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The Cathay #01-18

W39 BISTRO AND BAKERY

39 Jalan Mas Puteh

WALA WALA CAFE BAR

31 Lorong Mambong Holland V

WORKING TITLE

48 Arab Street



E-copies of HYPE are available at hypesg.tumblr.com/downloads

npTribune

THE STUDENT VOICE OF Ngee ANN POLYTECHNIC



npTribune is the longest-running student newspaper in Singapore and is published online by the Ngee Ann Polytechnic School of Film & Media Studies with contributions from final year Mass Communication students.

<http://nptribune.com>

For enquiries, feel free to email us at nptribune.trimedia@gmail.com

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Learning Reinvented

The classroom is where it all begins. An often heard adage, the quintessential learning space which can transform into a universe of possibilities – but how relevant is it to the modern graduate?

Practical experience is an increasingly vital criteria to entering today's workforce, with job advertisements that call for entry level applicants with some years of experience behind them, where fresh graduates are expected to hit the ground running from the get-go. Graduates need experience to secure a job, but need a job to gain the experience.

Is there a way out of this conundrum?

Innovative teaching and learning institutions have looked again at the classroom for a solution, but a different sort – a classroom that goes beyond four walls and allows students the opportunity for real-world learning experiences.

Students at Western Australia's largest university, Curtin University, see work integrated learning scaffolded across their courses. A purposefully designed curriculum with practical, hands-on skills training, case studies, industry-based projects and research is combined with a co-curricular program that offers practicums and work placements.

Students are immersed in learning environments from the start, designed to enhance their graduate capabilities and are also granted opportunities to take learning across borders with international studios and study tours.

Mass communication students, for example, work within studios outfitted with industry grade software and equipment so they are familiar with the industry standard. Those undertaking select streams work in independent student-run publications to expose them to all aspects of the work process, and will finish with a substantial portfolio of published or broadcasted work to kick-start their careers.

A network of key partnerships also provide an invaluable connection with the industry and genuine employment options for graduates – Curtin communication students have worked with state and national sporting teams to provide written and video content for corporate websites, produced panel shows and documentaries for official use, and developed a series of videos educating and encouraging healthy lifestyle choices.

As graduates vie to stand out from the crowd, the offering and embedding of experiences like these in a traditional academic curriculum serves to enhance their employability and prepare them for life after school.

Curtin University is offering scholarships to polytechnic graduates seeking further study options in a media and communication, design and art, built environment or education degree. Visit scholarships.curtin.edu.au for more information. Polytechnic graduates may qualify for exemptions.

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EDITORS' NOTE

Revolutions and complete replacements of old systems with shiny new ones has been all the rage in recent years. But the truth is, not every old idea is bad and not every new thing is good, either.

In this issue, we're focusing on the theme of **Reformation**. It represents acknowledging past successes while bringing in new innovations. It is the union of wisdom from the past and hope that shines beyond tomorrow.

The harmony of a community during the good old *kampung* days finds common ground with modern technology (**p.92**), where sharing something homemade with someone from a faraway land has never been easier.

Local delights get a makeover (**p.35**) – *ondeh-ondeh* is turned inside-out and food like your traditional breakfast set of *kopi-o* and toast is served as an icy cool treat.

Our homegrown storytellers share the significance of local literature (**p.70**) and why you should join the buzz.

Not to forget the master musician (**p.22**) who has ventured where not many have in mixing both modern and traditional melodies from a myriad of cultures.

Be brave and try something new – you'll never know how it'll turn out if you never try. But don't forget to arm yourself with lessons from the past as you embark on your new journey.

Ng Jing Zhi
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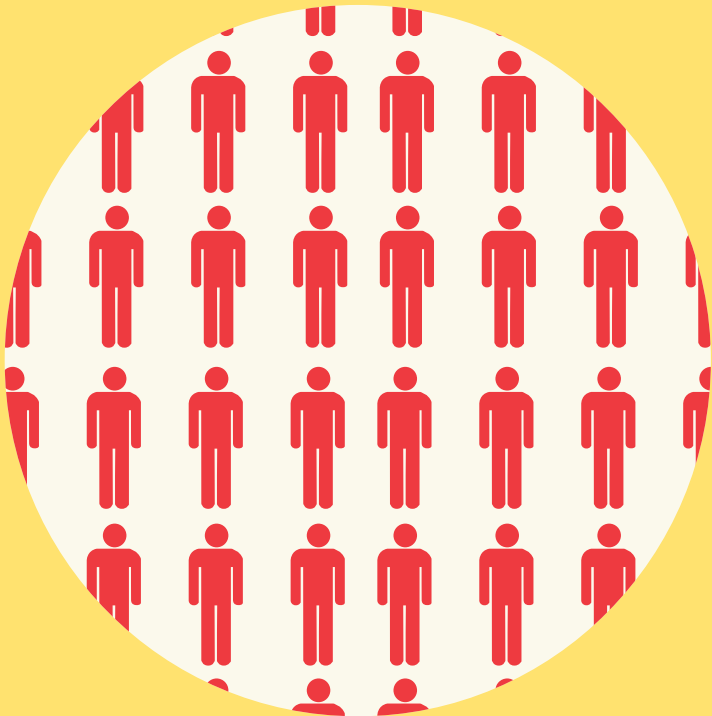
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HYPE is a free bi-annual production by final-year Mass Communication (Print Journalism) students at Ngee Ann Polytechnic's School of Film & Media Studies. HYPE is part of m:idea, Singapore's first student-run media conglomerate.

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20TH ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL

NEW DECADE, NEW LOOK

It's been 20 years since the very first issue of HYPE was published, and our past editors have come forward to share their thoughts and well-wishes to celebrate this milestone

When we first sat down and decided that we were going to completely change HYPE from the inside-out, two waves of emotions washed over us.

First, pure excitement. It was our chance to build a brand new identity, sculpt a shiny new look, refine and redesign the insides. Plus, with this year being HYPE's 20th anniversary, there's no better time to do it.

But when we got past our initial enthusiasm, it dawned on us that we've got a monstrously big task in our hands. A complete revamp meant starting from scratch with not much of a skeleton from our predecessors to follow. We would have to dig deep and pull together a look that would stand out and pull people in.

And so began our task of revamping HYPE. Days turned into weeks into months of scouring for ideas and inspiration while having our aesthetically-inclined designers breathe life into the words on pages.

The magazine slowly began to fill up with stories and colour. Some came easily, while others were squeezed out after many, many cups of tea (and coffee).

In line with our theme of Reformation, our goal was to achieve a clean and readable layout. Pops of colour in pastel were added to accentuate the design for a youthful look.

With the revamp, we aim to not only be a youth entertainment magazine, but a publication that engages and informs young adults on topics that are relevant.

We hope to embody the spirit of what it truly means to be young and free.

Young and free – not the reckless, wild freedom but the type of liberation that comes with knowing we've wisely used our freedom of choice to build up and not destroy.

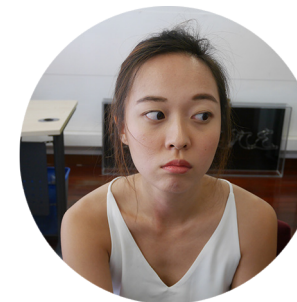
Back when we were working on the design for the first issue of HYPE, laptops weren't prevalent, so the three of us had to take turns working on a Power Mac. It was a painfully slow process and we would wait half a day just for Photoshop to render the cover featuring Moses Lim and Vernetta Lopez.

- Mr Melvin Goh (Designer for issue #1)
Lecturer at Ngee Ann Polytechnic



The revamp [in 2009] was a crucial milestone in HYPE's short history because we were going to completely reinvent the magazine for the same demographic of readers. Everything from its design, size, type and quality of stories and distribution channels was re-conceptualised by a strong student team and supported by the school.

- Mr Kenneth Chan (Editor of issue #29)
Lawyer



HYPE was my first 'real-life' experience working on a magazine and I'd like to think that it played a pivotal role in shaping my career in the publishing industry. It's not an easy task managing our own magazine and there were way too many sleepless nights trying to pull everything together but somehow, it came together beautifully.

- Ms Michelle Ng (Deputy editor of issue #31)
Writer for Time Out Singapore

It was my first taste of real publication madness – conceptualising, brainstorming, editing and more editing. All in all, it had been an immensely fulfilling experience.

- Ms Phoebe Low (Editor of issue #37)
Final year BA student at the University of Melbourne



I was pleasantly surprised by the amount of recognition and opportunities given to the magazine by external companies. It was very encouraging to know that what many skeptical students know as 'just a student publication' is in fact widely known among our media contacts.

- Ms Charmaine Lim (Editor of issue #38)
Writer for Vulcanpost.com

Countless ups and downs, moments of euphoria amidst seemingly unabating pressure, coupled with sleepless nights and binge snacking at the witching hour. At the end of it, you'd find yourself admiring a glossy 100-page magazine – every inch of colour, text and picture – made possible only with dedication, prudence and hard work.

- Mr Douglas Yong (Deputy editor of issue #38)
Owner of The Tiny Island Emporium





Photo courtesy of Sony Music Entertainment Singapore

SEZAIRE FIRES BACK

After a six-year break, Singapore Idol 3 winner Sezaire Sezaire has returned and ISABELLE LIEW sits down with him to uncover the intimate details behind his new music

Fresh, raw and unfiltered – these are the words that Sezaire Sezaire, 28, uses to sum up his recent self-titled extended playlist (EP), released on Jul 8 this year. Inspired by his seven-year relationship with his wife, Syaza Qistina Tan, 24, songs from the EP include gritty details of rocky times in their relationship.

Sezaire finished recording and mixing the EP in a matter of 15 days in January last year, but he wasn't ready to put out the album as "some details in there were too explicit".

"These songs were personal [and] written in times when I really needed to let out [my feelings]," reveals Sezaire. "It's very different from anything else I've done, partially because it's my first time producing and writing an entire [EP]."

Staying true to his promise, Sezaire reveals glimpses into the very private compartments of his life as he pens down the most passionate and emotional moments – so much so that he feels some may make him seem "like a crazy person".

The song he found hardest to write was Empty, one that his wife refuses to listen to.

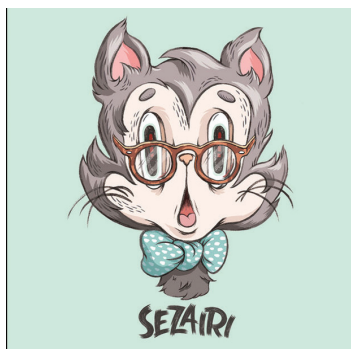
"It is about the many times we just went on a rampage, and for days on end we wouldn't talk to each other," he explains. "At the end, there's no purpose to all of it, and you just feel empty."

Despite the hurdles in their relationship, Sezaire shares that his wife has always believed in him.

"We started dating before I [found success], and [even back] then she told me that I would be who I am today," he smiles fondly. "Other girls came and went, but she saw it in me, and that's why I married her."

Through the blood, sweat and tears, Sezaire is still passionate about being a musician as he loves when fans are able to relate to his lyrics.

"I have a lot of responsibility and power that I didn't even realise – I can affect many people through my art and performances. I need to be very responsible with what I do," he says. "I need to serve the music and serve the people." **E**



Sezaire's self-titled EP is now available on iTunes and Spotify.



From left to right: Azira Shafinaz, Sophia Liana and Cik Manggis

Photo courtesy of Universal Music Singapore

Keep Calm, It's #GIRLPOWER

CINDY YONG speaks to De Fam who are set on bringing girl power back to Malaysia by daring to be different

Never in their wildest dreams did the iron-willed ladies of Malaysian female pop group De Fam – comprising of Azira Shafinaz, 25, Sophia Liana, 26, and Cik Manggis, 27 – imagine they would be the voice to empower and inspire women.

In May 2015, De Fam released their first single #SUPERGIRLS, which topped Malaysia's radio charts and has a strong message on girl power. Lyrics such as "independent women who I stand for" and "don't need to worry 'bout the things they say, you've got the power to stand up today" became an instant favourite in the Malaysian music scene.

"Sophia actually received an e-mail awhile back from a single working mother who said that she felt inspired listening to #SUPERGIRLS,"

Shafinaz fondly recalls. "It's important that women encourage and empower one another than compare."

The trio were born and raised in Kuala Lumpur and bonded through their shared love for dance when they met in high school.

They began meeting up frequently for karaoke sessions and soon noticed uncanny chemistry between them and their talent for singing.

"Because together, there's strength. Individually, there's always a weakness," Shafinaz explains their decision to dive into the music industry as a group as opposed to solo acts.

"The '90s saw the last Malaysian female pop band called Elite. Thus, we wanted to step out and start a girl group revival," Cik says. Earlier this year, De Fam collaborated with

Brandon Beal, American singer and songwriter behind the viral song Twerk It Like Miley, for their latest single With You.

Because together, there's strength. Individually, there's always a weakness.

– Azira Shafinaz, vocalist

Now, De Fam is aiming to release an extended playlist and expand in the region – starting with Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines.

"We hope that our songs will not be just songs, but that they will continue to empower many women out there," Shafinaz says. **E**

SECOND CHANCE

Greyson Chance is back after a break from the music scene but is he here to stay and does his new album say something about his hiatus? SWETHA S finds out

A preteen in a striped polo tee, with long boy-band hair playing a piano and belting out Lady Gaga's *Paparazzi* in a school auditorium – this was what the world associated Greyson Chance with in 2010 when he first rose to fame.

Six years later, Chance, 19, has lost his baby face and is now writing and singing his own songs with a fully-developed voice and a whole new attitude.

The singer-songwriter officially took a break from the music scene two years ago but according to fans like Iffah Nur Diyanah, 18, he remained extremely low-key and kept out of the public eye for almost four years.

“When I took that break, I was able to go back and have similar experiences to the teenagers around me and be a bit normal,” says Chance. “I needed that a lot so it was a really good thing for me.

“Because as a kid... I was travelling on the road and my life was *not* normal at all.”

While his fans and members of the public missed him, Chance took the

opportunity to go back home to his roots in Oklahoma, USA, to do some soul-searching.

In May 2016, Chance released an extended playlist (EP) titled *Somewhere Over My Head*, chronicling his previous years of self-discovery.

“The [EP] is the starting point for me and my fans now, plus it's all about my experiences as a teen, about me growing up as a teenager. Very much my journey not in terms of music but as a human and a person,” Chance confesses.

Addressing his new and more intimate songs, Chance says he wanted his fans to be able to “unravel layers by going alongside him through his journey”.

Instead of focusing on the outcome of the EP and how he was going to make it big, he hoped for it to let him connect with his fans on a more personal level and share his growth with them.

Nur Fatini Dayana, 18, a loyal fan since 2010, says Chance's songs in the past were more reserved and quiet as compared to his songs now.

When I took that break, I was able to go back and have similar experiences to the teenagers around me and be a bit normal.

– Greyson Chance



Want to win a tote bag signed by Greyson Chance? Flip to **page 98** to find out more!



Somewhere Over My Head is now available on iTunes and Spotify.

In *Somewhere Over My Head*, Chance explores a wide array of genres instead of sticking to mainstream pop like he used to when first discovered.

This was Chance's way of simply writing what he felt and “focusing on just the music and not anything else”, as well as not having to worry about which genre would appease majority of the public.

