Director may have been revolutionary from the technical standpoint, it was the team-centric gameplay and the option to play as predators which made the difference for fans.

Unlike most zombie-themed games that only allow players to play the hero, or in certain cases, as the human villain manipulating the story from behind the scenes, Left 4 Dead allows four additional players to control four of the five zombie bosses in the game, albeit only in the game's versus mode.

While the zombie players are not able to use weapons, each playable zombie boss has his own unique attack which is implemented in a way to ensure that the game remains balanced. In addition, players rotate between the human survivors and the zombie bosses once every chapter.

Final-year National University of Singapore student Matthias Mar, 22, who listed Left 4 Dead as one of his favourite games, thinks that it was these aspects that sealed the deal.

"You help each other out, like reviving teammates and stuff, things that don't appear at all in other games," he says. "That's the social aspect of the game."

As for playing as the zombies, he was a little more candid.

"I prefer to kill them actually!" he jokes. "But it's exciting to play as something different once in awhile."

Sounds good enough for us. And now, if you'll excuse us, we will be off to appreciate the unique features of Left 4 Dead in typical hype fashion: by torching the Infected till extra-crispy.


With a Molotov-cocktail, of course.



Baybeats 2009 :

checking in with bands
of style and anthem

Life would be a mistake without music. Baybeats would be a mistake without its kickass bands. hype snoops around this year's festival lineup to uncover their dirty little secrets. And yeah, it's going to be pretty darn good.



LUNAR NODE IS (CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT): ASYRAF RAZAK, AHMAD ARIFF, GERALD KOH, BRICE CHAMBRAUD, DANIAAL ADAM

WALKING ON THE MOON

PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN

Meet local band Lunar Node, one of the rare entries into the annual music festival Baybeats 2009 with their shoegaze genre and instrumental music. By **Tanya Lai**

hype: Why are there no lyrics in your songs?

Gerald: Instrumentals just give you that much more space to breathe and write your own lyrics in your head, don't you think? The next time you listen to the same song, it may not have the same lyrics. It was an interesting concept for us to explore as musicians.

Daniaal: We want you to have your own interpretation of what our songs are about, and not tell you with lyrics.

Brice: Lyrics are overrated.

Do you think people find it hard to appreciate your band's kind of music without lyrics?

G: I don't think people will find it hard. I think most of the people at Baybeats may be pleasantly surprised at just how much they like our kind of music. The only reason they probably wouldn't is probably because of the stereotype that bands must have vocalists.

How do you feel about the band's progress since it started in 2008?

G: I feel pretty accomplished about the band's progress so far. We're just over a year old and I think we've done pretty good for ourselves - releasing an EP (a short compilation of three to five songs), playing at the Esplanade Waterfront and in Manila, and in a short while, Baybeats.

So what was the most memorable gig for you as part of Lunar Node? Why?

B: I like the EP launch, since it was a full day's worth of hard work that really paid off.

G: Oh this is a tough one. But I'd have to say it was the show we played at the Esplanade Outdoor Theatre. Simply put, it was a dream to play there. Next stop, Powerhouse? Haha.

Describe your band mates.

G: I think the rest will tell you the same about Asyraf. He's forever in the virtual realm of World of Warcraft, but he's surprisingly punctual for jams and shows and stuff.

D: Asyraf is also the laziest but always seems to get the girls. Gerald is the casanova of the band and has many girls after him. He's also the brains of the band. Brice is the tallest and the hardest rocker among all of us. He's half-French and has a very boring sense of dressing. Ariff is a music prodigy and also the most *mat*. (Malay word for roughneck.)

B: Gerald is Mr High-Strung-but-timid. Asyraf is Mr Lazy and Daniaal is Mr Curry.

If you could be reincarnated as an animal, what would you be and why?

G: Why is this question even relevant?! A falcon, so I can look as cool as the bird on Cardinal Avenue's EP cover.

B: An eagle. Flying's cool.

D: Giraffe. So that I can be taller than Brice.

Catch Lunar Node at the Esplanade Outdoor Theatre on 30 August from 8pm.

Last, but not least:

By Airell Ang & Josceline Foo

PHOTO COURTESY OF SUICIDE SOLUTION



SUICIDE SOLUTION

One of the oldest kids on the block, **Suicide Solution** is probably the most familiar face in this year's Baybeats. Although the band's lineup has seen some changes through the years, their dark music and introspective lyrics with morbid horror band imagery remain their signature feel. In person, they are just a bunch of fun-loving boys, who are passionate and in this for a good time. After Baybeats, they have their eyes set on touring Asia and Europe. Nothing like other glam party-rock bands, they want to make their mark on the local music scene. Clearly, their career is anything but suicide and horror.

PHOTO BY RUEVAN TAN



AUDIOCEAN

Formed in 2007, each of **Audiocean**'s members have quite different personas and bring something unique to the game, which is the reason for their endearing, self-penned lyrics. They see Baybeats as a platform to hone their stage presence and musical style. Already psyched by the buzz of their performance at Baybeats, Audiocean is just raring to go with their original compositions, lovely music and according to the band, a surprise stint (something to do with hair apparently).

PHOTO BY AIRELL ANG



PHOTO COURTESY OF FLAWED ELEMENT



FLAWED ELEMENT

Paradoxical to the name, **Flawed Element** is, in actual fact, flawless. Well, their music at least.

Founded in 2002, vocalist Joe Chahal says, "I wanted to share my writing and composition with people. Everything was built from scratch. The current line up has been around for four years now and our different music styles and influences have brought about the music we play today." With hard guitar riffs that are reminiscent of some of the best bands we have come to know, combined with many other musical elements, Flawed Element has created a sound that is almost uniquely theirs.

One of the emergent local bands in Singapore, Flawed Element is definitely a band you'd want to keep tabs on.

FOR BETTER ENDINGS

For Better Endings started when all the members were still donning their secondary school uniforms back in the old days. As their guitarist, Alexandra, puts it, "It was sort of a casual thing. Like 'Hey guys wanna jam?' and it slowly progressed after. Everything came together pretty nicely, I guess."

A usual sight at underground gigs, Baybeats is a whole new tribulation for the band. Alexandra chirps excitedly, "Baybeats is a good platform for young local musicians to showcase their music."

"We never thought that a heavy band like us would ever play Baybeats, so this is definitely a dream come true!"

With the screaming vocals of lead vocalist Linus, it is going to be difficult not to let your hair loose at Baybeats and rock out. Even the mosh pit seems appealing this time.

PHOTO COURTESY OF BARRICADE



BARRICADE

Like the rest of the festival's lineup, playing at Baybeats is like a dream come true for **Barricade**, whose easy-going and fun-loving personalities mask their goal at Baybeats – to stand out from the rest of the pack. Raising a few eyebrows should not be a problem for them since they are fond of mashing up different genres of music together with their original lyrics to create tracks that are open to a wide range of interpretations and hidden innuendo. Their biggest challenge? Two of the four members are currently serving National Service.

PHOTO BY AIRELL ANG



EXDEE

As the youngest band playing at Baybeats this year, the six members have been eyeing this spot since they were in secondary two – and now years later, they have finally made it. Some might wonder how their name came about - it is apparently inspired by a dog called Excalibur, who was accidentally killed by a member of the band who is terribly afraid of dogs. In memory of the poor pup, they named their band, **Exdee** (Ex-D).