The reinvented Chance packs a whole lot of swagger and while it requires some adjusting to, fans like Grace Chan Kit Yee, 19, are taking it in stride.

“It did take a bit of time to get used to his new music style. After awhile, it grew on to me and I pretty much fell in love with his new album,” she admits.

The question on every fan's lips however, is whether the singer is here to stay.

Chance reveals, “I took a break because of some stuff that happened with the business side of things. But I've graduated and I want to focus on my music now – just the music, not photo shoots or fashion or fame, solely music. So yeah, I'm back for good.” **[E]**

DISCO

HUE

SINGAPORE'S SYNTHPOP SENSATION

ABIGAIL ANG sits down with the four-piece band to talk about their musical journey that gels them despite their diverse individual tastes

After four years of line-up changes, genre experimentation and differing musical palates, Disco Hue finds common ground – with much success – in their debut extended playlist (EP) *Arcade*.

A shimmering blend of electronic pop, indie rock and funk, the record balances groovy sounds of the '70s with modern accents. The digital release on May 13 this year saw an exponential surge in sales, landing them in second place on the local iTunes album chart beside established acts like English rock band Radiohead and Korean girl group AOA.

Despite whirlwind promotions that included interviews with local radio stations like Lush 99.5 FM and an appearance on *NOT The 5 Show*, the band has yet to take it all in.

"It's strange that people go out of their way to tell us that we're good," lead vocalist Sherlyn Leo, 20, says with a bewildered smile. "I was amazed that there were so many people [at our EP launch]."

Turnout for the band's first solo gig at the Aliwal Arts Centre was so large that extra tickets had to be churned out to meet the demand.

"We could see people [packed up against one another from the stage] all the way to the door," guitarist Rush Ang, 22, chuckles. "The crowd was singing so loudly I had to tell the sound engineer to increase the volume of Sherlyn's mic."

Surprising Twists

Formed in mid-2011, Disco Hue edged into the local music spotlight when the group released the dreamy, sports luxe-inspired lyric video for their first single, *Gotta Find You*, this January. Since then, the clip has garnered more than 10,000 views on YouTube.

"It's the song where I 'hustled' the most," confesses synth player Auzaie Zie, 23, who wrote the song for his application to the University of Liverpool. "[The admissions staff] loved it so much that until today, they keep calling [to invite] me." Amused but flattered, Zie turned down the offer due to monetary concerns.

It wasn't the first time that things have taken an unexpected turn.

The formation of the band began at the Singapore Polytechnic where drummer Billy Chua, 22, Rush and Zie met during their time in the Music

and Audio Technology course. Although they achieved little triumphs in competitions, the struggle to find suitable bandmates grew evident.

“We’ve had too many line-up changes when we first started,” Zie admits. “We changed our bassist three times!”

Disco Hue also met a roadblock when their singer, Christina Lye, left due to academic pressure. “We were stuck [and] we couldn’t do anything. And the guys had to go for National Service,” Zie adds.

As luck or fate would have it, Zie stumbled upon a cover Sherlyn uploaded on Vine, a video sharing platform. Impressed by her mellifluous voice, he offered her a spot in the band.

“At that point I was bored and wanted to do something music related,” Sherlyn recounts, noting that singing as a career became more real only after the band started playing at a few gigs.

Despite these challenges, Disco Hue drew strength from the support of their growing fan base. Their persistence paid off when the band got to perform at Baybeats 2016, an achievement Billy describes as “a long time coming”.

Disco Hue is still finding their feet, but the band has already gained unprecedented success overseas – a launch party in Osaka after selling out all copies of their EP within two weeks. “Our songs have even been played on radio stations overseas,” Billy says with a smile.

One Sound

With *Arcade*, the band drew inspiration from a playlist of songs by other bands and artists with the intention of replicating a similar “feel” in their music.

“It’s helpful as a guide so I don’t go too far off [when songwriting],” Zie says.

While members of Disco Hue are united by the same vision, each has his or her distinct taste in music. Still, the band asserts that it’s not difficult for them to reach common creative ground.

“I usually come up with the main chords and send them to the rest [to add their parts],” Zie says. “If I’m stuck, I’ll sit down with Sherlyn to write more melodies. All of us have a spectrum of genres we like, and when you put the spectrums together, they overlap.”

Billy acknowledges that despite their individual preferences, all the members generally “know what the song requires” and write with that as a priority.

Tight-lipped and excited, Disco Hue reveals that their upcoming single is a collaboration with an undisclosed local artist “outside their [stylistic] circle” but assured fans that it would be worth looking forward to.

As Rush puts it: “Whatever [musicians] put out is to the world and everyone is going to listen to it, so we want it to be our best.”¹



Disco Hue's debut EP, *Arcade*, is now available on iTunes and Spotify.

We have ONE specially autographed copy of Disco Hue's EP *Arcade* up for grabs! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

Photos courtesy of Eileen Teh

RUSH



ZIE



SHERLYN



BILLY



STAGE

Tropical Traumas: A Series of Cinematographic Choreographies

The Meadow @ Gardens by the Bay

Sep 2 – 4: 9 – 10:10pm (No intermission)

Free admission

Photo courtesy of Singapore International Festival of Arts

EYE CANDY

Get ready to feast your eyes on the marvellous creations of Brian Tan. ANGELICA CHONG speaks to the mastermind behind *Tropical Traumas*

Brian Gothong Tan, 36, is not your typical “sing, act and dance” triple threat – instead, he excels as a director, artist and performance-maker.

Known for his eye-catching spectacles at the National Day Parade, Youth Olympic Games and Southeast Asian Games, this homegrown talent will be opening for Ron Arad’s 720° exhibition with his piece *Tropical Traumas: A Series of Cinematographic Choreographies*, held at The Meadow @ Gardens by the Bay from Sep 2 to 4.

Tropical Traumas is a multi-theatrical presentation and reaction piece to Ron Arad’s installation. Shown on a

360-degree panoramic screen made up of 5,600 silicon rods, the audience will experience tales from the sultry Malay Archipelago presented through a group of actors.

“I was very inspired by Sophia Raffles – Sir Stamford Raffles’s second wife – [and] her adventures here in Southeast Asia. [She was] the first Caucasian woman to venture deep into the jungle in Java and all five of her children died here [in Singapore],” says Tan in a phone interview.

The California Institute of the Arts graduate kickstarted his career when local playwright Alfian Sa’at approached him to create several multimedia elements for his play, *The Optic Trilogy*.

“That was quite a turning point because that was actually my first encounter with theatre. Before that, I was still shooting my old animation and experimental films. After I did that, other theatre companies kept calling me,” says Tan.

However, as the adage goes, smooth seas don’t make good sailors. Tan faced many setbacks while attempting to further his career in multimedia design. As he wasn’t a renowned visual artist, it wasn’t easy to clinch a venue for his first solo exhibition, *Heavenly Cakes and Sentimental Flowers*.

Tan says with a laugh: “I went to a lot of different places and they all turned me down. So I tried my luck and knocked on the door of [the Singapore Art Museum] and requested to meet the curator, June Yap. She just gave me the space and that was truly amazing.”

He fondly recalls *The Incredible Adventures of Border Crossers*, a six-hour piece created with fellow theatre director Ong Keng Sen, as one of his most memorable works. Held last year in Paris and Singapore, he says the event is still etched in his mind as he had never done a show with such a strenuous run time before.

But the physical demand of his pieces doesn’t stop him from dreaming up more works. His upcoming experimental piece *Lost Cinema* is built around quirky personalities from stories he loves and inspired by Asian directors like Apichatpong Weerasethakul and Wong Kar-wai.

He says: “Art has the power to move people. I saw it for myself. You can create a video or short story that can move people and have them tell you that it was really good; that they felt very touched. In that, I witnessed the power of art.”²

When she took the first step to play music at the age of nine, pipa virtuoso Wu Man, 51, never imagined that she would be merging music from divergent heritages and nominated for a Grammy award.

Wu experiments by mixing melodies from China and Central Asia – most notably the Uighur. While the pipa is traditionally a Chinese instrument, its origins were highly influenced by Persian and Turkish cultures.

Singapore music lovers will get the chance to listen to Wu at the Singapore International Festival of Arts in September this year where she will be playing alongside musicians from the Silk Route in a newly created performance, *Borderlands*.

“I grew up listening to the radio and most of the time I would [be intrigued by] traditional Uighur music,” says Wu, in a telephone interview, about the cultural influences in her compositions.

The Uighurs who reside in the Xinjiang province are among China’s 55 ethnic minorities. Due to their mixed heritage from Turkey, Mongolia

China and numerous other surrounding countries, they have very different beliefs, music and food compared to the Han Chinese.


Despite being known for playing around with various forms of traditional Chinese melodies, Wu has taken on a new interest in merging Western and Asian forms of music.

“All the instruments are very different,” Wu ruminates. “It is important to know the instrument before you venture into it, the same with food – if you never try, you never know. If you don’t try to merge the music forms together, you will never know if [the combination] would work or not.”

Wu muses that while South Asian music is not as traditional as it used to be, change is not a bad thing.

She says: “Music is just shifting to a different idea, but its objective and everything is still the same.”

While many young people these days are not as inclined to learn about traditional music, Wu is not fazed. In a recent trip to Jordan, she shared her passion for her art with youths in a refugee camp. They responded well, preferring traditional melodies to generic pop tunes.

Classical or contemporary, they are all music to people’s ears. Wu continues to inspire people around the globe with her fusion music from different cultures and eras. 

Catch Wu Man live:

Borderlands
SOTA Studio Theatre

Aug 15 – 17:
8 – 9:20pm

Tickets are priced at \$40 each from Sistic (visit sistic.com.sg or call 6348 5555).



Photos courtesy of Singapore International Festival of Arts

Musical Cocktail: Marga -pipa

SWETHA S discovers the traditional Chinese inspirations of a musician who has ventured into mixing music from different cultures



Time Between Us

Imagine lying on an actress’s bed, listening to her whisper of a distant memory. Imagine again, walking into an actor’s house, watching as his life unfolds around you.

These are scenes from *Everything By My Side* and *Time Between Us*, two gripping performances that break the fourth wall, created by celebrated artist Fernando Rubio. Both plays will be featured at the Singapore International Festival of Arts (Sifa) that runs from Aug 11 to Sep 17 this year.

Everything By My Side

You take off your shoes and slip between the pristine white sheets of a bed to find yourself lying next to a stranger. Situated in a public space, the private act of climbing into bed with an actress is made even more intimate. Transfixed, you listen to her whispers of a story of childhood memories – a story that transcends time and space.

Everything By My Side is a miniature play in bed. In 10 white beds, 10 actresses invite individual audience members under the covers to experience an authentic, intense expression of emotions.

Hoping to form a connection with her audience in the mere 10 minutes

Come Play with Us

Step through the fourth wall with LIM YUAN XIU as she delves into the world of interactive theatre at the Singapore International Festival of Arts 2016

for each performance, veteran actress Margaret Chan, 67, feels that the interactive nature of the production makes every single performance unique and different in its own way.

“Each actress will bring herself to her performance, as each member of the audience will bring his or her presence to the performance,” she says. “If the member of the audience jumps into bed with another actress, the script may be the same, but the experience will be different.”

A thought-provoking production, this hypnotic play will take you back to moments of nostalgia, strength and vulnerability.

Time Between Us

Walk into the house of a stranger and share the space with a man isolated in the middle of a busy city. A passer-by in his life, you enter his personal space and observe his quirky habits and flitting emotions as he shows you his world; a world of solitude, change and potent memories.

Spanning five full days, Fernando Rubio’s *Time Between Us* is a continuous interactive play that gives audiences a glimpse into the life of a man who lives as a stranger in his own house.

Dedicated to staying in character for the entire 108 hours, Oliver Chong, 39, an award-winning actor and director, says: “I will immerse myself

Catch these performances:

Everything By My Side
The National Gallery Singapore


Aug 12: 6 – 9pm
Aug 13: 2 – 5pm, 6 – 9pm
Aug 14: 2 – 5pm

Time Between Us
The Marina Bay Sands
Event Plaza

Sep 7, 10am – Sep 11, 10:30pm

Tickets are priced at \$10 each from Sistic (visit sistic.com.sg or call 6348 5555).

in it. For the five days, I will not be me. I even told my wife and friends, ‘If you come visit me and call me by my name, I would not respond to you.’”

Looking forward to the performance, he says: “I hope the audience will be able to see themselves in different parts of this play or different facets of this man living alone in this house. I hope it triggers something in the audience and they will think about their existence, learning more about themselves.” 

We have three pairs of tickets to *WICKED* up for grabs! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

A Tale of Two Witches

International award-winning musical *Wicked* is here again to get audiences Dancing Through Life. BENJAMIN CHUA has a chat with the cast of the Emerald City



Photos courtesy of BASE Entertainment Asia

Steady your broomsticks as Elphaba and Glinda come soaring back to the shores of Singapore this September with a bagful of gravity-defying tricks in this edition of *Wicked*.

“We made several exciting changes to the show for the UK & Ireland Tour, including some additional flying sequences, and it is this version of the show that is coming to Singapore,” says international executive producer Michael McCabe in an email interview.

The play, which was here five years ago, features a star-studded cast from the UK. Jacqueline Hughes will be playing the green-skinned outcast

Elphaba; Carly Anderson will be playing the popular blonde-haired Glinda; and Bradley Jaden, who played Enjolras in the West End version of *Les Misérables*, will be joining as Elphaba’s love interest, Fiyero.

Expect a stunning display of colourful costumes and vibrant set designs in this reloaded version of the musical.

“I have always loved the song No Good Deed. The staging is stunning [with extraordinary lighting effects and projections], and the momentum of the story at this point in the show is incredibly exciting,” says McCabe.

For the uninitiated, *Wicked* is set in the world of Oz, the same one you know from the equally famous *The*

Wizard of Oz. This is before Dorothy, Toto and her farmhouse crashed into the picture.

The lives of Glinda and Elphaba intertwine throughout the musical, starting as students of sorcery and growing into Glinda the Good Witch and the Wicked Witch of the West respectively. The duo are forced to take sides during the conflict that ensues in the musical.

Hughes tells HYPE that the greatest thing she learnt was it being “okay to be different”, a nod to the discrimination that Elphaba faces in the musical.

Fans can look forward to Elphaba’s dance, where she gains the

acceptance of the other characters who had ostracised her.

“It’s a really beautiful scene. It’s the first time in her whole life that she’s welcomed into society,” says Hughes.

It comes as no surprise that acceptance, friendship and understanding were themes from the musical that resonates the most with her. Fellow cast members Anderson and Jaden echoes the same sentiments, and hopes it will be the audience’s main takeaway from *Wicked*.

McCabe also wishes that audiences will learn to not judge a person based on how they look or because they’re different.

“It is all too easy to be suspicious of or ‘demonise’ [someone], and *Wicked*’s story is a sobering and important lesson [on] looking beyond the ‘surface’ and also not allowing others to influence your personal feelings about people,” he says.

With *Wicked* being a massive production, Hughes shared that she has been improving her vocal stamina while Jaden does physical training and runs daily.

“It’s a production that we are incredibly proud of and we hope that audiences in Singapore will have a fantastic experience, whether coming back to the show or seeing it for the first time,” says McCabe. **E**

Catch *Wicked*:

Grand Theatre, MasterCard Theatres at Marina Bay Sands

Sep 29 – Oct 16

Tuesday to Friday: 8pm

Saturday: 2pm & 8pm

Sunday: 1pm & 6pm

Ticket prices start at \$55 (excluding \$4 booking fee per ticket) from Sistic (visit sistic.com.sg or call 6348 5555) or Marina Bay Sands (visit marinabaysands.com/ticketing or call 6688 8826).

TWENTY-SOMETHING

Hitting the Right Notes

CINDY YONG celebrates the success and voices of two musicians breaking into Singapore's music industry

This year, amidst the local arts scene, a legacy is born: curated by Singaporean singer-songwriter and producer Inch Chua, the Festival InstaGala, part of The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival, is an outdoor concert featuring local musical acts and epicureans.

The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival is a platform for creatives and theatre makers in their twenties to showcase their productions. From fresh to familiar faces, the brainchild of 53-year-old theatre practitioner Tan Kheng Hua aims to empower these young adults by providing a platform for them to step up and make a name for themselves.

Courage, music, passion – and of course, being in their twenties – are what Samantha Rui and Lewis Loh have in common.

Samantha Rui: In Raw Honesty

Four years ago, Samantha started writing original songs on boys, change and love.

Two years later, she was one of the opening acts for local singer Gentle Bones' extended playlist (EP) launch, while her first original, Blue, had garnered more than 18,000 plays on music sharing site SoundCloud.

"I'm the biggest advocate for SoundCloud, especially if you're too camera-shy for live performances or YouTube," says Samantha in an email interview with HYPE.

"Just have fun. Don't think of it so much as a 'performance' as it's just singing. There just happens to be people in your near vicinity enjoying your music!"



Samantha Rui

Photo courtesy of Shawna Chia

Now 20, she recently collaborated with Singaporean music producer FAUXE to launch Down, a rhythm and blues (R&B) track, on SoundCloud.

"I love how free this style makes me feel. The liberty you have with offbeat timing runs that leak past their proper bars, the amount of emotion that this style channels – that's what drew me to it," says Samantha.

Samantha will be releasing an EP along with her first-ever music video later this year.

Lewis Loh: Of a Different Spirit

Lewis (better known as LEW) is a local songster whose aesthetic embodies acoustic and folk tunes. Inspired by Michael Rosenberg, the main vocalist and songwriter of British folk band Passenger, and English indie folk musician Birdy, he feels it's most natural for him to write acoustically.

"I am inspired by anything that can evoke emotion like art, a movie, a new song, an experience or a relationship; love and friendship are my go-to topics," says LEW.

Born and raised in Hong Kong, he returned to Singapore to fulfil his National Service. He seized the opportunity to break into Singapore's music scene and wrote about the sights and sounds of his new surroundings.

Last year, LEW completed the NOISE Singapore Music Mentorship Programme and had the honour of receiving the NOISE Singapore Award, a \$5,000 grant for top graduates of the programme.

"Always remember that there is more space on the dining table for new food," says LEW. "Stay true to your sound, and the right people will come in." [E]



Lewis Loh

Photo courtesy of Esplanade

THEATRE FESTIVAL

Play on Words

AUDREY LEONG delves into the deep ideas and thoughts that went into two of the local plays at The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival



Photo courtesy of Debbie Y. Photography

Tree's a Crowd by Irfan Kasban

A tale of two trees and a futuristic dystopian Singapore are just some of the stories brought to life at the festival that played on the idea of what happens when playwrights in their twenties are given free reign to create whatever they wish without boundaries or external pressure.

Held at the Goodman Arts Centre in June 2016, The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival resulted in a spectacular roar of opinions and thoughts expressed through fictional characters and impossible situations.

Tree's a Crowd by Irfan Kasban

Created specially for the festival, this play takes root in forum theatre, often referred to as the "theatre of the oppressed".

Botanical puns like "it's not mandato-tree" take the stage but the production stems from deeper purpose, showing

how a relatively fair system of democracy becomes an unjust tyrannical autocracy after falling into the wrong hands.

It brought up the issue of how much should be sacrificed for the sake of progress – shown through the analogy of whether to cut down a 50-year-old tree planted by the Prime Minister or an ordinary 150-year-old tree.

The ministry in charge of the decision fails to come to a consensus and decides to organise a public forum, which the audience is part of.

This play meant more than just a bunch of twigs and leaves for Kasban; it was a turning point for him.

"I was on the verge of giving up theatre, due the politics and the business-driven landscape we live in, but I fell in love with this medium again," he says, adding that audience reactions to the play were surprisingly kind and supportive.

Balek Kampung by David Khoo

"A good deal of prayer" was the first reaction David Khoo had after finding out his script had been picked for The Twenty-Something Theatre Festival.

This was followed by "frantic cries for assistance, directed mostly at my sister", the one who persuaded him to submit his script in the first place.

Balek Kampung, which means "to go home" in Malay, is an adaptation of a radio play that Khoo had left collecting dust in the hidden crevices of his hard drive.

Set a hundred years from now in Singapore, the country is run by robots – more specifically, Artificial Intelligence bot, CEPARS, one entity made up of the preserved consciousness and memories of the nation's greatest leaders and citizens.

As futuristic Singapore slowly slips into a robotic normality where humans turn more and more to technology CEPARS starts to find its own humanity.

"I wanted to pursue the topsy-turvy logic of a civilisation's purpose becoming just to produce wealth, statistics and skyscrapers in the name of survival and pragmatism, which human beings end up serving, instead of focusing on cultivating good human beings," says Khoo on his message for the audience.

Khoo, who grew up listening to classical music and radio plays on Symphony 92.4, felt that the entire experience of adapting *Balek Kampung* from an on-air play to one set for the stage was "a fairly grand adventure, and the result of some nebulous plan to write radio comedy for a living and the need to make myself laugh". [E]

We have three pairs of tickets to *Innamorati Two* to give away! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

Photos courtesy of Toy Factory Productions

Seven Voices ONE SONG

AMANDA LEO travels into the realm of *Innamorati Two* where money holds no power and seven characters look for their hearts' desires within objects in a barter shop

Opening Sep 22 and starring Wong Jing Lun, Chriz Tong, Ann Lek, Sugie Phua, Jacky Chew, Sunny Yang and Stella Seah, *Innamorati Two* combines an emotive storyline with original songs and a well-designed set.

Following the footsteps of *Innamorati* in 2014, *Innamorati Two*, a Mandarin musical by Singaporean bilingual theatre company Toy Factory Productions, revolves around seven characters with either physical or emotional loss striving to find something more within a barter shop.

Director Goh Boon Teck, 44, also the chief artistic director of Toy Factory Productions, wishes to reimagine a life without over-reliance on money in the musical.

He says: "Theatre is a space to escape and think of alternative things in life. This was how we took away money and base on the concept of a barter shop."

The setting would then enable the seven characters to use objects within the shop to represent their thoughts.

Wong says: "My character yearns for communication skills as he wishes to gel [with] everyone. As he lost communication skills, [it is] very valuable [to him]. However, he has a barrier [between himself and] others and doesn't know how to express himself."

According to Goh, the concept also stemmed from how "an autistic person uses an object" to better communicate with others.


Happiness is another topic Goh wants to address in *Innamorati Two* because he believes people tend to take it for granted.

"To have happiness, you need to have the right attitude. The seven characters have insecurities and [are] handicapped, yet they're happy," says Goh. "I want people to understand it's not about the [disability], it's not about how poor you are, it's not about how mistreated you are – it's about how you think about yourself and your life."

Apart from dabbling in philosophy, Goh has also given a chance for his young talents to take on jobs outside

of their usual acting. Phua, 34, is an assistant director for the first time in *Innamorati Two* and is thankful for the opportunities given by Goh. It would also be Wong, Lek and Yang's first venture into composing music and songwriting.

Goh hopes Singaporeans will support the local production and for there to be sequels of *Innamorati* every two years.

"To showcase fresher talents and attract newer audience will be the true [purpose] of *Innamorati*," says Goh. 

Catch *Innamorati Two*

Drama Centre Theatre, National Library Building, Level 3

Sep 22 – Oct 2 2016
Wednesday to Sunday: 3 – 5pm
Tuesday to Saturday: 8 – 10pm

Language: Mandarin with English subtitles

Tickets are priced at \$52, \$62 and \$72 from Sistic (visit sistic.com.sg or call 6348 5555).



Spring Symphony

This is the season filled with music, friendship...
A journey to overcoming your fears, as PORTIA TAN discovers

The world of anime will see yet another live action movie adaptation, this time from the hit anime *Your Lie in April*. Set against a backdrop of ethereal watercolours and classical compositions by Beethoven and Chopin, it tells the story of a young pianist finding his way back to music.


At the tender age of 12, prodigious pianist Arima Kousei (Kento Yamazaki) is forced to face the death of his mother, who was also his instructor. Dubbed 'The Human Metronome', he breaks down at a piano recital when he is suddenly unable to hear the sound of his own playing. Ever since then, Kousei has avoided the piano and has withdrawn from the world of music.

Determined to lead a life without music alongside his friends Sawabe Tsubaki (Anna Ishii) and Watari Ryouta (Taishi Nakagawa), everything changes when he meets the beautiful, vivacious Miyazono Kaori (Suzu Hirose).

Her enthusiasm for playing the violin soon brings his fingers back on the keys and sets him on a return journey into the competitive classical music scene.

The two go on to compete in local competitions, where Kousei meets old rivals along the way. The unlikely violin and piano duo steals the limelight at various shows, leaving the audience in awe of how two completely different styles of music can complement each other so well.

"The basis of the whole story where the protagonist is inspired by the heroine is not new," says Mr Johnny Goh, a content planner at SOZO. "[But] the story is very character-driven with the focus on the lead characters of Kousei and Kaori, the performance of the two lead actors is something to keep an eye out for."

Fans of the anime will rejoice to know that the movie is almost entirely faithful to the original 22-episode series by the studio A1 Pictures. Be prepared to sniffle quietly in your seat and have lots of tissues on hand – this one's a tear-jerker. 

OPENS IN CINEMAS

SEP 10

Photo courtesy of Toho Company Ltd

Home is Where the **MAGIC** is

ANGELICA ELEANOR CHONG steps into Ransom Riggs' bewildering world of peculiar children

Move over, Harry Potter – this other world of fantasy is bound to sweep magic lovers off their feet with its unconventional storytelling.

Black-and-white photographs, which look slightly vaudeville and hint at the supernatural, are carefully intertwined in Ransom Riggs' *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*.

The book opens with Jacob Portman (Asa Butterfield) as a child, and whose grandfather often shared stories of gifted orphans who lived on an island. Years later, Jacob, now a teenager, visits that same island after the death of his grandfather, who is rumoured to have been murdered by a mysterious mythical creature.

Along the way, Jacob discovers that he has the ability to enter the world and witness the talents of the orphans. They live under the care of Miss Peregrine (Eva Green), who has powers of her own.

However, the presence of bloodthirsty creatures called "hollows" threatens their existence, and it is up to Jacob and his newfound friends to rid the curious little world of these monsters before they are eradicated first.

This haunting tale will be adapted for the silver screen with the film directed by Tim Burton. Burton has directed several dark films with a hint of comedy, namely *The Nightmare*

Before Christmas (1993), *Big Fish* (2003), *Corpse Bride* (2005) and *Alice in Wonderland* (2010).

Despite the novel being void of colour, Burton's adaptation will see bright bursts of summer hues akin to *Alice's Wonderland* – especially in and around the orphanage.

"I just want to see how Burton incorporates the pictures from the novel into the movie, and how he interprets the living and the dead," says Noah Liu, 19, a final year Optometry student.

Readers of *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children* will notice that Emma Bloom (Ella Purnell), Jacob's love interest, does not possess the power to wield fire in the movie.

"I'm quite excited to see how they are going to tweak the story around it since Emma's powers are pretty important to the plot and action sequences," says Nur Fazilah bte Mohd Fazil, 19, a Ngee Ann Polytechnic student. ■

OPENS IN CINEMAS
SEP 29

Photo courtesy of Twentieth Century Fox

Riding to The End

JOLÈNE GINA ABELARDE welcomes a new era of book adaptations with upcoming novel-turned-film *The Girl on the Train*

Photo courtesy of United International Pictures Singapore

The *Girl on the Train* is set to be a box office hit after its record-breaking novel and may well signify the end of teenagers saving the world from an evil, well-dressed dictator.

The film, adapted from the cult favourite book of the same title by Paula Hawkins, will sing a similar tune as its sister novel-turned-blockbuster *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn. The film is carrying a heavy cargo of expectations, given the fact that the novel topped the United Kingdom's hardback chart for 20 weeks.

The Girl on the Train follows unemployed alcoholic Rachel Watson (Emily Blunt), who obsesses over a seemingly perfect couple, Megan (Haley Bennett) and Scott (Luke Evans), while on her commute. The façade is broken when Rachel is thrown into an investigation involving Megan, who goes missing and is then murdered.

Helming the DreamWorks film is director Tate Taylor, who directed *The Help*, with screenplay by Erin Cressida Wilson, who adapted *The Secretary*.

The eerie trailer is set against a haunting rendition of Kanye West's

Heartless, which amplifies the swiftly switching scenes that readers of the book might find resonates with Rachel's constant state of intoxication and memory loss.

While dedicated readers have complained about the shift in the location from London to the United States, what truly caught many off-guard is the casting of Blunt, whose slim silhouette and aristocratic features did not seem to fit into the book's description of Rachel as "overweight". However, loyal fans can take heart in the fact that Blunt is retaining her British accent despite the change in setting.

The versatile actress, who has roles ranging from thrillers like *The Edge of Tomorrow* to comedies like *The Five-Year Engagement*, said to entertainment site Deadline: "The idea of playing a part like that where you just feel like you're drowning is exciting."

This rising trend of thrillers and mysteries, amongst similar dramatic thrillers such as *The Revenant* (2015), *Everest* (2015) and *Colonia* (2015) may well signify the temporary end of the dystopian film genre that soared after favourites like *The Hunger Games* (2012) and *Divergent* (2014).

"There's something about the state of seeing a world outside your comfort zone that makes the curious youth wonder about how they would survive in that condition," says Chang Qi Feng, 19, a student from Singapore Polytechnic, on why dystopian genres appeal to young adults.

Lois Lowry's 1993 award-winning novel, *The Giver*, was said to have ignited the flame for young adult dystopian fiction, yet it underperformed on the silver screen in 2014. Lowry said to entertainment site Salon: "It was a trend and it's ending now."

"[The] dystopian setting is giving way to edge-of-the-seat dramas that joins the modern resurgence of dramatic thrillers in the vein of *Gone Girl* and *The Girl on the Train*," says V Dhanraj, 19, a student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

While this may be the end of the end of the world, it may just be a chilling, long-awaited beginning to the rise of drama-thrillers. Settle in, because this train ride is about to get bumpy. ■

OPENS IN CINEMAS
OCT 6

Not Your Average DOCTOR

Photo courtesy of The Walt Disney Company

Keep those apples away, Marvel fans, as RACHEL CHAN takes a closer look at the new Marvel comic-turned-movie, Doctor Strange

Prepare for a new addition to the legion of superhero movies invading cinemas in recent years as Marvel Studios unveils yet another installment in the third phase of the Marvel Cinematic Universe – Doctor Strange.