The band's motto, "Are you smiling today?" is really what they want to achieve with their audience through their music. Prepare for some good cheer and hands in the air with their feel-good melodies.

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEZA VIRS



MEZA VIRS

Derived from the Latvian Goddess of the Forest, **Meza Virs**, the band's name has almost little to no meaning behind it, says frontman Cedric Chew. However, frivolous as the concept, Meza Virs is actually one of the more acknowledged metal bands in Singapore's music scene. Having played overseas in Bangkok and Taiwan, their exposure and hard metal riffs have gotten them far. Cedric describes their tunes as symphonic metal with tinges of Goth metal and an almost Gregorian-esque charm to it. "Being the first metal band is pretty niche, so to speak, and to play at Baybeats, where the usual fare are indie and alternative bands, is an honour to us. It's an outlet for metalheads to get together," says Cedric.

FOR THIS CYCLE

breakthrough artiste of the show and year

Life's a cycle for the Live 'N' Loaded breakthrough artist and it is just starting to roll. By **Amber Chan**

A medium built, slightly muscled boy stands on a makeshift stage in The Heeren. He clutches a guitar in his hand and smiles shyly at the 80-strong crowd. He sweeps his hand across his hair before plucking at a string. He looks just like a nervous boy on his first date.

However, when he parts his lips, strums his guitar and starts to sing, it's as though a different side of him emerges. The shyness dissolves as confidence takes over – for him, home is where the stage is.

Weiwen Seah may look like the boy-next-door, but his voice packs a punch that seems to go beyond him. He goes by the name For This Cycle on popular talent show Live 'N' Loaded. The logic behind the band's name is straightforward. He says, "For This Cycle is basically the whole life cycle one has to go through – you get born, you live and then eventually you die."

Only 16 this year, he is fast making a name for himself in the local music scene. Chosen as the best breakthrough band on the show, For This Cycle is set to perform at Baybeats festival this year, among many other shows.

For Weiwen, the stint on TV just happened. "I didn't want to join Live 'N' Loaded at first. My friend told me to do it, so I uploaded my stuff

Image courtesy of Zaki Razalo

on the website," he says in his husky voice. "Then they called me down for a review session and I sat in front of six people or so. And they called me back for the producer's pick section, so that's cool."

With his young age, songwriting and guitar-playing skills, Weiwen is like a local male version of American country superstar Taylor Swift. Both of them draw their writing inspiration from everyday life – both the good and the bad.

Since he first picked up the guitar at the age of 12, he has always wanted to play for others. A quick check with him showed that many of his goals for his craft have already been accomplished.

"I mean, in this whole year, I've been on Live 'N' Loaded, released an EP sampler (a CD compilation of three to five songs) and I'm going to perform at Baybeats. It's really great actually."

So what plans does he have in mind? "Ok, this may sound really lame and corny," Weiwen laughs, shifting in his seat, "but I want to sing the National Song. No, no, not Majulah Singapura, but the theme song for one of the National Day parades! It would be so cool to sing that!"

And for that, we wish him the best of luck.



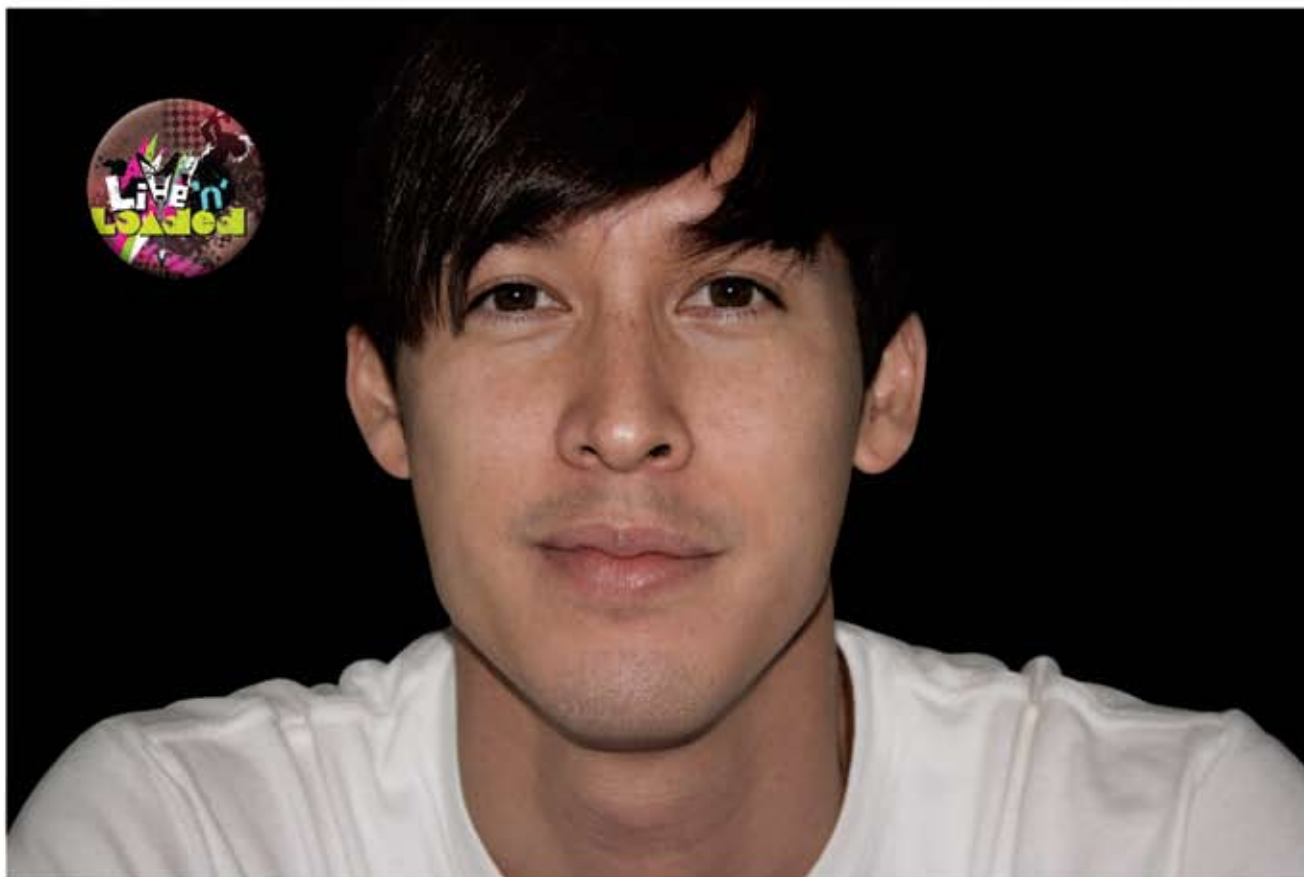


PHOTO BY CHERYL TAN

UTT CHA TALKIN' ABOUT?

Big dreamy eyes? Check.
Megawatt smile? Check.
Infectious personality?
Check. What more
could you ask for a
Live 'N' Loaded host?
By Cheryl Tan

When hype first interviewed Greg Uttasada Panichkul, most affectionately known as Utt, six years ago, he had this thing about him that would make any pubescent girl drool.