The movie follows Doctor Stephen Vincent Strange (Benedict Cumberbatch), the world's best neurosurgeon whose career was cut short after a car accident. However, surviving the tragedy gave him access to alternate realms and magical abilities.

A Celtic mystic based in Tibet, called the Ancient One (Tilda Swinton), then recruits him as a disciple, training him to become the next Sorcerer Supreme.

Best known for playing Sherlock Holmes in BBC's television series Sherlock, Emmy Award-winning actor Benedict Cumberbatch is the leading character.

The star-studded cast also includes Chiwetel Ejiofor as the antagonist Karl Mordo, and Rachel McAdams as Strange's surgeon colleague.

Dubbed by CinemaBlend as "2016's biggest superhero movie hit" and "one of the most visually exciting movies" produced by Marvel, Doctor Strange is directed by Scott Derrickson.

"We felt free to go as far as we could imagine, so we're doing a lot of things that I think have not been done before," said Derrickson in an interview with Empire magazine earlier this year. "Once we'd crossed a certain line, we just kept going."

Marvel released the first official trailer for Doctor Strange on Apr 13 on YouTube. With its jaw-dropping special effects accompanied by the movie's chilling music score, the trailer appeared promising despite having gone through countless scriptwriters since 1986.

Ameer Ibrahim, 19, a fan of Marvel comics, said: "From the trailers alone, I can tell the CGI is going to be pretty darn awesome. The mood and ambience of the movie is also something different from other superhero movies and draws a lot of parallels to abstract works like *Inception* by Christopher Nolan."

Although there was an overall positive response, the trailer received much flak over the "white-washing" of certain characters, such as the Ancient One, who was originally an Asian male in the comics.

Gan Zhen Yin, 19, another fan of Doctor Strange, said that the issue of "whitewashing", especially in Hollywood, is very worrying as other ethnicities are not getting enough recognition for characters that are originally depicted as people of colour.

According to collider.com, Kevin Feige, President of Marvel Studios, said that they decided to swap the roles as "an effort to avoid the racist caricature of the comics" and that the swap was "exciting" as it "opened up many possibilities" into the comic's cliché plotline.

Nonetheless, fans will still be anticipating the newest superhero/sorcerer make his appearance on the big screen. [E]

OPENS IN CINEMAS
OCT 27

What's in a Suitcase?

Plenty of different creatures can fit in Newt Scamander's magical suitcase, as PORTIA TAN unpacks the upcoming Warner Bros. release, *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them*

This is the first Harry Potter movie set in J.K. Rowling's world of wizards that we're going in knowing absolutely nothing about – after all, this movie is based on Harry's old textbook about magical creatures.

British self-styled 'magizoologist' Newt Scamander (Eddie Redmayne) arrives at the Magical Congress of the United States of America (MACUSA) in 1926, when his magical suitcase disappears and the creatures inside escape. This sends MACUSA scrambling after Newt, and threatens to strain the relations between the wizards and the "No-Maj". "No-Maj" is the American equivalent of the British 'Muggle', a person who lacks magic powers.

Teaming up with two witches, Tina (Katherine Waterston) and Queenie (Alison Sudol) Goldstein, as well as

a "No-Maj", Jacob Kowalski (Dan Fogler), the four go on an adventure to recapture the animals in New York during the Jazz Age.

Some may recognise a familiar name from the movie trailers – Albus Dumbledore. We know that Newt had been expelled from Hogwarts when Dumbledore was but a lowly Transfiguration teacher, and that Newt was a former Hufflepuff judging from the yellow and black scarf he carries in his suitcase.

Since Dumbledore has been a mentor to both Harry and Newt, how do the two of them compare?

"My heroes [Harry and Newt] are always people who feel themselves to be set apart, stigmatized or 'other-ed'," said Rowling in a featurette of the film. "That's at the heart of most of what I write, and it's certainly at the heart of this movie."

My heroes [Harry and Newt] are always people who feel themselves to be set apart, stigmatized or 'other-ed'. That's at the heart of most of what I write, and it's certainly at the heart of this movie.

– J.K. Rowling, Author

In fact, Redmayne also said in the same featurette that "Newt feels more at home with creatures than he does with human beings." Making his way through a strange country that he doesn't fully understand is part of the wild goose (or should we say thunderbird?) chase which makes this story much more delightful.

This is Rowling's very first screenwriting project, giving us even more of an official Potter experience than ever before. With the director of the last four Harry Potter films, David Yates, at the helm, we shall have to wait to see what other wonders *Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them* can offer us. [E]

OPENS IN CINEMAS
NOV 17

Photo courtesy of Warner Bros. Singapore Pte Ltd



Choc-full of Happiness

Sit back and relax as LIM YUAN XIU and ISABELLE LIEW gives you some chocolate therapy

An image of a stack of brownies generously drizzled with caramel sauce floats invitingly into your mind as you face your to-do list overflowing with impending deadlines. You turn away from your workload, craving the warm, rich goodness that never fails to melt away your problems and into your heart.

According to Science Focus, chocolate is similar to certain antidepressants in regard to how they affect consumers. Containing tryptophan, an amino acid that produces serotonin within the brain, it improves moods, digestion and lets you sleep better at night. Phenylethylalanine, another chemical found in chocolate, replicates the heady bliss of falling in love.

It has also been proven that dark chocolate can increase metabolism. The high cocoa content improves the body's ability to break down fatty acids, reducing the digestion and absorption of fats.

While this delectable treat brings multiple benefits to both our physical and mental health, it's no excuse to start gorging yourself chocolate – it still contains a high amount of sugar that can lead to obesity if eaten in excess. Exercise some self-control, savour chocolate in moderation and reap its benefits!☑

Photo courtesy of Lim Yuan Xiu and Isabelle Liew

Chewy Brownies

Ingredients

- 80g of flour
- 225g of sugar
- 60g of unsalted butter
- 60g cocoa powder
- A pinch of salt
- 8 inch square tin

1. **Preheat oven** to 180 °C.
2. **Beat** the butter and sugar until the mixture turns pale, and add in the eggs.
3. **Add** the flour and cocoa powder and whisk until everything has been incorporated.
4. **Pour** the mixture into the tin and put into the oven for 8-10 minutes.
5. **Serve** warm, with toppings of your choice.



Springleaf Prata Place
57B Jalan Tua Kong

Opening hours:
Daily, 7am – midnight

Tel: 6636 2935

No. 1 Thong Soon Avenue

Opening hours:
Daily, 7am – midnight

Tel: 6459 5670

1 Red Bean Dessert Prata – \$3.00

The Chinese red bean paste pancake is a soft and chewy pancake filled with sweet red bean paste. Instead of the usual doughy pancake, this dish uses a crispy prata and is served with a side of curry.

The first bite of curry-soaked prata brings on the flavour of Sunday mornings or late night suppers – but what you won't expect will be the wave of nostalgia that washes in with the saccharine red bean paste, reminiscent of Chinese desserts. This seemingly strange combination creates a magical blend of sweet and savoury that will leave you craving for more.

LOCAL FOOD REINVENTED

JOLENE GINA ABELARDE sinks her teeth into the comforting and familiar flavours of Singapore – with an unexpected twist

Some say that the transformation of traditional treats is like a double-edged sword – it can either water down the true flavours of the dish or be a great way to reintroduce cultural food. Here are three dishes that will make you sit up and take notice.

Dempsey House
8D Dempsey Road

Opening hours:
Mon – Thu: Noon – 11pm
Fri: Noon – midnight
Sat: 11am – 4pm, 6pm – midnight
Sun: 9am – 4pm, 6 – 11pm

Tel: 6475 7787



2 Marilah Onde-Onde – \$8.00

The moist and dense pandan cake is layered with a thick yet surprisingly light coconut pandan cream, its sides rolled in coconut flakes – one half white, another green – and served with a side of gula melaka syrup for that extra kick.

The star of the dish is surprisingly the syrup, which is truly a great reinvention of the traditional ondeh-ondeh. A chewy cake recipe could have been used to emulate exterior of the original dish, but this doesn't hinder the fact that the slight tanginess of the pandan paired with the gula melaka is, as proven many times before, a match made in heaven.

3 Kopi-Cat – \$8.90

Served in a paper cup, the base of Kopi Cat is a half-half serving of pandan ice cream and coffee ice cream drizzled with kaya syrup. It is topped with a piece of kaya toast and a Chinese fried dough twist with a sprinkling of crushed sugar peanuts.

Dipping the crisp kaya toast into the strong and bitter coffee ice cream will bring on the familiar flavours of traditional coffee shop breakfasts. This dessert is more of a novelty than anything else, and a great treat if you prefer a cooler alternative to the traditional set.☑



Hatter Street Bakehouse & Café
212 Hougang Street 21
Opening hours: Daily, 1 – 10pm
Tel: 6988 4591

Taking Smart BITES

Enjoy crunch time with LIM YUAN XIU as she finds healthy alternatives that will give you that extra boost

Going cold turkey and resisting the urge to reach for those delectable chips, cookies and chocolates are enough to make almost anyone give up eating healthily.

Snacking, an integral part of many young people's lives, has earned itself a "bad" reputation as an unhealthy habit. However, snacking isn't actually harmful – what's harmful is consuming *unhealthy* snacks. Typically known as junk food, these snacks are high in refined sugar and saturated fat.

Ms Toh Yun Xuan, 26, a nutritionist at the Singapore Heart Foundation, warns that they cause "a higher inflammation rate in the body and the production of stress hormones".

She adds: "Not only does it affect brain functionality and moods, it can also cause a higher risk in other health conditions."

Dr Agnes Tey, 35, a researcher at the A*STAR Clinical Nutrition Research Centre, advises: "Try replacing

processed snacks with plant food. The less refined the snack is, the better."

Instead of cutting out snacks such as potato chips, cookies and chocolate entirely, Ms Toh recommends making a gradual switch to healthier alternatives. Here are a few ideas.

Replace milk/white chocolate with dark chocolate

"Consuming dark chocolate with a high cocoa content can help reduce blood pressure, lower cholesterol levels and even improve moods. Releasing endorphins in the brain, it also helps [to] give an instant euphoric rush," says Ms Toh.

"While dark chocolate is a healthier option than milk or white chocolate, it is still high in fat content," cautions Dr Tey. "It's not advisable to eat it daily; it's better to take it as a 'treat'."


Replace potato chips with nuts

Citing nuts as a great source of nutrients and fibre, Dr Tey says: "In large population studies, it has been shown that nut consumers have better brain functions than non-consumers."

In particular, walnuts make a great brain-booster snack. Ms Toh says: "High in Omega-3 fatty acids, walnuts help reduce inflammation, fight chronic heart disease and promote brain health."

Replace cookies with sunflower seeds

Rich in nutrients and Vitamin E, sunflower seeds provide a great daily dose of antioxidants, reducing cell damage and inflammation.

According to the book *Nuts and Seeds in Health and Disease Prevention*, sunflower seeds have a calming effect on the brain, nerves, muscles and even blood vessels, making them a great snack during exam periods. 



Taste the WORLD

ISABELLE LIEW savours cuisines from around the globe without stepping off our sunny shores

Singapore boasts an expansive variety of food from many countries. We made a trip down to southern USA, Russia and Italy to explore each cuisine's trove of traditional delicacies.

Tucked away in a small corner of One Pemimpin, the café offers affordable and authentic American soul food.

"People are rather apprehensive at first, because it looks and smells different, but when [the food] goes in their mouth, [you see] smiles and their feet start dancing – you can see that it's really delicious," says café owner Steven Nicaud, 49.

Chef Babara Nicaud, 48, lovingly preps the food from scratch every day.

Mario Caramella, owner and chef of inItaly, has been in the culinary scene for over 30 years.

"[inITALY] represents the country, the culinary culture... Italian culinary culture is 2,000 years old and cuisine is a big word [to us]," says the Milan native. "First of all, you have to use the right ingredients, have the right procedure, and be able to deliver it."

Try the classic Ravioli di Ossobuco in Gremolata (\$32) made with veal stuffing and served with saffron sauce accentuated by chopped lemon rind, parsley and garlic.

Shashlik is a Russian fine dining restaurant with a charming vintage interior and rich history. Their chefs picked up Russian cuisine from working on ships in the past.

Mr Alan Tan, second-generation owner, shares that prices on the menu have not changed for the past 30 years.

1 SOUL KITCHEN, AMERICAN SOUL FOOD

1 Pemimpin Dr, #01-02, Singapore 576151

Tel: 9272 4561

Opening hours:

Tue – Fri: 8am – 4pm, Sat: 10am – 3pm

Customers can look forward to home-baked cakes, freshly brewed coffee and a different lunch menu that is updated daily on Soul Kitchen's Facebook page.

Their signature dish is the breakfast Soul Kitchen Hash and Eggs (\$6.90). The hash – chopped potatoes, home-style pork sausage and onions – is served alongside two fried eggs, their famous buttermilk biscuits and homemade hot sauce.

2 INITALY, ITALIAN CUISINE

38 Craig Rd, Singapore 089676

Tel: 6423 0918


Opening hours:

Mon – Fri: 12 – 2:30pm, 6 – 10:30pm, Sat: 6pm – midnight

Finish off your meal with the Prosecco Pannacotta (\$16), a fluffy pannacotta sitting in the midst of chocolate sauce and drizzled morello cherry sauce.

Prices may run high but nevertheless, inITALY is an elegante restaurant whether for special occasions or just a casual treat.

The signature Borshch soup (\$7) – a classic Russian broth, slow-cooked to perfection with chunks of beef shank, cabbages and potatoes, topped with a dollop of sour cream – is a must-try.

Shashlik may be pricier than your average eatery, but the food is worth every cent. Set lunches are available on weekdays for \$16.80. 



SOUL KITCHEN



INITALY



SHASHLIK

3 SHASHLIK, RUSSIAN CUISINE

545 Orchard Rd, #06-19, Far East Shopping Centre, Singapore 238882

Tel: 6732 6401

Opening hours:

Tue – Sun: 12 – 2:15pm, 6 – 9:15pm

FAST AND FOOD-RIOUS

Fasten your seatbelts and ready your wallets as RACHEL CHAN takes the wheel on recognising food trucks in Singapore

Restaurants, food courts and hawker centres – these places are colloquial to every Singaporean but mobile eateries are definitely on the obscure side.

According to culinaryschools.com, these travelling kitchens, which come in the form of trucks, were first seen in the US where Mexicans drove around selling tacos prepared in these vehicles. This trend finally parked here in Singapore with five food vans currently operating.



KERBSIDE GOURMET

Nicknamed “Kerby”, this dark brown Toyota Hino hybrid whips up all kinds of gourmet food, including hotdogs stuffed with bak chor mee (minced meat noodles).

Founder Luan Ee, 51, says: “After 15 months of culinary school and stints at two restaurants, I decided I wanted to make a living out of cooking, and the idea of a food [van] struck.”

Kerbside Gourmet also serves up smiles by working with volunteer welfare organisations like the Prison Fellowship Singapore. For every meal sold, another would be given to families or individuals in need.

A must-try is their Crispy Fried Chicken Karaage Burger (\$10) that bursts with juiciness in every bite. Track the van at facebook.com/kerbsidegourmet

COFFEE BANDITS

Singapore’s first coffee food van lives up to its name as owners Cheryl Ong and Jessica Chow, both 37, found ways to run their truck while waiting for their license to be approved.

Ms Ong says: “I love people so I have always been particular about good service, and Jessica has always been into coffee, so we wanted to bring coffee to places which may not sell good coffee.”

Working together with Liberty Coffee, they serve aromatic brews that are nutty and chocolaty.

Their Hazelnut Ice White (\$5) is perfect to combat the sweltering heat.

Have it with a Pulled Pork Sandwich (\$6.50) that has tender meat smothered in caramelised onions – the perfect to-go snack with your coffee. Track the van at facebook.com/sgcoffeebandits



THE TRAVELLING C.O.W

This cow-print van founded by Ms Karen Cheng, 40, is Singapore’s very first food van.

“In 2012, food vans were everywhere except in Singapore so we felt that we could introduce something different to the market. We’ve got everything from the most authentic local hawker delights to the best Michelin quality fine dining,” she says.

Inspired by Karen’s “food hunting trips” overseas, The Travelling C.O.W also prides itself in providing international comfort food for its patrons.

The Truffle Mac & Cheese Balls (\$6 for three) transports one to an all-American home spiced up with a hint of truffle oil, while the homemade bite-size beef and chicken burgers (\$10 for two) leaves one craving for more. Track the van at facebook.com/thetravellingcow



OUT WITH THE HEALTHY, IN WITH THE FATTY

VIEW SWETHA S



In a fast-paced, increasingly healthy world where health fitness seems to be the replacement of “celebrities” and gym-memberships seem to be the one free item people look for, fast-food outlets are places most of us go to in times of heartache. Indulging in the sinful goodness that is burger patties, sugary sodas and oil-bathed fries has become a treat for the weeks of hitting the gym and “eating clean”.

Seems to me like people are misunderstanding the point of a fast-food restaurant. Even fast-food outlets like McDonald’s and Long John Silver’s are offering healthier options such as salads and plain water. Before you can even place your order, their managers will ask you almost immediately if you “would like to go for the healthier option”. They make such options seem presumably more attractive with titles like “Garden Salad Lite” or “McValue Meal Lite”.

Don’t get me wrong, the idea of healthy does appeal to me – every twice a month, that is. It is ultimately for the benefit of our health and well-being, but don’t take away the one thing we “attempting-to-be-healthy” people indulge in once in awhile.

It’s okay to have healthier options and lighter food on the menu, but don’t push every customer to opt for the healthier option.

Wholemeal burger buns have replaced regular burger buns, and the world-famous French fries by cup corn (if you are so persuaded). If we had wanted a wholemeal burger bun, it would have been easier to get a couple of Gardenia wholemeal buns and make our own healthier patties at home.

Wraps and sandwiches are starting to take the place of burgers and nuggets. This is like taking away the child-like innocence surrounding chicken nuggets. Fast-food outlets are called what they are for a reason, and so what if they attract the bulk of the younger generation?

Very soon, they’ll be in the corporate world, facing unreal standards set by society, scrambling to look for ways to keep fit. Just don’t turn fast-food restaurants into pretentious salad bars.

In fact, it reminds many of us of our childhood. Remember when kids’ birthday parties would be commonly held in fast-food restaurants? Remember how it was a treat to

receive a Happy Meal with the tiny toy? As we got older, McDonald’s remained our go-to food place – even if it meant walking out with friends at 3am in the morning.

It’s okay to have healthier options and lighter food on the menu, but don’t push every customer to opt for the healthier option. Some of us just need that oily, fatty patty of goodness and that juicy, deep-fried chicken nugget, accompanied by an ice-cold soda that is of no health value whatsoever.

Fast-food outlets should perhaps stop changing their mission and vision statements to offering consumers the “healthier option” and changing fast food to a supposedly “healthier food”. If people want healthier foods, there are countless salad bars and wrap bars around Singapore for them to indulge in and there’s also the option of bringing your own food from home.

Keep the fatty goodness in fast food. Sometimes, happiness can simply be found in the oiliest of foods and the sweetest of drinks. **E**

Eat Me, Drink Me, Spread Me

It's a mad tea party with SAI VIDHYA as she brings three homemade artisan goodies to the table



Photo courtesy of Straits Preserves

Living in fast-paced Singapore, it is a wonder that people can find time to make food from scratch. Whipping up a home-cooked meal feels like a time-consuming luxury and, for the inexperienced, could end up worse than falling down a rabbit hole.

Enter the new food artisans. Design-conscious and Internet savvy, they painstakingly handcraft food in small batches, re-inventing familiar local flavours into unexpected forms.

Strong believers in using traditional, sustainable preparation methods, they are intimately involved with every step of the production process and use only high quality, locally picked and unprocessed ingredients.

There is Mdm Sharon Lee, 41, founder of Straits Preserves and a marmalade and jam food artisan, who

manages everything in her store from sourcing freshly grown raw ingredients to artfully crafting her preserves and packing them into bottles. She even takes care of marketing efforts.

With the tedious manufacturing process involved, products such as Mdm Lee's marmalades are more expensive than your usual off-the-shelf marmalades.

But fellow food artisan and founder of Eastern Granola Chin Hui Wen, 30, assures that the price is worth the quality and shakes off naysayers who think these products are "pretentious".

"The expensive thing is true, but that's the real cost of doing business in Singapore," says Ms Chin. "Working on a small scale, we don't always get good bulk prices, and rent is, of course, not cheap in Singapore. As for the whole 'pretentious' thing, I think that's a matter of perspective. We're just doing what we believe in and trying to be as transparent as we can be."

Many consumers are not aware that the term "artisan" refers to the crafting of foods that generally

require a longer time due to the much slower traditional preparation methods, high quality ingredients and labour intensive work.

In fact, these foods could go through months or even years of making and learning from mistakes before the recipes are perfected.

"Each tea flavour takes about three months to blend, using trial and error methods to mix and match the various ingredients to get that perfect blend of flavours," says Ms Sim Li Peng, 33, marketing manager of tea boutique Ette Tea. "While the actual tea blending process takes only two to three days, it's choosing the suitable ingredients which is most time consuming."

Inspired by Singapore's rich history, Mdm Lee describes her award-winning marmalades as "Singapore stories in a jar". Each creation features her own interpretation of Singapore's history.



Photo courtesy of Eastern Granola

Her best selling flavour, Singapore Sling, is inspired by Singapore's national cocktail. Other concoctions include Spice Island, which is a blend of spices frequently traded in olden-day Singapore, and Ginger Garden, inspired by the ginger family growing at Singapore Botanic Gardens.

These humble jars of marmalades have won several medals at The World's Original Marmalade Awards – Singapore Sling snagged a silver for its interesting flavour, while Spice Island bagged a bronze in the jelly marmalade category.

"I wanted it to be something everyone can enjoy," Mdm Lee explains. "So I made it into something that's not a cocktail but a more spreadable format."

Much like Straits Preserves, Ette Tea and Eastern Granola are brands that focus on creating food inspired by local favourites like pandan cake and Milo dinosaur.

Ette Tea started out as a personal project, and the flavours created are a reflection of 33-year-old founder Mr Victor Koh's personality.

"The blends are inspired by everything and anything around him – his travels, favourite movies, songs and food," Ms Sim says. Unique flavours like the Chicken Rice tea often confuse people who think the flavours come from sugars and additives.

"These teas are not liquid variations of the actual food item but handcrafted blends of various natural herbs, spices, fruits and even flowers," says Ms Sim.

Ms Chin, on the other hand, started Eastern Granola to share her love for the breakfast food and spread the importance of having a balanced attitude towards food and indulgence.

Unlike store-bought granola, which uses more ingredients associated with Western cuisine and lots of added sugar, she substitutes them with Asian alternatives.

"That means using *gula melaka* (palm sugar) instead of honey and goji berries over cranberries," Ms Hui Wen says. "It actually makes for a better product in my opinion. It's food with more of a sense of place, more representative of Singapore."

Stand a chance to win granola bars from Eastern Granola! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

STRAITS PRESERVES

Must-tries: Singapore Sling, Spice Island, Tropical Calamansi

Price: \$15.50 per bottle

Website:
www.straitspreserves.com

ETTE TEA

Must-tries: Chicken Rice, Nasi Lemak, Pandan Chiffon.

Price: \$14 – \$18 for a 50g packet and \$26 for a 50g tin

Website:
www.ettetea.com

EASTERN GRANOLA


Must-tries: Goji Berry & Cream, Open Sesame, Royal Sultana Briyani

Price: \$16 for 500g

Website:
www.easterngranola.com

Photo courtesy of Ette Tea

Icons courtesy of Freepik



Capsule I'Em All

PHOTOGRAPHER Eileen Teh

STYLING & MAKE-UP Cindy Yong, Sai Vidhya,
Abigail Ang and Cheryl Koh

ART DIRECTION Cindy Yong, Ng Jing Zhi and Adelenah Oh

MODELS Ray Yeo and Kasey Low

Constructing a wardrobe that inspires individuality, maximises every dollar, and eases the struggles of choosing an outfit is a creative exercise as ABIGAIL ANG, SAI VIDHYA and CINDY YONG find out

'70s Wash Blue Rowley Denim Jacket,
\$116, Topshop. Washed Striped
Short Sleeve T-Shirt, \$24.90,
Uniqlo. Accessories,
model's own.

Startled awake by the alarm, Nicholas Toh, 19, drags himself out of bed and into the bathroom. Bleary-eyed and groggy, the last thing the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Accountancy student wants is to engage in the exasperating task of figuring out what to wear.

Staring at the bursting wardrobe of clothes, Nicholas is stumped. He stares harder at the cardigans he bought but never wore, now relegated to a corner of his closet and the colourful oversized shirts he pulled on once or twice before he became bored with them.

A scene that triggers a strong sense of déjà vu in you? You are not alone.

In a survey conducted by HYPE among 125 youths, 66 per cent of respondents have difficulty styling an outfit. Like Nicholas, many of them own loads of clothes – but that doesn't always translate into greater outfit combinations, extra room for creativity and elevated style. But one thing is clear – the pressure to impress is stressful.

Enter the capsule wardrobe.

This compact closet typically comprising 30 or fewer high-quality and versatile pieces in complementary colours allows you to save money, closet space and time.

More importantly, there's no reason to sacrifice comfort for style. Here are the steps to make it work.

1: Empty your closet, create your capsule

According to theeverygirl.com, the first thing you need to do before building a capsule wardrobe is to clean out your current one completely.

2: Categorise, organise

Lay out every single item on your bed or floor and divide them into:

I Dig This! – These items suit your skin tone, fit perfectly and provide a major confidence boost whenever you wear them. There's no way you're going to get rid of these pieces, so put them back where they belong.

Meh – This refers to apparel you've worn only once or twice. Perhaps they don't fit perfectly or come in colours you don't know how to work with. Pack these items into a box but pick some to wear as and when you desire. If items remain untouched for three to four months, it's time to bid them farewell.

Nub-nub – We all have clothes that we never want to be seen wearing again. Donate them to thrift stores, give them to friends or earn extra cash by selling them on e-commerce platforms like Carousell or Depop.

Seasonal/Travel – Travel staples like winter jackets are necessary when travelling to colder climates. Store them at the back of your wardrobe for use when you need them.



1. Bomber Jacket, \$126, Topshop 2. Necklace, \$23.90, Topshop
3. Chilli Latino Suntop, \$63.90, Topshop 4. Sleeveless Blouse, \$39.90, Uniqlo
5. Suede Skirt, \$35, The Editor's Market 6. MOTO Panel Straight Leg Jeans, \$106, Topshop



1. Navy Ditsy Paisley Pocket Square, \$13.90, Topshop 2. Denim Jacket, \$116, Topshop
3. Crew Neck Long Sleeve Shirt, \$19.90, Uniqlo 4. Printed Short Sleeve Shirt, \$19.90, Uniqlo
5. Black Ripped Stretch Slim Jeans, \$93.90, Topshop 6. Chino Shorts, \$24.90, Uniqlo

3: Find your style

Now that you've sorted out your wardrobe, assess what's left – pieces from the *I Dig This!* pile. These clothes are a natural indicator of what colours or silhouettes flatter you while ensuring the fidelity of your style.

With a clearer idea of what clothes are best for you, shopping for additional items will be a breeze.

4: Set a budget

Since one reason for building a capsule wardrobe is to save money, it's wise to set a budget if your *I Dig It!* pile is scanty.

Ms Amanda Tan, 28, a personal shopper from Club 21 recommends \$500 to \$700 depending on how many supplementary pieces you need to buy.

Good clothes don't have "to cost a fortune or have some prestigious tag on it" – Uniqlo offers a good selection of affordable well-made shirts. Ms Sharon Tan, 35, a freelance fashion stylist, says it perfectly: "Uniqueness and quality in any form can prove timeless." And priceless, we might add.

5: Shop

While it's important to know what colours suit your skin tone, it's not necessary to stick to them. "Some people prefer to clash colours within a capsule to show off an eclectic personality, whereas others may prefer the comfort or convenience of similar tones," says Sharon.

If your style is still nascent and deciding where to start is challenging in itself, our fashion experts recommend a palette of neutrals and earthy hues that suits most skin tones and occasions. Think white, grey, camel brown or moss green.

Putting the Look Together

Basic items may not be exciting or unique, but they are the pieces that will lose neither style nor appeal. With the help of fashion experts, we've curated a list of easy, universally flattering, and comfortable essentials for your capsule wardrobe.

"Separate [pieces] drive more mileage than dresses, so invest in nice bottoms and tops," advises Mrs Lani Chan, 55, another personal shopper at Club 21.

These guidelines are not an inflexible set of rules – what goes into your capsule wardrobe is ultimately up to you. As clothes should be selected based on your specific lifestyle, fashion sense and body type, there is no one-size-fits-all capsule wardrobe. The main idea here is to increase cost-per-wear and encourage creativity while balancing practicality and luxury.

"Your style, your call," emphasises Zalora stylist Amanda Tan, 28. "Wear the clothes and don't let the clothes wear you."

Brown Step Hem Longline T-Shirt, \$29.90, Black Ripped Stretch Slim Jeans, \$93.90 and Red, White and Blue Embroidered Eagle Souvenir Jacket, \$173, all Topshop.

Sugar, Spice and Everything Nice

Having a solid collection of basics allows you to transform an outfit from casual to formal or sweet to sexy by simply adding or removing clothing items. A white dress with a cardigan tied around your waist is great for a casual school day. But swap the outerwear for a biker jacket, and you've got an outfit for a girls' night out.

While comfort is key to keep your capsule wardrobe sustainable, being cosy doesn't mean looking sloppy. Wrinkles, creases or overstretched necks of T-shirts are a no-no.

Another way to look sleek is to layer and emphasise shape. A bomber jacket might help to make an otherwise slouchy ensemble more debonair, and tucking a blouse into a pair of jeans can instantly add a touch of polish.

Sharon adds, "Always explore and search in different places for fashion inspiration so you don't keep dressing the exact same way. Fashion should be fun, so don't stress yourself out!" 