Now, except for a few more wrinkles and a slightly different hairstyle, the gorgeous host of Live 'N' Loaded still has the same effect on young women.

"Well, I have no complaints! I'm definitely welcoming it," says Utt with a cheeky grin. As one of MTV Asia's most recognisable faces, the pretty boy has since ventured into acting, and setting up his own business, Seven95ive, a boutique artiste management company.

"I've been multi-tasking quite a bit, both behind the scenes and in front of the camera," says the host-cum-actor-cum-businessman.

With his latest role as host of Live 'N' Loaded, it is very clear that the stage is where he truly belongs. Just watch him hype up a crowd and you will see why he takes to hosting like a fish to water.

"Hosting comes most naturally to me because I like meeting and interacting with people," says Utt, who sheepishly claims that he still gets nervous in front of the camera.

Although hosting a local talent show is unlike anything he has done before, Utt feels that his presence on the show is a show of his support for the local music scene. When Live

'N' Loaded first premiered as a platform for showcasing local musicians, Utt was most willing to be part of it all.

"Live 'N' Loaded is underestimated, especially when it first came out but I think we really need to be supportive and encouraging as we see an overview of the local music scene."

A self-professed fan of local music, the MTV VJ thinks that there is hope for the local music scene, which is commonly described as a cultural desert. He quotes bands like Electrico and The Great Spy Experiment as examples of local acts that have successfully crossed into international markets.

"We need to be supportive and not leave the local music scene dead and hanging," he says.

That, and his down-to-earth persona is probably the reason for his staying power in the industry.

Remaining relevant in the fickle world of television for so many years has been no easy feat, especially since new faces flood the industry almost every other day.

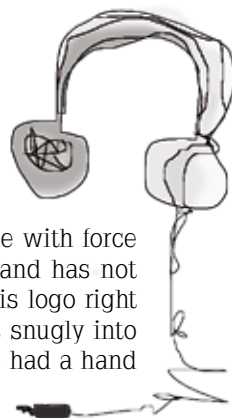
"You have to be true to yourself and have respect for those around you," he remarks as he reminisces fondly about all his years in showbiz.

He adds, "It is easy to fall into the industry... So you need to see that the world does not only revolve around you."

PHOTO BY ZELDA SUN
CLOTHES COURTESY OF NIKE SPORTSWEAR



CURIOUS ABOUT IN QUI SI TIVE



In 2003, he took on the night scene with force - shook it up, changed it around, and has not let go since. From the colours of his logo right down to his sound, Inquisitive fits snugly into the electro-clash scene that he has had a hand in creating. By **Alicia Lee**

Inquisitive's career in deejaying and turntabling did not begin with him in the clubs and aspiring to be the one on the decks. It acutally started with inline skating.

"I used to skate and normally when you watch the skate videos, you hear the soundtrack where you have people like, scratching to the hip hop beats and stuff so I was like 'Wow, I like this kind of music'... I like the noise so I started [from there]."

Just 24 years of age and Inquisitive has already garnered an impressive portfolio, being named DJ of the month by JUICE magazine, a three-time DMC champion, playing alongside the famed Steve Aoki, and earning a residence at popular local club Butter Factory. For those of you not yet in the know, the DMC Championships is the Olympics equivalent for turntablists and has crowned DJs such as Andrew Chow of Zouk, who is incidentally the only other DJ in Singapore with a triple win at the DMC, and also Inquisitive's first mentor.

When asked whether he would consider another round on the DMC decks to claim a fourth title, Inquisitive muses, "It is really stressful, practicing for DMC [because] DMC is like, you can practise for 10 hours a day, but on that day if you make one

single mistake, that's it. I mean, [yes it is] fun, but I've already won three times so I want to go do my own music. But I will definitely come back."

For most other popular DJs, the next stop would be superstardom, world tours, autograph sessions and an entourage. But when hype asked Inquisitive about his list of things to do, he says, "I'll set up my own music label to sign friends and stuff, hopefully!"

Contrary to expectations, a day in the life of Inquisitive is surprisingly normal.

"I wake up at 1pm, go on Beatport to find new music and read my friend's blogs. Because I need to read a lot on music and try to source for it and know about it, I spend about two to three hours online reading up... and then nothing much. I'll just start making music till about dinnertime. You can find me at the skate park at Orchard, at home, or at a friend's house chilling. Nothing special. Or you can find me at Butter [Factory]!"

Like what he's wearing? We have up to \$300 worth of NIKE Sportswear up for grabs! Check out <http://theurbanwire.com>

90's RELOADED

They once topped the charts more than 10 years ago. And now, as we near the end of another decade, they claim to be back with a bang. We check out some of the music acts that made it big in the 90's and their staying power in the ever-changing music landscape today.

Think of the 90's and three things come to mind: Friends, Pamela Anderson and the birth of the Internet. However, there was something else that changed the world of fandom forever: Boy bands.

Yes, those guys who captured the hearts of teenage girls all over the world.

But as time passed and the teens outgrew their elaborate dance moves and perfectly coiffed hair to make room for more modern genres of music, most of them ended up fading into obscurity.

Well, maybe except a certain British boy band.

Formed in 1989 by Nigel Martin-Smith, Take That was the United Kingdom's answer to the wave of American boy bands. The five-member band comprised of Gary Barlow, Howard Donald, Jason Orange, Mark Owen and Robbie Williams.

Through 1992 to 1995, they released three wildly successful albums, and with their charming good looks and upbeat pop tunes, they easily gained an epic international following.

Their success took a nosedive when Robbie Williams, arguably the band's most popular member, overdosed on drugs in July 1995. The near fatal incident led to tension within the band and Williams quit. A year later, the group formally announced that they were disbanding.

Long-time fan Gloria Tan, a finance consultant, 30, still recalls how she felt when she heard the news.

"I was devastated when Robbie Williams left. I was even more shocked when the band disbanded!"

I can't remember if I cried, but I probably did and so did all my other friends who loved the band," Gloria claims.

However, in 2006, Take That (sans Robbie Williams) released their comeback single, "Patience". It topped the charts and the music world welcomed them back with open arms.

In 2007, they chalked up another hit, "Rule the World", and their chart-topping streak scored a hat trick in 2008, when the revived pop group released their second album, *The Circus*, and its first single, "Greatest Day", went straight to number one once again.

While many other boybands are now struggling to make an impact in the fickle music industry, Take That has certainly proved that they have staying power – at least in the United Kingdom.

Their most recent concert, Take That Presents: The Circus Live, even managed to outsell Michael Jackson's Bad Tour to make it the fastest-selling concert in the UK.

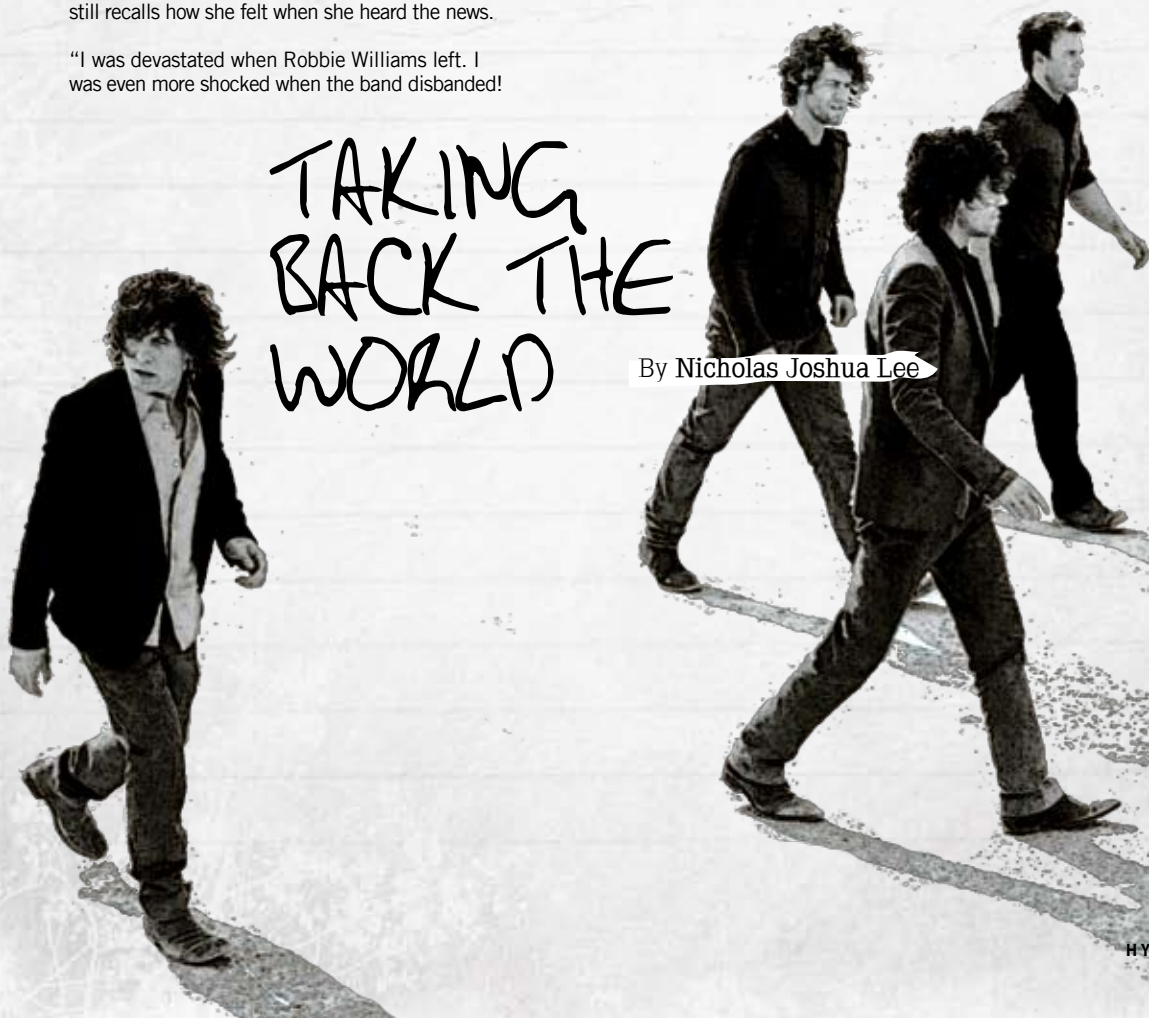
But now that the band has gained some new fans, what do old fans think of their revival?

"I still love their music!" Gloria says with passion.

"Their sound may have changed a bit... but I've matured and so have my taste, I guess that's why I like their new sound," she adds.

TAKING BACK THE WORLD

By Nicholas Joshua Lee



NO DOUBT ABOUT IT

By Eunice Lew

It all started at a Dairy Queen outlet in 1986.

The three founding members of No Doubt, John Spence and siblings Eric and Gwen Stefani, met while working at the popular fast-food restaurant.

From then on out, the band went through various line-up changes (with Spence's unexpected suicide and Eric's exit) before Gwen, bassist Tony Kanal, guitarist Tom Dumont and drummer Adrian Young stumbled across success with their sophomore effort, *Tragic Kingdom*. The album spawned hits like the fiercely popular "Don't Speak" that garnered two nominations at the 1998 Grammy Awards.

The band churned out two more albums, *Return of Saturn* (2000) and *Rock Steady* (2001). Though the darker-sounding *Return of Saturn* didn't manage to repeat the success that *Tragic Kingdom* had, *Rock Steady* proved that No Doubt is arguably one of the most successful ska band the world has ever seen.

Since their hiatus (though the band insists that they have never gone on a break of any sort) in 2004, the band members have gone to solo careers, the most lucrative being lead singer

Gwen Stefani's multi-platinum solo records. During which, rumours were abound that the rest of No Doubt would be continuing on a new album without her, much to the dismay of their fans.

However, these were quickly dismissed, with band members citing her second pregnancy as the only reason she took a break.

Said Gwen in an interview with Spin magazine, "I always felt like I was cheating on them when I was working with other musicians. In my mind, there was never any question that I was going to come back to No Doubt. Those guys are my best friends forever."

In 2009, the band officially announced a 52-date North America tour, insisting that they were not in it as a nostalgia act, but to draw inspiration for their upcoming album. The band started touring alongside popular rock band Paramore on 19 May.

And from the rave concert reviews that they have received so far, it would seem as though No Doubt has never lost their touch.

The Los Angeles Times reported that they delivered an explosive performance "to a sold-out house at the Mandalay Bay Events Center, [recapturing] the pop magic of its glory days in the late 90's and early 2000's."

And even though the younger generation of music lovers these days only remember Gwen Stefani as the lady with an entourage of Harajuku girls behind her, we have no doubt that once their album drops in 2010, that sh*t's gonna be bananas. In a good way, of course.





NOT YOUR AVERAGE ROCK STARS

By Chee Hui Ming

In recent years, rockstars have come in the form of heavily tattooed individuals with floppy, unkempt hair and a penchant for black clothing, who croon constantly about heartaches and heartbreaks and who, frankly, take themselves a little too seriously.

Rewind back to the late 90's, however, and there was Blink-182.

Best known for their endless stream of crude banter, they never took themselves seriously and frequently sang songs about aliens and never wanting to grow up.

The band shot to mainstream fame with their third album in 1999, *Enema of the State*, which sold 15 million copies and gained them a huge following of loyal fans.

However, just about three albums later in 2005, the band shocked their fans when they went on an "indefinite hiatus", citing creative differences and an internal power struggle. Guitarist-vocalist Tom DeLonge moved on to front his own band, Angels and Airwaves, while vocalist-bassist Mark Hoppus and drummer Travis Barker formed +44. Both bands released separate albums in 2006.

It was only after Travis was involved in a plane crash in 2008 that the three began communicating once more.

Said Tom in a recent Rolling Stones interview, "I was just sitting there with tears in my eyes. I decided that I wanted to be next to Travis when he played drums again."

And so, at the 51st Grammy Awards this year, all three members appeared on the same stage and declared as a band, "We used to play music together, and we decided we're going to play music together again."

For long-time fan, Joel Tay, 25, this definitely spells good news.

He candidly remembers Blink-182 as that reckless, fun-loving band with ridiculous, vulgar lyrics that "obviously never captured everyone's hearts" but certainly captured his.