On Kasey: Slash Crop Tee, \$16.90, Square Pocket A-line Skirt, \$63.90, Quilted Faux-Leather Biker Jacket, \$96.90 and Kirby Drop Collar Necklace, \$23.90, all Topshop. Shoes, model's own.

On Ray: Black Ripped Stretch Slim Jeans, \$93.90 and Red, White and Blue Embroidered Eagle Souvenir Jacket, \$173, both Topman. Shoes, model's own.

Messing With Your Mane



Grab some gel and a razor, or contact your favourite barber, because JOLENE GINA ABELARDE has some re-emerging hairstyles for you

Thick and coarse hair has its challenges. On one hand, this type of hair can grow out of control. On the other hand, with a head full of hair, you can get creative. Here are our top three picks for men's hair and how Asians can pull them off!

Man-bun

Long hair is making its comeback, and this new hairstyle is challenging stereotypes everywhere. The man-bun is reminiscent of historical Asian warriors such as samurais and as a result, Asian masculinity. It is worn by pulling hair back from the forehead and tying it in a knot at the centre of your head.

Ms Denise Ng, the managing consultant at ImagoImage, advises that long hair "should be worn sleek and tidy so it looks styled rather than just thrown up". This is

especially so in Asian cultures, where long hair is considered unkempt.

Mr Teo Wah Thiong, 50, hairstylist at X-Zen Hair Salon, brands this year as the year of men's barbering. So – guys out there, your barber will be happy to help you embrace your more stylish side!

The man bun was a warrior's hairstyle worn by generals and samurais but it actually started with the image of Buddha and after that, the Terracotta Army. A traditional Asian style, the man bun has made its way to international favourites like Korean actor Jang Geun Suk and singer-songwriter Harry Styles.



Photo courtesy of Eileen Teh

Undercut

An undercut is simply short hair on the sides with longer hair at the top and comes in a variety of styles.

Given Asians' dark hair, the undercut makes light skin tones contrast starkly, giving it an eye-catching quality. For an extra sharp look, there is the razor fade that tapers hair down to the skin in a gradient, or the pattern undercut, where designs are shaved at the sides.

Mah Yi Da, 19, a Ngee Ann Polytechnic Aerospace Technology student who sports an undercut, says that Asians tend to have more bulbous skull shapes that "protrude at the back of your skull". Hence, he tends to leave the hair at the back a little longer.



As the undercut requires "constant upkeep to avoid stubble and looking messy", Mr Teo suggests pairing it with a styled crown to create volume and elongate the traditionally round Asian face.

In the 1920s, the undercut was a style for people who were too poor to afford a proper barber who could taper up the sides. It eventually became a common hairstyle for street gangs in Scotland.



Pompadour


The basic concept of the pompadour is hair swept upwards from the face and worn high above the forehead. A modern take on this look is to pair it with the undercut, where the sides and back are shaved close to the skin.

Styling a pompadour usually means playing around with it until you achieve your desired look. The versatility of this hairstyle makes it suitable for Asian hair, which is naturally more coarse and spiky.

Mr Teo says that Asian hair tends to grow away from the scalp. He encourages guys to grow their hair longer at the top or risk looking "like a porcupine".

"[The pompadour] is a classic hairstyle that gives a

professional look," says Ms Catherine Chan, 45, a personal brand consultant at Iconiq Image. "It looks manly and mature."

After all, rugged charm is enticing, but a well-dressed and coiffed man is also much reason for a second look. 

The pompadour was inspired by Madame de Pompadour – the royal mistress to Louis XV, king of France in the 18th century – who coiffed her hair up and backwards. It was seen as a women's hairstyle until the '40s, when it was picked up by celebrities like James Dean and Elvis Presley.



Love on the Line

ISABELLE LIEW discovers Singapore-based artisan jewellery online shops and picks out unique pieces that adds a touch of class to your accessory collection

While accessory stores like Lovisa and Accessorize have a wide range of trinkets to choose from, some shoppers are craving designs that are more distinguishable and detailed than their mass-produced relatives. Here are some handmade brands that will keep you in style while allowing you to stand out.

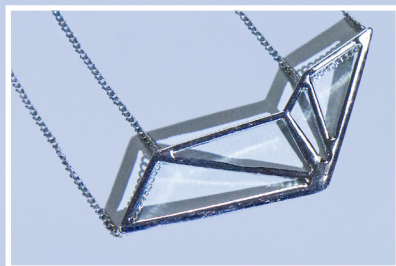
Origami

With categories such as Sleek, Glam, Romantic and Rebel, Vicki & Meg caters their collection towards women of different personalities and fashion tastes.

“Each of our handmade jewellery is created with extra finishing touches to bring on the high-fashion styles yet affordable jewellery for our shoppers,” says Ms Angela Loh, managing director of Lizard Storm, the company that owns Vicki & Meg.

The origami-styled centerpiece is suspended from a two-strand long chain necklace, hence its namesake. Don this necklace for a minimalistic and quirky look.


\$24.90; [vickiandmeg.com](#).



Rose Quartz Halo Necklace

Unlike other brands, By Invite Only sorts their jewellery by meaning instead of collection, and they are “constantly replenished to give buyers fresh choices”. Some “meanings” include “balance & focus”, “communication & creativity” and “confidence & recovery”, giving customers the freedom to pick which aura they wish to show through their accessories.

Ms Trixie Khong, owner and designer of By Invite Only, says that customers often ask for the properties of each stone; hence, the idea of categorising them by meaning was born. The team of only two people make up to 1,000 pieces during peak seasons by hand.

The Rose Quartz Halo Necklace gracefully conveys a delicate feminine energy of compassion, peace, tenderness and comfort, and is directed to melt away emotional wounds, fears and resentments. 

\$48; [byinviteonly.info](#).



“Their necklaces are so unique and beautiful, it’s simple and easy to wear,” says Li Yan, 18, a student. “It’s also handmade, so you can really feel their love and passion behind [the making of] the necklace.”

Mr Jaren Neo, owner of JXKL, says that they strive to keep up with their customers individually on Instagram, as well as teach them how to take care of the jewellery. “We make sure that they are not just customers but also friends, which I think is something very special about JXKL,” he says.

\$54.90; [whynotspeakup.com](#).

BIZARRE BAZAAR

SAI VIDHYA hops around the trendiest markets to snag great bargains of one-of-a-kind creations ranging from fresh produce to handmade trinkets

Your chances of getting unconventional products are a lot higher at artisan markets than chain retail stores. If you’re looking for something to buy or just window-shopping, you’ll definitely leave one of these pop-up markets satisfied.

Gillman Barracks Farmer’s Market

Spice up your family’s Sunday brunches with this carnival-like market. Expect fresh, affordable and locally harvested produce such as seafood, herbs and vegetables at this latest monthly initiative. Chill to live folk tunes while enjoying grilled fish burgers, shucked oysters or even a meal whipped up by the café where you bought the fresh stuff.

“Bring cash [and] your own bags. Come with an open mind and see what we have for you,” says Mr Prashanth Somosundaram, 45, co-founder of Red Baron, a bakery, café and bar.

Price: \$2 – \$20

Best for: Fresh produce, cooked foods

When: Every third Sunday of the month from 9:30am – 2pm

Where: Red Baron (Gillman Barracks) Block 45 Malan Road, Singapore 109455

Free admission

For more details, check out Red Baron’s Facebook page.



Maker’s Market

This year-old initiative founded by event company Fleawhere is tailored exclusively for the local start-up community. The monthly weekend mobile market is inspired by the growing arts and food scene.

Featuring only brand new, never-before-seen handmade items from independent fashion labels, vintage collectibles and artisanal foods, don’t be surprised if you end up spending your entire week’s allowance at the market.

“Keep your wallets fat and look out for stuff with good quality and good crafts. A little support can go a long way,” says Mr Koh Cheng Guan, 35, the strategic marketing manager.

Price: \$4 – \$200

Best for: Fashion apparel, handicrafts, music, artisanal food and beverages

When: Selected weekends on a monthly basis

Free admission

For more details, check out [fleawhere.com](#).



Great Singapore Garage Sale

This bi-monthly market is a platform for home-based businesses and budding entrepreneurs to showcase products with nostalgic significance and rare vintage finds. It incorporates the idea of re-using, re-loving and recycling, and advocates the importance of being eco-friendly in our society.

“All these items are in tip-top condition so don’t belittle what you see. You’ll never know what hidden treasures you might find,” says co-organiser Jaclyn Aw, 30.

From face painting and balloon sculpting for the children to bargain hunting for teens and adults, this family-friendly event is bound to have something for everyone.

Don’t forget to come with reusable bags in hand to bring your finds home!

Price range: From as low as a couple of dollars for pre-loved bargains

Best for: Arts and crafts, toys, books, collectibles, handmade goods, pre-loved goodies 

When: Once every 2 months during a selected weekend

Where: Multi Purpose Hall @ Goodman Arts Centre

90 Goodman Road, Singapore 439053

Free admission

For more details, check out the Great Singapore Garage Sale’s Facebook page.

Box-session

RACHEL CHAN unwraps the latest trend of subscription boxes in Singapore and sources out the hidden gems that are worth a try

Subscription boxes have been all the rage among YouTubers, bloggers and people with a diversity of interests – fashion, food, gadgets, geeky collectibles and even adult toys.

According to washingtonpost.com in 2014, the spark that ignited the abundance of these businesses was Birchbox, a grooming and beauty subscription box based in New York City created by Hayley Barna and Katia Beauchamp in 2010.

Singapore finally caught onto the trend, birthing the popular Lowinsky and BlackBox subscriptions that cater to beauty and fashion enthusiasts.

But if cosmetics and clothes are not your cup of tea, here are two affordable and less mainstream Singapore-based boxes that are worth a gander.



For the Health Junkie: BoxGreen

Admit it, we've all been guilty of indulging in sinful snacks while convincing ourselves that we would stop after the next piece – but we unconsciously finish the entire packet of chips, chocolate or sweets in the blink of an eye.

Such situations inspired BoxGreen, a healthy snacks subscription box and brainchild of Mr Walter Oh, Mr Andrew Lim and Mr Fai Wong.

Mr Oh shares that Mr Lim and he “had to do something about the quality of snacks” in their office pantry, which led to the creation of BoxGreen, with Mr Wong joining the team a few months later.

“The idea is for people to have access to a healthier lifestyle by offering healthier options of snacks compared to the junk food available everywhere,” says Mr Oh.

“We have an in-house nutritionist and she goes through all the [nutritional values] of our snacks to make sure that what we are feeding our subscribers are healthy and wholesome for a balanced lifestyle,” he adds. “We want them to know what they are putting in their body, so they feel good about it.”

BoxGreen offers monthly, bi-weekly and weekly subscription plans, all priced at \$19.90 per box. Salty, sweet or naturally flavoured, there is a myriad of over 30 snacks to satisfy every palate.

For every box, subscribers are allowed to select four different snacks, which will each come in three servings. A note containing a message from BoxGreen and information about the chosen snacks is also included.

“We don’t curate boxes. Instead, we let our subscribers choose whatever snacks they would like to have on our website or we recommend snacks tailored to their taste or dietary preference,” Mr Oh explains.

The idea of healthy snacking may sound bland, but the items HYPE selected: Quirky Quinoa Puffs & Friends, Cheng Tng (No Ice), Shitake Mushroom chips and Goji Berries & Cream Granola, contained an explosion of flavour with every mouthful, making healthy snacking surprisingly enjoyable. With substantial portions, the snacks abated our cravings and left us satisfied.

Apart from influencing subscribers’ eating habits one healthy snack at a time, BoxGreen also works with Willing Hearts, a beneficiary in Singapore, to send a free meal to the underprivileged with every box sold.

If you’re looking for healthier snack options or simply want to support a brand with a noble cause, you can purchase their boxes from boxgreen.co.

For the Bookworm: Carpe Librum

If the thought of having a miniature bookstore being delivered straight to you causes quickened heartbeats and uncontrollable squealing, then Carpe Librum may tickle your fancy.

The bi-monthly book subscription box was founded by Ms Huda Ramlee, 29, and Ms Azura Jumari, 31, in 2015. For both of them, it was a passion for reading at a young age that drove them to create the subscription service.


“Singapore’s book community is not very big so we want to help grow that,” says Ms Jumari. “We were [also] very inspired by the book subscription boxes overseas such as Owlcrate, but [they’re] very expensive. So we thought of starting our very own book subscription box.”

Every two months, there’ll be different themes such as “Books & Tea” and “Magic”. At \$35 per box, subscribers will receive a novel and four to five bookish items related to the theme.

“We [work] very hard and brainstorm as we try to make each box more interesting and better than the previous one,” Ms Ramlee says. “After

deciding on the theme, we then decide on what kind of merchandise [are suitable] and worth the money.”

To celebrate National Day, the July/August 2016 box was themed “Made in Singapore”. It included an autographed copy of *Let’s Give It Up for Gimme Lao!* by Sebastian Sim, a “Kiasu Singaporean” notebook, a limited edition of an *ikat* hand-woven bookmark, a Singlish sticker pack, six “Complain King” pencils, and 15 per cent and 20 per cent vouchers for Epigram Books and BooksActually respectively.

The upcoming box for September/October 2016 is themed “Wanderlust” and if that has your inner bookworm and traveller bursting with curiosity, you can place your order by emailing carpelibrum.sg@gmail.com. 



Giveaway

Carpe Librum is offering one lucky winner a two-box subscription and a chance to curate the Nov/Dec box with them! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.





Sounds Good To Me!

Elevate your hearing experience – learn how to choose the right earphones and keep them in prime condition with ABIGAIL ANG

Many of us identify mobile phones and laptops as devices that lie at the technological epicentre of our lives, but what about the humble earphone? This unassuming gadget has proven time and again to be our trusty companion on long bus rides and study sessions.

With so much time spent on these devices, it only makes sense for us to pay more attention to what we buy. Here are some pointers to help find a pair of earphones that works best for you.

Don't Under Budget!

The love of music is ubiquitous but so are frugal-minded individuals. In a survey conducted by HYPE amongst 117 youths, almost half the respondents won't spend more than \$50 on earphones.

Mr Joe Wong, 27, a salesperson at Stereo Electronics, notes that most customers who walk in with such budgets are not aware that "earphones have the potential of sounding [better]". Although initially sceptical, such customers are often impressed after testing out more expensive models.

High-end earphones are pricier than regular ones because of a component called the driver. According to

Gizmodo.com, these "mini loudspeakers" enhance audio elements of different ranges. The more drivers one earphone contains, the better each one focuses on its domain: the bass, mids or treble.

Recognise Usage Patterns

Start by listing the activities you use earphones for specifically. Even amongst those who exercise, different functions are needed for the best listening experience.

"If your workout session is under four hours, you can consider wireless earphones [to reduce] obstruction of movement," says Mr Wong. "The caveat is that you have to charge it; all wireless earphones work on battery power."

For gym goers, sound isolating earphones are recommended to block out the clanging of equipment and blasting gym music.

"The most important thing is to buy something sweat resistant," says Ms Mario Tan, 29, a salesperson at Challenger Musica.

The Sound for You

There is no ultimate earphone. A crucial step in choosing suitable earphones is determining your preferred sound signature.