"Their reunion announcement seriously sent chills down my spine – and in a good way!" he exclaims excitedly.

Picking up from where they left off, Blink-182 has planned a series of summer concerts across North America and is currently in talks to produce another album.

Still, there are rumours swirling around that the band only got back together for the cash.

Mark, however, claims that this is not true. In an interview with SPIN magazine, he declares that the band wasn't desperate for a quick moneymaking opportunity, but simply wanted to go back to having fun once more.

And whether or not they'll be a continued success or not remains to be seen. The odds seem to be good as of now.

The band has promised that the concerts will be much more than just a repertoire of their past hits. They will hit the roads with plenty of new material on hand.

More importantly, they're doing something that they had never really bothered to do before until now: Rehearse.

"We used to walk around onstage and forget our parts – we just wanted to play fast and look cool. This time we want to be more artistic," Mark claims in another interview with Rolling Stones.

It may seem like Blink-182 has finally grown up but don't be fooled, one thing still remains, they claim: toilet humour and dirty jokes.

I'm sorry, what's their age again?

GUILTY PLEASURES 90s

Remember the good ol' days when Britney Spears was that sweet starlet and posters of boybands were all plastered over our walls? All that we all love to hate and hate to love; we bring you our own list of the 90's rewind. By Eunice Lew & Loh Qiu-Lyng

1990 *Ice, Ice Baby* – Vanilla Ice



The turn of the decade saw the rise of the first white rapper, Vanilla Ice, whose claim to fame was the chart-topping single 'Ice, Ice Baby'. Recently it came in fifth in Blender Magazine's list of 50 Worst Songs ever. But no matter how lame we declare the song to be, resistance is futile whenever its sexy chorus comes on.

1992 *Baby Got Back* – Sir Mix-a-lot



One thing is certain, Sir Mix-a-lot is an honest man: He really likes big butts. After all, this is the premise of *Baby Got Back*, a song about the female anatomy. Even the music video would make your mom cry because Sir Mix-a-lot is strutting his stuff on top of a huge, well, I'm sure you can guess.

1994 *I Swear* – All-4-One



Originally a country song by John Michael Montgomery, the cover by All-4-One became even more popular than the original and paved the way for other equally suave boybands. In breathy, perfectly harmonised vocals and cheesy hand-on-heart gestures, they swear by the moon and stars to always be there.

1996 *Wannabe* – Spice Girls



With their outrageous costumes and even more outrageous nicknames, the Spice Girls sang 'Wannabe', which was a pure pop guilty pleasure with its catchy piano riff and harebrained lyrics. ("I wanna really, really, really, wanna zigzagah" anyone?) The song became their signature song.

1998 *Truly, Madly, Deeply* – Savage Garden



This is perhaps the love song to end all love songs, with its teenybopper appeal and tacky lyrics ("Lay like this forever until the sky falls down on me"). The public was completely taken by this song even though its cringe-worthy lyrics would make any cynic roll his or her eyes at its sheer absurdity.

1991 *(Everything I Do) I Do It For You* – Bryan Adams



The amazing thing is that despite cheesy lyrics like "There's nowhere unless you're there", this ballad managed to spend seven weeks atop the Billboard. Now, no wedding would be complete without it, although we probably die a little inside from embarrassment whenever bride and groom slow dance to this tune.

1993 *I'm Gonna Be (500 Miles)* – The Proclaimers



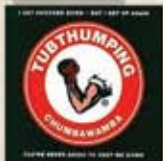
Arguably one of the corniest songs of the 90's about a man proclaiming his undying love for a woman by (rather foolishly) walking a total of 1000 miles only to fall down at her door. Although the song is bouncy and catchy, the lyrics are laughable and awkward. Why did we even... Let's not talk about it.

1995 *Lemon Tree* – Fool's Garden



Remember tuning into any radio station in the year 1995 and hearing Fool's Garden singing about a certain yellow lemon tree? You must admit, a list of guilty pleasures just wouldn't be the same without this song, whose insanely catchy chorus is the reason we can't stop swaying and humming whenever it comes on.

1997 *Tubthumping* – Chumbawamba




For a song that ranked 12th on The Rolling Stones' 20 Most Annoying Songs, *Tubthumping* by Chumbawamba is surprisingly motivational, with never-say-die lyrics like "I get knocked down/ but I get up again/ you're never gonna get me down", and a thumping beat set against jaunty electric guitars riffs.

1999 *...Baby One More Time* – Britney Spears




The song was the start of a global pop phenomenon, and has since seen Britney rise to sex goddess stature and subsequently fallen from grace with her public meltdowns. Even with her recent successful comeback, this is still the one song that almost everyone will know the lyrics and moves to.





POP CULTURE

Love it or hate it, we know everything that is pop culture. From the famous golden arches to almost everyone's favourite place to get a caffeine fix, or even a vampirific and obsessive love fantasy with an even more obsessed following – the pop cult is here to stay. So take the first step by embracing your inner mainstream fangirl (or boy) as **Lin Verena** takes you down this pop culture crash course.




ONE Twitter trending topic was all it took to gain the attention of the international news media. **#KeepPaula** rose to the top as fans from all over the world tweeted to show their support to keep the quirky but lovable American Idol judge for the ninth season running, after her seat at the table appeared to be on the chopping block. Never underestimate the power of a Tweet (or maybe just one sneaky negotiation strategy).

And so they say it takes **TWO** hands to clap, and two men to make a bro-mance. If these love stories aren't riding off on white horses, we don't know what is. From real life American Idol's **Kris Allen** and **Adam Lambert** to reel life's Dr Wilson and Dr House (in American medical drama House), unashamed bromances are the new black. 




Only **THREE** people in the whole world were privileged enough to voice the legendary **Mickey Mouse** cartoon character. The first was Walt Disney himself, followed by Jim Macdonald for three decades till his retirement, and finally, Wayne Allwine, who recently passed away on May 13, 2009.




FOUR androgynous **oddities** once graced the children's television world with their own television screens on their bellies. They come in four colours - yellow, red, green and purple - hang out with a vacuum cleaner and overdo the baby talk a little too much. No brownie points for guessing who.

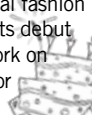
David Beckham ranked number **FIVE** on Forbes' Most Powerful Celebrity 100 List in 2008. For a reason we can't figure, the English soccer stud earns a whopping USD\$50 million a year - probably from his ballsy "career" and for showing off his perfectly sculpted body many, many times in Giorgio Armani ads.

SIX is the number of cast members in the hit television series **Friends**. The famed six are Rachel Green, Joey Tribbiani, Monica Geller, Ross Geller, Phoebe Buffay, and Chandler Bing, who have made numerous cultural impacts with their timeless humour and catchphrases – including Joey's sad attempt at a pick up line: *How you doin'?*

It's everyone's favourite lucky number and the same goes for famed author J.K. Rowling. **SEVEN** appears many times in Harry Potter: there are seven players on each Quidditch team, **Harry Potter's** birthday is on the seventh month, Ginny Weasley is the seventh child and students at Hogwarts must complete seven years of education. 



EIGHT is the number of lives Jon and Kate brought into this world – but they're **Jon and Kate** no more. Still, the divorced reality show "stars" (Jon & Kate Plus 8) illustrate our fascination with the personal lives of ordinary and not-so-ordinary people who don't mind the onslaught of criticism in exchange for 15 seconds of fame and a nice cheque.

March **NINE** is **Barbie's** official birthday. The best-selling but controversial fashion doll is manufactured by Mattel, Inc. and made its debut at the American International Toy Fair in New York on March 9, 1959. Well at least there's someone (or something) who will be forever young. 

Gossip blog meets pop culture discussion board **Oh No They Didn't** (ONTD) was the first LiveJournal community to reach the limit of **TEN** thousand comments in a single post. ONTD went on to break more records, more news and even all of LiveJournal's servers due to an explosion of posts following Michael Jackson's death. Wow.



THRILLER
1982

“People always told me be careful of what you do / And don’t go around breaking young girls’ hearts

And mother always told me be careful of who you love / And be careful of what you do ‘cause the lie becomes the truth ”

‘Billie Jean’, written by Michael Jackson



BAD
1987

“I’m starting with man in the mirror / I’m asking him to change his ways / And no message could have been any clearer

If you wanna make the world a better place / Take a look at yourself / And then make a change”

‘Man in the Mirror’, written by Glen Ballard & Siedah Garrett



DANGEROUS
1991

“But they told me / A man should be faithful / And walk when not able

And fight till the end / But I’m only human”

‘Will You Be There’, written by Michael Jackson



HISTORY
1996

“With such confusion don’t it make you wanna scream / Your bash abusin’ victimise within the scheme

You find your pleasure scandalizin’ every lie / Oh brother, please have mercy cause I just can’t take it / Stop pressurin’ me ”

‘Scream’, written by James Harris III, Terry Lewis, Michael Jackson & Janet Jackson



INVINCIBLE
2001

“You can change the world (I can’t do it by myself)

You can touch the sky (Gonna take somebody’s help)

You’re the chosen one (I’m gonna need some kind of sign)

If we all cry at the same time tonight”

‘Cry’, written by R. Kelly

Iconology

At a mere 10 years of age, Michael Jackson had already danced his way into the hearts of his global audience, and as he grew older and into his unparalleled talents, we came to realise that there would never be anyone else who could command the stage quite like him.

Now, with 10 albums and countless other masterpieces in his discography, his music is heard everywhere, from clubs in downtown L.A. to the slums in India, and has brought people of every race and religion together.

Here is a little taste of pop at its absolute finest.



GOT TO BE THERE
1972

"You don't have to worry 'cause I'm coming / Back to where I should have always stayed

And now I've heard the maybe to your story / And it's enough love for me to stay"

'I Wanna Be Where You Are', written by Lean Ware & Arthur Ross



BEN
1972

"Ben, the two of us need look no more / We both found what we were looking for

With a friend to call my own / I'll never be alone/ And you, my friend, will see

You've got a friend in me"

'Ben', written by Don Black & Walter Scharf



MUSIC & ME
1973

"My life began when happy smiled / Sweet, like candy to a child

Stay here and love me just a while/ Let sadness see what happy does

Let happy be where sadness was"

'Happy', written by Michel Legrand & Smokey Robinson



FOREVER, MICHAEL
1975

"Just a little bit of you every day / Will surely keep the doctor away

Eeny weeny teeny bit of your love / Baby it's all I need, it's all I need"

'Just a Little Bit of You', written by Edward Holland Jr & Brian Holland



OFF THE WALL
1979

"Just take it slow/ 'Cause we got so far to go / When you feel that heat

And we're gonna ride the boogie / Share that beat of love"

'Rock With You', written by Rod Temperton

Generations

Michael Jackson's death, possibly the most covered event of the year to date - having occupied the covers of almost every publication on the newsstands - achieved what every politician and leader could only dream of - he brought together people of different nations, different cultures, different languages and different generations as they remembered the life of the last music great.

By Wong Yeang Cherng

Our island remembers the wonders of this individual who crossed all boundaries, be it in music, dance, race and even geographical location. But for this Singaporean family, Jackson was what held them together despite the fact that he was 8,782 miles away in Los Angeles.

For Joshua Simon, 19, a third-year Film, Sound and Video student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic, it was a tumultuous morning the day news of Jackson's death broke.

He recalls, "I had this big fight with my dad the night before. I was planning to run away from home the next morning. In the morning of my planned escape, my dad ran into my room... and told me the news of MJ's passing."

"I didn't believe it. I actually thought he wanted to ruin the one thing that connected the family."

For the Simon family, of which Jackson and his music has saturated the lives of for more than two decades, a nothing-too-fancy, but befitting tribute says it all.

"We specially stayed up late at night to watch his funeral and bought new CDs of Michael Jackson to remember our music

icon," recounts Mr Magdalene Simon, Joshua's father.

Nostalgia evidently lends a sort of sentimentality to Magdalene's face whenever Jackson's songs like "I'll Be There" and "Billie Jean" come on, since the songs hold particularly fond memories of the old secondary school days when he and his friends "would gather in [the] shopping centre just to watch the music videos".

Amidst Jackson's countless masterpieces, the track "Thriller" from the 1982 album of the same name is "by far, the best" for Magdalene, although he quickly adds that it "does not in any way lessen the albums that came before or after".

It comes as no surprise to find out that the Simon family is an entire fan base on their own that spreads across all three generations of them.

For one, Joshua's late Indian grandmother had a memorable and quirky way of crooning to the beat of the popular track "Beat It".

"That is the first song I heard her sing in English. I'll always remember her singing

it with the thick accent. It's hilarious yet heart-warming," he recounts fondly. For Joshua, the track is his anthem, and his form of escape from bullying when he was younger.

"I'd replay the song on my discman back then and just go crazy yelling inside, imagining myself in the music video."

Even Joshua's mother, who is least the least fanatical of all, could not help but catch Jackson's funeral service on television the day it was broadcast live on local television.

"She's a quiet Chinese woman who appreciates Jackson's ballads like 'Human Nature' and 'Man in the Mirror,'" Joshua claims.

With the passing of a legendary superstar, especially one held so dear by the family, or the Ghandi of music as Magdalene describes, Jackson's legacy is perhaps most appropriately summed up in Joshua's own words.

"I remembered asking God why and the only thing I heard was... I created him and the world missed him so I'm calling him home so the world will remember."