In HYPE's survey, 47 per cent of

respondents look for a balanced and clear sound. According to Mr Wong, this is typically favoured by listeners of instrumental music or songs with an emphasis on melodic vocals.

"If the person likes club music or house music, he or she will tend to prefer something with more bass," he says.

Try it Out

"The product might work well for reviewers, but it might not work for you," says Mr Wong. "You need to try it for yourself."

Most stores specialising in audio equipment provide samples for customers to try, so you can compare the various earphones available.

Maintaining Your Earphones

Investing hundreds of dollars on a good pair of earphones is pointless if you don't take care of it. Earphone cases are a must to ensure longevity.

"A hard case is better than a soft case, but a fabric pouch is better than nothing," advises Mr Wong. Coiling the earphones also prevents tangles and makes them easier to find.


Because tugging on the cable may shorten the lifespan of your product, hold onto the housing or plug during removal – in other words, anything other than the cable. 

Photo courtesy of meeaudio.com

Signature scents

SAI VIDHYA helps you find that perfect fragrance that enhances your personality

Scent is powerful – it's able to evoke emotions triggered by past experiences both good and bad. With dozens of perfumes in the market, finding the right scent to suit your personality takes time and testing. Fragrance experts tell HYPE how you can find your signature scent.

Go au naturel

Before you go shopping, avoid wearing perfume or using anything scented, such as body lotions, as it will confuse your nose when you're testing out fragrances.

Master the ac-scent

Perfumes are categorised according to their level of concentration:

1. Parfum – Also known as the purest form of perfume, parfum contains 30 per cent perfume oils. It can last from six to eight hours and is highly suitable for sensitive skin due to its low alcohol content.
2. Eau de Parfum (EDP) – This type of perfume contains 20 per cent perfume oils and lasts around four to five hours.
3. Eau de Toilette (EDT) – Made with about 10 to 15 per cent of perfume oils, eau de toilette is the most common in the market. It lasts about two to three hours.
4. Eau de Cologne (EDC) – These perfumes last up to two hours and contains only two to four per cent of perfume oils and more alcohol.

Test it on your skin

Due to the different odours and skin chemistry of each individual, testing fragrances on paper blotters does not give an accurate representation of how the perfume will turn out on your skin, says Ms Sandy Blandin, 40, founder of NoseWhoKnows, a fragrance studio.

"As soon as the fragrance touches your skin, the body temperature and odour will all play a role on how the perfume diffuses," says Ms Blandin.

Let it linger

Remember to let the perfume sit on your skin. It usually cycles through three stages – the top, middle and base notes – before settling into the long-lasting fragrance.


Often, consumers purchase a scent based only on the top notes – the smell of the perfume in the first five minutes, says Mdm Prachi Saini Garg, 41, founder of Jetaime Perfumery. Ms Blandin advises following the perfume you have chosen for at least 24 hours before buying it. 



Photo courtesy of Eileen Teh

Tracing the Scent

Observe your likes and dislikes – this will help you pick the type of scent you can best connect with, says Mdm Garg.

From there, pick one of the following fragrance families that suits you best.

Citrus

Energetic, spontaneous, daring, adventurous

The scent of zesty fruits like lemons, limes and pineapples are fresh, crisp and zingy. However, citrus scents have a short life span on skin.

Fresh

Cool, extrovert, elegant, free-spirited

Think mints, warm and green notes of freshly cut grass, light and airy notes of the cool sea breeze. These scents are refreshing and youthful.

Floral

Feminine, confident, vivacious, sensitive

Fresh scents of flowers like roses, lilies, carnations and violets conjure femininity and softness.

Oriental

Elegant, mature, responsible, compassionate

Sandalwood, limes, balsams and bergamot make up this category. The earthy notes go well with spicy or citrus scents.

Woody

Head-turner, exotic, bold, sophisticated

Rich, bold, and exotic – think spices like amber, warm vanilla, incense resins and musk. These sultry scents evoke a sense of mystery.



SLAVES OF THE 21ST CENTURY

Has this generation become a slave to trends? ISABELLE LIEW and LIM YUAN XIU dig deeper

Scroll through Instagram and one is often deluged with images that leave a pang of desire to rival a slimming wallet. A prominent conduit for sharing, social media draws alarming numbers of people into the web of consumerism and trend-chasing.

While trends come and go, Ms Sarah Mangelsdorf, a counsellor at Nanyang Girls' High School, says that "there's always been trends" and that the phenomenon of trend-chasing is more pronounced these days as media has provided youths greater accessibility to trends and influences.

With the heightened presence of social media, enticing pictures endorsing trends are a mere tap away, so youths easily find themselves bombarded with the temptation to follow suit.

A survey by HYPE brought to light that 83.7 per cent of respondents find out about trends through social media. In fact, many contribute to the loyal following of local YouTubers, Instagram models and bloggers such as Naomi Neo, XiaXue and Bong Qiu Qiu. With millions of subscribers, internationally renowned style icons such as Michelle Phan, Maddi Bragg, Jenn Im and Zoella are also popular amongst youths.

A keen follower of local YouTubers and bloggers, Temasek Polytechnic student Isabel Neo, 19, says: "I think that as youths try to find their personal identity and slowly find themselves, they tend to follow trends to fit in and make themselves feel part of a community."

The survey also revealed some trends youths are following these days – food trends such as salted egg yolk, cheese tarts and froyo (a term coined for frozen yoghurt); and fashion trends including bomber jackets, baseball caps and branded sports shoes such as Nike Roshes and Adidas Superstars are widely popular.

SHOPPING TRENDS

From Topshop's recent partnership with Kendall and Kylie Jenner for a swimwear collection to Kanye West's Yeezy Boost line in collaboration with Adidas, it's no secret that brands endorsed by celebrities are coveted by youths.

Some fashion trends have been around for a while, but recently spiked in popularity due to the influence of celebrities, such as the curved brim baseball caps which used to be fashionable back in the '90s. Celebrities Rihanna, Gigi Hadid and even Korean actor Song Joong-ki have thrust the old style back into the spotlight, causing it to be all the rage lately.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic student Lee Jia Cai, 18, finds himself jumping on the bandwagon of caps, ascribing the influence to the media and friends.

"Just a few years back, I didn't even like wearing caps, but because of what you see in the media, and seeing what your friends wear, you kind of follow along," he says.

A shoe fanatic, he also owns more than 20 pairs of shoes, most of which are from his favourite brand, Adidas.

His most expensive pair, the highly sought after Adidas Ultra Boost, cost him \$329. But he justifies it, saying: "It may be super expensive but the comfort and quality is really good."

On the other end of the fashion spectrum, the influx of beauty gurus on YouTube flaunting their collection of make-up products has a huge influence on their young followers.

Daphne Au, 19, a student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic, gleans most of her make-up knowledge from beauty YouTubers such as Maddi Bragg, Nathalie Paris and Jenn Im.

She shares: "I use a lot of make-up from brands like Tarte, Nars and Benefit, or even Korean brands like Innisfree after recommendations from YouTubers and friends."

As trends die out, will these youths continue using the items they once adore?

While Jia Cai still keeps his 20-odd pairs of shoes, he admits not wearing most of them anymore. Although he tries to pay for most of his expenses by taking on event-based jobs, his parents chip in when he runs low on funds.

With a sheepish smile, he says: "To be honest, I don't think I can keep up with this level of spending in the future, so I'm trying to cut down now. I'm probably going to sell off the items that I'm not using anymore."

Daphne, on the other hand, is planning to make full use of the items she's bought while following trends.

She says: "Even though I like trends, I will only splurge on things I know I will use it, because it's a waste to throw aside a product just because the trend has died."

While it is evident that fashion trends are hardly going to die out soon, one thing is certain: youths are not likely able to keep up with this level of spending in the long run.

FOOD TRENDS

Home to a melting pot of cuisines and flavours, Singaporeans have a voracious appetite and it comes as no surprise that Singapore has witnessed waves of food trends; from bubble tea that fizzled out over the decade to the aesthetically pleasing desserts of today.

In recent years, artisan bakeries, café, bistros and restaurants have garnered long snaking lines as more youths jump on the bandwagon of finding food worthy of gracing their Instagram feed.

These delectable treats often come with a hefty price tag. A single salted egg yolk croissant can go up to \$7 each while a bowl of *bingsu*, a popular Korean dessert comprising shaved ice and various toppings, can easily cost you \$15. While youths may not have the spending power to

splurge on such indulgences, many find themselves following these trends anyway.

Finding it hard to spend less than \$10 on a meal, pre-university student Melanie Ho, 20, struggles to resist the tempting pull of "luxury food and beverage items" such as froyo and Starbucks coffee.

Melanie's primary weakness is bingsu, a trend she pursued after seeing the hype on social media.

Besides being expensive, these popular treats also cost you time waiting in queues. Exploding in popularity in 2014, Spanish froyo brand Llao Llao saw long queues as many salivated over its sweet goodness. Fast forward a few months and the hype has fuelled the spawning of 25 outlets over the island.

Similarly, in early 2016, adoring fans of Hokkaido's BAKE cheese tarts willingly queued up to three hours just to get a taste of the famous crisp pastry. Themed cafés such as the Hello Kitty and Pokémon Cafés also saw fans queuing for hours.

Ms Lai Sau Kuen, spokesperson of Singapore's pop-up Pokémon Café, says: "Based on the interest that was generated on social media before the opening, we believed that response would be positive because there seemed to be a demand in Singapore for character or theme cafes."

Despite the popularity surge caused by social media, many of these treats remain fads that die out after a while, such as the ones for Llao Llao and Shibuya Thick Toast. Trends change like the weather – it's anybody's guess how long these food fads will last.



THE GOOD AND THE BAD

While many view that this generation takes trend-chasing to a whole new level, it is interesting to note that the tendency of youths following trends has always been around.

Ms Mangelsdorf says: “Following trends is in their nature; it’s always been something attractive youths wanted, for example, yo-yos back in the 1990s – all of them are trends.”

Over time, the desire for yo-yos grew to the latest iPhones and under the temptations of media, youths are credulously influenced by celebrities and advertising. As a result, they feel increasingly compelled to have the newest, trendiest items to fit in with their peers.

Attributing the phenomenon of trend-chasing to the accessibility of media, Ms Suki Tong, a child and adolescent psychologist, says: “With the influx of the internet, things are much faster, you begin to see what’s

the latest trends. You get much more information at your fingertips.”

Ms Mangelsdorf adds: “There’s always been a pressure on youths to keep up to date with trends, but now there’s the influence of social media, and everyone wants to look good on social media... You only post the times when you look fantastic on social media.”

With more youths having an unhealthy obsession to look good in front of their peers, Ms Tong advises them to be careful about the trends they are following, listing examples such as taking dangerous, life-threatening selfies and unhealthy weight loss as trends youths should ponder over.

She adds: “In the long term, if you follow this kind of trends, it can be very unhealthy. The trends will always be there – it’s how you use the trends to your advantage that helps to build

you up as a person. Or, you can be a slave to trends.”

However, following trends may not necessarily be a bad thing, it’s what and how you follow.

A potential healthy trend that arised from social media could be volunteerism. Ms Lau Ee Min, 22, senior executive assistant at Singapore Children’s Society says: “Social media is a convenient platform to share stories and information like societal issues, volunteering programmes to gain the youths’ interests.”

“In the past, I remember it [volunteering] as a *bobian* (‘no choice’ in Hokkien) thing,” she laughs. “But now, what started out as an obligation has become a trendy and cool activity for youths thanks to the digital age!”

It all boils down to choice – to be a slave to trends or to set your own trends. **E**

A GREENER Big Apple

JOLENE GINA ABELARDE hits up Syracuse in Central New York for everything you would want, without the hustle of the Big Apple

New York City isn’t the only gem the state of New York boasts. Less than four hours’ drive away is Syracuse, a smaller city abundant with nature and culture, where one of the first women’s rights conventions was held in 1852.

“[It has] everything you would want from New York City, but without the traffic, the crowds and the pollution,” says Joyce Lalonde, 23, a Public Policy student at Syracuse University. “[It’s] a great place to just cool down and relax.”

If you’re tired of wrestling the crowds in NYC, Syracuse might be the perfect destination to get a breather for the weekend.

The Nature

What was once upon a time considered the dirtiest lake in the US, the infamous Onondaga Lake has since been cleaned up after efforts by Honeywell, a supply chain company. Since the major clean up, many rare species of fish and birds have returned to the lake – perfect for the nature lover in you.

“The lake exhibits not only natural beauty but also the beauty of people coming together and working as one towards a noble goal,” says Ngee Ann Polytechnic Engineering Science student, Zechariah Tan, 18, who was there on a study trip.

Be sure to also visit the new Lakeview Amphitheater that as the name suggests, provides a view over the now picturesque lake.

According to former county executive Nicholas J. Pirro, 76, the amphitheatre is becoming “a top attraction”. Rightly so, seeing that pop music favourites like Snoop Dogg and Wiz Khalifa held concerts there in August 2016.

The Arts

The creative community in Syracuse has converged to create instalments and artistic graffiti around the city that would make you stop in your tracks. Visit Armory Square for the full experience of being immersed in community arts, an opportunity you’ll never experience in Singapore given the strict laws on graffiti.

“What I found interesting was how the initiative spearheads a series of art interventions to address community

issues and connect residents to their living environment,” says Ms Jennifer Koh, 32, a student development officer from Ngee Ann Polytechnic who accompanied students on a school trip to Syracuse.

With museums like the Erie Canal Museum and the Women’s Rights National Historical Park to highlight its culture and history, Syracuse’s art scene is set to be the family-oriented, breathable version of NYC.

The Shopping

Amongst the top must-visits in the state of New York is Destiny USA, a mall that prides itself on being “more than just a mall, but a destination” with more than 250 stores.

Rachel Tan, 20, an Engineering Business Management student, felt that the large variety of brands there made it possible to spend an entire vacation just traversing the mega mall.

From an antique carousel to the world’s largest suspended ropes course at WonderWorks, the mall is known to have brands that won’t be found anywhere else in the state and something to fit the taste of every visitor. **E**



Unravelling CAMBODIA

KATRINA CAPEL embarks on a three-day two-night trip to Cambodia to experience the cultural grandeur the country has to offer

It wasn't long after the plane touched down that we found ourselves bundled in a van with our chatty tour guide, Mr Ea Sambath, 41. With fervent enthusiasm, he shares about the Khmer Rouge and Cambodia's independence as the rattling vehicle made its way up the dusty, rocky road to the Angkor Silk Farm.

After whizzing past several wooden signs in Khmer, French, English and even Russian, the van finally comes to a halt. We tumble out onto the sprawling grounds shaded by tall trees. Before we can fully appreciate the serenity of our surroundings, we are ushered into the wooden huts to begin our tour.

Upon entering the silk making workshop, we are greeted by the sight of vibrantly coloured silk threads stretching from one corner of the workshop to another. The silk artisans are engrossed in both their work and gossiping enthusiastically with their colleagues. Some stir metal pots containing cocoons and unravel them into sticky threads with the help of a spindle while the rest expertly loop and weave the silk threads into scarves, cushion covers and clothing articles.