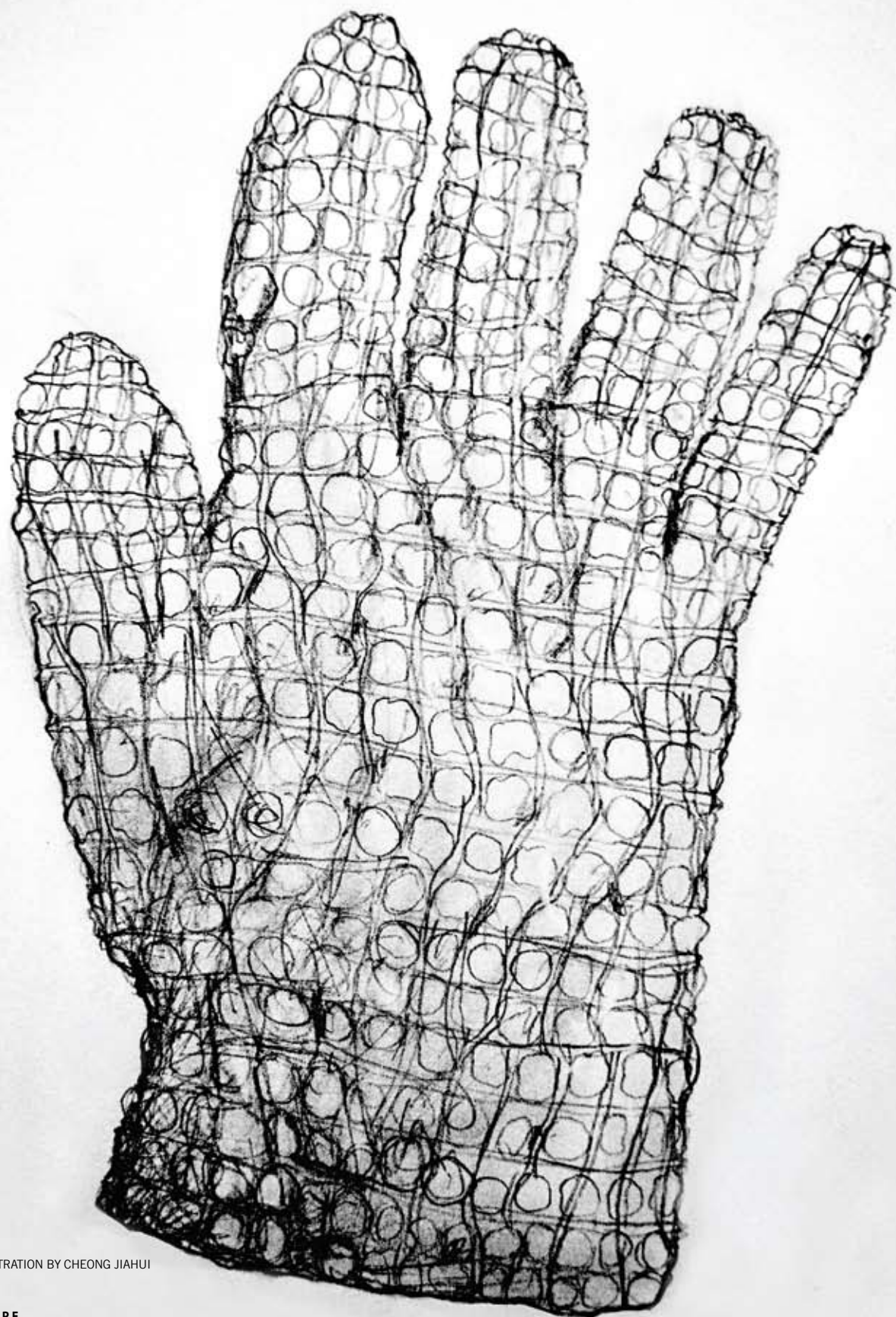


ILLUSTRATION BY CHEONG JIAHUI



escape the media, not his fans. “Michael Jackson transcended culture. He transcended love,” Usher said.

Man in the Mirror

If records meant anything, perhaps the one Michael Jackson holds in the Guinness Book of World Records for the “Most Charities Supported by a Pop Star” represents what we love most about him.

There’s no doubt that Michael Jackson’s music influenced generations, and his strong belief in humanity has driven his attempts to “Heal The World”. From poignant ballads like “Man in the Mirror” to the 1985 collaboration with Lionel Richie – “We are the World” to help raise funds for politically unstable, drought-hit Ethiopia – his commitment was unmistakable.

In 1992, the entertainer set up a charity organisation, Heal The World Foundation, which focuses on global issues like abuse and hunger and homelessness.

Eng Yvonne, 21, an undergraduate at Nanyang Technological University and a huge Jackson supporter, sees the King of Pop as purely human. “I see the Michael that genuinely cares about humanitarian

work and gives a lot of money to charity organisations,” Yvonne points out, adding that he’d made great efforts to incorporate conviction into his career even during his difficult times.

According to BBC News, the superstar, at the age of 25, suffered serious burns to his scalp after his hair caught fire while filming a Pepsi Cola commercial.

However, Michael Jackson never kept the compensation from Pepsi. Instead, he generously donated the US\$1.5million (about S\$2.2 million) to a burn centre in California, which was then named after him – The Michael Jackson Burn Centre.

Black and White

According to The Washington Post, Jackson also “broke down the racial barriers” in and out of the music industry.

Back in the 1980s, African-Americans were disadvantaged when it came to getting airplay on American radio stations that played “white” music most of the time. However, when Michael Jackson’s Thriller album was released in 1982, it became a global sensation that radio stations couldn’t ignore – and not long after, MTV caught the fever.

Indeed, the highly enamoured entertainer paved the way for new black artistes to step out. According to Joycelyn Wilson, a professor of African-American studies at Morehouse College and popular culture specialist, the King of Pop “influenced a new generation of black musicians” like Kanye West, Usher, and Ne-Yo, who have been topping the charts in recent years.

Samuel Prakash, 19, a final-year Mechatronics Engineering student of Nanyang Polytechnic says, “Michael Jackson revolutionised and started a trend in R&B and hip hop music, which are the genres of these three musicians. Even their appearances are somewhat influenced by MJ – Ne-Yo with his hat and Usher with his dance moves.”

There was also “Black or White”, which was composed to promote racial unity. In its video, Michael danced with people of different race and cultures. Its message was powerful and showed his enduring belief in world peace and harmony. Attempting to replace this King of Pop might just be impossible – if we even bother to try. Though having passed on – we hate to bring this up again – we’ll miss him, his eccentricity and his immense talent terribly.



Resonance

We live in a time where we have heard more of Michael Jackson's bedroom shenanigans than of his musical genius and stage flair.

This is the generation of today, fuelled on Youtube and illegal music filesharing, defined by pop starlets who pale in comparison to the sheer force that was the King. They thrill in their own right, Lady Gaga, Rihanna, Justin Timberlake and the rest, but Michael was so much bigger than that, so much larger than life, the little boy from Gary, Indiana rising above his traumatic childhood, transcending genres and cultures to define the world in his time. This is the Michael that the Youtube generation knows not about.

By Keann Chong and Eunice Lai

Boy Wonder

This is Michael Jackson the Entertainer, the child prodigy signed to Motown at the age of 10, sweeping airwaves with the Jackson 5 and having four solo albums under his belt before the age of 17. This is Michael Jackson the visionary, realising at that same age that, unless he got off the Motown conveyor belt that refused to let him write and perform his own songs, he would only ever be a product, never a person. Armed with this knowledge, Jackson left Motown in 1975, signing on to CBS Records (now Epic Records) and striking up a friendship with critically acclaimed music producer Quincy Jones a few years later. We all know what happens next.

Finally let loose to explore his own creative inklings and guided by Jones' steady hand, Jackson exploded onto the music scene in 1979 with *Off The Wall*, sending shockwaves through a community that knew he would be successful, but never quite that big. In the next 30 years, Jackson would go rampaging through the music world, producing chart-topping album after chart-topping album, claiming award after award, including 18 Grammys and 13 Guinness World Records. If *Off The*

Wall put him on the map, *Thriller* gave him the map, and it would not be far amiss to say that Jackson was the main reason why R&B, pop and hip hop music developed the way it did after the 80's.

Jackson had redefined what was perceived as popular music. Deriving what many would later call "contemporary R&B" from a series of genres including soul, funk, jazz and slow rock, Jackson was influencing a generation of soon-to-be artists such as Usher and Britney Spears, as well as his youngest sister, Janet. They would grow up watching him on MTV, captivated just like the rest of the world. "Performing with Michael was like a childhood dream come true," JC Chasez of the now defunct *NSYNC said on an interview with CNN.com. "It was kind of like my life had come full-circle at that point. First you dream about being able to dance like him and the next thing you know you're standing next to him while you're dancing."

It's impossible to watch Jackson and not want to dance. It was not so much about the iconic moves than it was about the sheer spontaneity and joyfulness of his stage charm. Jackson made dance look so easy; so natural. He made us believe

we all could. "I tried to do the Michael triple spin (and) dislocated my knee trying to do it," hip hop instructor Kar-el Green said. "That's what got me to start dancing. Now, I teach it for a living,"

Perhaps one of the greatest legacies that Jackson left behind was to MTV. Before 1983, MTV was a rock-exclusive music channel that rarely, if ever, gave airtime to African-American artists, until Michael Jackson happened. Videos for "Billie Jean" and "Beat It" were too irresistible not to be played, let alone the 14-minute long "Thriller" video became. MTV, almost sheepishly, switched to pop after that, saving its ratings and made the music video a staple to every artistes single release, now seen everywhere from Japan to Bollywood.

But it seems like the YouTube generation may get to experience Michael Jackson for themselves after all. A revolution has been happening online since he passed on, with fans tearfully digging up his music videos – these are videos that thousands of teens worldwide are starting to key in searches for – and putting them on the net. Michael Jackson lives on in his music, perhaps a fitting resolution to a man that often only wanted to



ILLUSTRATION BY CHEONG JIAHUI



Jude Lee, 24, bassist of local alternative rock band West Grand Boulevard, has mixed reactions on the sudden attention and interest that Jackson is getting post mortem. While he is glad that people are finally recognising his musical achievements again, Lee feels that there are hypocritical people out there who previously never listened to Jackson's music but only became "a huge fan" after his death.

But the biggest question still looms. Prior to the fateful day, Jackson had been seen practicing hard for his comeback tour "This Is It", and seemed to be perfectly healthy, despite a long history with various drugs. Could it be that Jackson had died of a drug overdose, just like his ex-father-in-law and King of Rock 'n' Roll Elvis Presley did? Why was he allowed by his doctors to go on the physically demanding comeback tour if he had a medical history and a weak constitution?

Celebrity gossip site TMZ.com, which also broke the news of Jackson's death, reported that he used the names of his entourage to secure extra prescription drugs for his own consumption. Numerous reports have also surfaced claiming that Jackson had indeed died of a drug overdose and with his history of self-administering doses of painkillers and

relaxants – the reports seems completely believable. However Jackson's dermatologist Arnold Klein claims that he danced in Klein's office just three days before his death, and seemed to be in perfectly good shape.

But like millions of Jackson's fans in the world, Singapore Idol alumni and a fan of the performer since she was two years old, Gayle Nerva, 20, remains indifferent to Jackson's rumored drug problems because "it would not change the fact he is a legendary icon who changed the movement of music".

A King's Funeral

Amidst shoddy rumours, hasty preparations and security issues, Jackson was finally laid to rest on 7 July, following an extravagant and emotional tribute befitting of a king. A reported one billion people watched the live public memorial service; perhaps as their own way of saying their final goodbyes to the man who defined an era and the man whose music is still heard in every contemporary music radio station today.

During the service, fellow A-listers like Stevie Wonder, Mariah Carey and Lionel Richie, paid their own tributes to him with a heartfelt delivery of songs. But the nearly two-hour memorial boiled down

to 20 moving seconds when Jackson's daughter, Paris-Michael Jackson, took the microphone to address the crowd. While Jackson was part of the Jackson 5, the King of Pop or Wacko Jacko to the world, it was often forgotten that he was also someone else's father. And in a shaky voice, Paris said, "Ever since I was born, Daddy has been the best father you could ever imagine... I just wanted to say I love him so much."

Perhaps you are overwhelmed, or even frustrated, by the excessive Jackson media coverage and countless tributes, but this is mere proof of Jackson's legacy and unprecedented star power he had that the world almost forgot. No one, even the harshest of critics, can deny Jackson's superstardom and his place among the exclusive pantheon of music giants like Elvis Presley and The Beatles. As Newsweek rightfully laments, "Before Michael Jackson came Frank Sinatra, Elvis Presley, and the Beatles; after him has come absolutely no one, however brilliant or however popular, who couldn't be ignored by vast segments of an ever-more-fragmented audience."

Short of Barack Obama's win, 2009 will be always be remembered as the year the world lost its last, and possibly most-beloved music legend.

Finale

Michael Jackson's unexpected passing marked the end of an era of musical superstars, and left the world without their King of Pop. John Mayer, a blues and rock singer-songwriter from the other side of the music world, said on Twitter: "A major strand of our cultural DNA has left us." The King may be gone, but his legacy lives on as surely as his music does.

By Paige Foong

Although the 21st century has seen the rise of new stars like Usher and Justin Timberlake, who coincidentally cite Michael Jackson as their greatest influence, none have come close to Jackson's influence or record sales during his lifetime. Even Jackson's closest competitor, Madonna, is nowhere near.

As with other icons like Elvis Presley and Marilyn Monroe, Jackson's unexpected and untimely passing sent the media and the world into a massive hysteria like never before. From every corner of the world – Europe, China, India, the United States, Africa, Russia, Singapore and even the Middle East - the world mourned for the death of their beloved King. Tough questions were raised and the finger pointing game began: Who, or what, killed Michael Jackson?

The official word is that Jackson suffered a cardiac arrest at his holiday home in Los Angeles on 25 June and despite valiant efforts by paramedics on the scene, he was pronounced dead at the Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Centre two hours later. News of his sudden death commandeered the radio airwaves and led to an upsurge in Internet traffic: CNN.com reported over 20 million page

views within the hour for their cover on his death, while social networking site, Twitter was so busy that users were unable to log into their accounts.

The mania caused by his death came as a surprise for many. The last time that Jackson hit the headlines it had been about his eccentricities and odd behaviour, not so much the groundbreaking album sales and slick dance moves that were synonymous with him during the 80's. They called him "Wacko Jacko".

But now, with Jackson's demise, all that was deemed weird and strange about him seemed to have died as well, leaving behind the genius of his music and talent that the world fell in love with in the first place. Billboard reported sales of more than 110,000 copies of Jackson's albums two days after news of his death broke out, while Amazon saw his CD sales increase sevenfold from the previous day's volume, which landed him a spot on the 10 best-selling albums on Amazon. Since then, his total CD sales across all major retailers globally makes him the best-selling artiste of 2009. Ironically, in his death, he was King again.

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ILLUSTRATION BY CHEONG JIAHUI

R.I.P.
1958-2009
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special commemorative issue

HYPE

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