Even while working on such intensive

and meticulous projects, the artisans remain calm and relaxed. Ms Srey, a 20-year-old who has been with the farm for three years, says: "[The silk-making process] is therapeutic to me.

I like working here and I earn enough to provide for my family, so I'm very grateful."

The next day arrives in a blink of an eye. It is 37 degrees Celsius, and the people exploring the Angkor Wat temple grounds brave the heat by donning hats and sunglasses, keeping themselves cool with wooden fans.

Angkor Wat was built in the 12th century by the orders of King

Suryavarman II. Initially a Hindu temple, it was later converted into a Buddhist temple as Buddhism became the most widely practiced religion in Cambodia. What baffles most is the fact that a construction project of Angkor Wat's remarkable scale could have taken place that early in the day.

"Around 300,000 Khmer people built the temple, using canals and elephants to transport bricks. It took more than 30 years of construction for the temple to be completed," Mr Ea explains.

Intricate carvings decorate the long stretch of walls in the temple, depicting gods, mythology and actual historical events.

After removing ourselves from the breath-taking monument that is Angkor Wat, we make our way to Tonle Sap Lake, the largest freshwater lake in South East Asia. Inching down the precariously steep and slippery ramp, I take in the sight of the coursing, muddy river, the colourful boats and the bustling of people at the dock.

The people live in houses that are supported by narrow wooden stilts. "There's constant flooding here especially during the monsoon season. Houses are built this way so they don't get submerged in the water," says Mr Ea.

One of the locals, Mrs Long Sim, 51, greets us with a toothy smile. She perches on the small platform on the front of her boat. Her 16-year-old son stands behind, operating the boat's motor while her 5-year-old nephew creeps up behind our backs, persistently offering to give us a short massage for a small tip.

"I've been tending the boat for 35 years and my youngest son helps me out with my business. I have four children, so I fish to get by as I do not have land to plant crops," she says in Khmer, the roaring of the motor threatening to drown her voice.

The fishermen, with their shorts and sleeves rolled all the way up their limbs, wade into the water as they dunk their nets in hopes of getting a good catch. The tide is low this time of the year, meaning that the population of fish has decreased significantly.

"Majority of the people here earn their living from fishing. A lot of the fish sold in the market comes from the lake. Now that the fish are dying due to shallow waters, it is even more difficult for them to earn money," says Mr Ea.

It is about a 30-minute boat ride from the dock to Chong Kneas, the floating village, and upon our arrival, children and their mothers flock around us with snakes coiled around their necks, trying to cajole us into paying a dollar for a picture with them.

The first level of the floating platform – a tour stop for tourists – boasts its own snack shop, fishery and crocodile



A child with a water snake, Tonle Sap Lake

farm. The women bid tourists to buy overpriced ice cream and drinks while the men lounge about, taking long draws from the cigarettes in their hands. The second floor of the platform, however, provides a bird's eye view of the lake and the floating village.

As we set off again, touring the rest of the village and then making our way back to the dock, we dreaded the thought of leaving Cambodia so soon. The short stay opened my eyes to the architectural beauty of the city, the state of poverty in Siem Reap and the country's rich culture but sad history. It's easy to gather even after such a fleeting trip that Cambodia is without a doubt, a land of wonder. **F**



Angkor Wat

Photo Courtesy of Katrina Capel



Angkor Wat

Photos courtesy of Katrina Capel

BREAKFAST AT TIANJIN'S

TAMMY LIM explores the streets of China's fifth largest city in search of scrumptious and guilt-free breakfasts to kick start your day

As you saunter down the buzzing streets of Tianjin at dawn, the aroma of fresh soybean milk and old tofu fills the air. The crunchiness of crispy dough fritters can be heard faintly alongside the slurping of wonton noodles.

Not quite your idea of a healthy breakfast, you think. But there are more and more food shops looking into provide hearty and healthy breakfast dishes.

Mr Yin Rufei, 32, a strong believer in healthy and green breakfasts, started his restaurant at Xiqing District three years ago to provide nutritious breakfast for Tianjin locals.

"Health is my top priority for my customers. I must make sure my conscience is clear with the food I sell," he says.

Mr Yin is strongly against the use of food chemicals that can harm our bodies. His ingredients come from his own family farm where they rear chickens and grows vegetables.

"Along the streets, I found out that people tend to use soybean powder instead of fresh soybean to make soybean milk," Mr Yin adds. "Soybean powder does not provide nutritional value, hence we grind our own soybeans every morning.

"In my restaurant, health and cleanliness are my first

priority, so when I see my customers eat without worries, I feel that strong sense of trust."

Mr Yin named his restaurant "Initial Taste" (*yuanxiang*), representing his belief in preserving the original taste of freshness.

Ms Yang Zichen, 20, says: "Healthier breakfasts improve my complexion. Also, they definitely keep me more energised and focused throughout the day."

"Having a healthier breakfast also prevents problems like obesity," says Ms Zhang Huili, 24. "Due to the efforts of considerate shop owners who provide healthy food, I eat with no worries at all."

Located at 134 Heping Street, Mr Chao Zuoli's shop welcomes many customers every morning. Using simple garden fresh ingredients and healthy methods of cooking have attracted more customers than ever before.



Savoury Tofu or *lao doufu*

Unlike in Singapore where beancurd (*doubu*) is served sweet, the Tianjin version is savoury, topped with a brown sauce and chilli oil.

Gabacai

A noodle dish served with a thick and savoury brown sauce, this is a common breakfast item.

Jianbing Guozi

The thin pancake that's more like a crepe is made using a bean batter. It is then layered with a coating of eggs and broad bean paste. For the filling, you have a choice of *you tiao* (dough fritters) crispy soy bean strips, chicken or ham.

Mr Chao, 35, says proudly: "We are aware that most of the traditional breakfast delicacies are fried. For a healthier version, we use bean oil that is lower in calories."

Mr Chao also adds that they replace the oil every day to maintain cleanliness and freshness of their food.

What better way to start the day than with the assurance that breakfast is clean and low in calories. [F]

Photo courtesy of Tammy Lim

MENTAL RESTORATION THE NATURAL WAY



VIEW ABIGAIL ANG

About four years ago, I made a spontaneous decision to quit ballet. This greatly dismayed my parents, who insisted that I needed some form of exercise. To appease them, I started taking long walks in my neighbourhood park, not knowing how much it would transform my perspective on the importance of spending time with nature.

Have you ever felt like you had a million things to do at once? Nature help to restore our minds from the pressure of everyday demands like replying emails and getting to places on time. Lakes and beaches with their understated charm and appeal put no pressure on us to react.

While stimulation in the urban environment can overwhelm, nature allows us to determine how much we interact with it. This process, explained by the Attention Restoration Theory, allows us to recover from mental fatigue and seek comfort simply by being in a natural environment.

Technology that has enabled incredible swiftness in dialogue exchange and information sharing has also caused us to experience stress

Carving out that space to unplug and ruminate my responsibilities in a natural environment enabled me to go back to work with greater concentration and energy than before.

at some point in our lives. Research on addiction to technology and work suggests that a culture of efficiency, borne from the power of technology, places obligations on users to work and play at the same pace.

Frustrated and in need of an outlet, many turn to social media for relief. According to We Are Social, Singaporeans spent an average of 2.5 hours on social media every day in 2015, higher than the global average of 2.4 hours.

Unfortunately, social media may only be a short-term solution. In a 2012 study by Kittinger et al amongst college students, researchers observed that reliance on social media as a coping mechanism for stress resulted in its intensified use and aggravated psychological discomfort in the long run.

Conversely, exposure to nature is proven to have positive effects on

mood, attitude, cognition and physical healing as reported in a 2014 study by Sandifer, Sutton-Grier and Ward.

Despite the periodic urgency of meeting deadlines, a part of me knows that I could not compromise park walks for more time to do work, while expecting to complete tasks with the same level of mental clarity. Carving out that space to unplug and ruminate my responsibilities in a natural environment enabled me to go back to work with greater concentration and energy than before. It's difficult to detach from technology, but I need to place my well-being first.

Whether it's the ocean's vastness or sunlight filtering through the leaves of trees, taking some time off each day to go outside and immerse myself in nature is far more rewarding than scrolling through Facebook. The reward may be simply a sense of serenity, yet perhaps this is all you will ever need. [F]



Kusu Island

KIMBERLY LIM scopes out Singapore's underrated islands and beaches for quick escapades out of town

Life's a Beach!

Lazarus Island



Photos courtesy of Colin Chan

St. John's Island



We've all dreamt of the perfect beach getaway – strolling down a golden coastline that stretches for days, dipping your toes in the refreshing seawater as waves rush up the shore to greet you, palm trees swaying in the balmy sea breeze...

Except that our options are rather limited – we either end up at Siloso Beach in Sentosa or East Coast Park, and it often seems as if the entire population of Singapore has decided

to head down to the beach on the same day.

Don't plan a trip to Bintan just yet – dream beaches do exist just off the shores of our little island, if you know where to find them.

“Most places you go to in Singapore are developed and bustling with people. The Southern Islands would be a good place to go if one wishes to escape from the concrete jungle that is Singapore,” says Mr Li Guoli, 25, the manager of Island Cruise.

Head Down Under

No, we don't mean *that* far down. Just at the base of Singapore lies the Southern Islands, which consists of Sentosa, St. John's Island, Kusu Island, Lazarus Island, Pulau Seringat, Pulau Tekukor and Sisters' Island.

St. John's and Kusu Island can be accessed via public ferry service from Marina South Pier. To get to the other islands, you'll require a private ferry service which is costly and recommended for parties or events.

THE ISLANDS

St. John's Island

Fairly secluded (save for the occasional jogger or family of tourists), this island is ideal for trekkers and has plenty of picnic-friendly spots. Cat lovers will be delighted to know that many felines have made the dock their home and will be ready to welcome you.

Beside the dock, there are benches placed conveniently under the breezy shade of the thick, towering trees, so you don't have to worry about getting sunburnt. Pull out your portable speakers and you're all set for a simple and enjoyable picnic.

Once your belly is filled, take a quiet 20-minute stroll across the bridge that's easily spotted from the dock towards Lazarus Island.

Lazarus Island

The real gem of the Southern Islands is hidden among the trees and bushes in Lazarus Island. Clear, blue waters and clean, light gold sand are almost unheard of on Singapore's beaches, so you might be surprised to find them on this island.

The semi-circle shaped paradise is just 10 minutes away from the bridge that connects to St. John's Island.

With almost nobody in sight, this rustic beach is a splendid spot for swimming, ball sports or a relaxing tanning session.

To make sure you have a great time, remember to pack enough food and drinks as there aren't many food stalls around the island.

Kusu Island

Head back to the same dock at St. John's Island and the ferry will take you to its final stop, Kusu Island. Kusu means turtle, and turtles are the island's main attraction. Hundreds of turtles are housed at the famous Chinese *Da Bo Gong* (*tua pek kong* in Hokkien) temple.

The temple is also the only spot in the Southern Islands where drinks can be bought for just \$1. Make your way up another 152 steps and you will find three *kramat* ('holy shrines' in Malay) built for the island's founders. The temples make for great photo spots.

Besides visiting the temples, you can also go fishing or swimming at Kusu beach, where Singapore's skyline can be seen on a clear day. ☐



St. John's Island

Getting there:

Take the train along the North South Line to Marina South Pier and use Exit B. The ferry terminal is outside the exit and you can purchase tickets to St. John's Island there. A two-way trip costs \$18 for adults and \$12 for children aged 12 and below.

Chai Chee



Opera Estate



Former Coastline



CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE

Arm yourself with a map from any of the five community centres and clubs along the Bedok Heritage Trail (Bedok, Siglap, Siglap South, Kampong Chai Chee and Feng Shan) or get one from NHB's website and you're all set for a self-guided tour.


Places to look out for along the Bedok trail include the Bedok Corner market, Fengshan Estate, the old seawalls and military pillboxes that used to line the east during World War II.

There is also a Singapore Heritage Trails app available on the Google Play Store and App Store. The app, co-developed by the Keio-National University of Singapore Connective Ubiquitous Technology for Embodiments and NHB, hopes to share the untold stories of Singapore through trails that have been curated by the public and organisations such as NHB.

"The challenge was to package the geolocations, descriptions and pictures of the areas into an easily accessible application, and on such a small screen," says Dr Kelvin Cheng, research fellow and centre representative from the team that developed the app.

There are 14 other trails in Singapore, with the Bedok trail being one of the most well preserved thanks to films and pictures that documented its past.

There are also food trails where tourists and locals can scope out some of Singapore's best local delicacies. Adventure seekers can look for nearby trails with the help of Google Maps and bookmark their favourites in the app.

Whichever journey you choose, you're bound to discover something new about Singapore. Slip on your track shoes, slap on some sunblock and start your adventure today! 

TRAIL MIX

Journey to the east with **AUDREY LEONG** as she uncovers the newest heritage trail in Singapore

One weekend is all you need to bring #ExploreSG to a whole new level. Nestled behind a stretch of busy malls in Bedok lies a 15 km route extending over 10 vantage points, including the last remaining sea walls of privately owned homes that used to line the beach.

On May 5 this year, the Singapore National Heritage Board (NHB) launched the Bedok Heritage Trail – the fifteenth of its kind to be developed – as part of the Housing & Development Board's "Remaking Our Heartland" programme.

Heritage markers lining the trail show how the estate grew from a small *kampung* by the sea to a bustling estate. You can sit where the first bucket of sand was dumped to mark the start of reclamation works that would stretch Singapore's coastline by 1 km, or walk by former mass graves from the *Sook Ching*

('purge' in Mandarin) massacre during World War II.

Along the way, you may also meet long time Bedok residents.

"We used to grow up here and we didn't know that history was around us. Now we're just left with memories, [which is] very *sayang* ('such a pity' in Malay)," says Mr Nazrin, 50, an ex-civil servant who grew up in Bedok.

For those living around Bedok, this could be a new way to explore their neighbourhood. However, the younger generation will only be able to relive olden-day Singapore through stories and pictures.

"During the *kampung* days, everything was easier [as] we saw everything first hand. While I'm thankful for the progress that Singapore has seen in the past 50 years, it comes at a cost," says Mr Peter Chan, 62, a resident who completed his National Service at Bedok Camp, which was then situated beside the Bedok Corner food centre.



Hua Yu Wee



Princess Theatre

BUSKING IN THE LIMELIGHT

JANAE CHUA hits the streets of Singapore to hunt aspiring performers that have found a new stage to showcase their talents

As razor sharp knives twirled in the air above his assistant, the audience stood mouth agape marvelling at Jonathan's technical finesse. The atmosphere – a mix of tension and echoing cheers – brought the night to life.

The streets of Singapore have become a growing stage for young buskers who aspire to become the next big thing in the performing arts industry.

FINDING BUSKERS:

For a great night of performance by the aspiring performers, head down to:

Marina Bay Sands Event Plaza

Saturdays, 10pm to midnight (Jason Yu)

Orchard Road, outside Wisma Atria

Weekends from 7pm to 10:30pm (The Annoying Brothers)

Somerset MRT, right after H&M

Fridays 6:30pm and Saturdays 5:30pm (Jarvis Quek)

Act I: Daredevil

Circus busker Jonathan Goh, 20, says that the busking scene three years ago was much smaller than it is today. With the increased number of youths putting out song covers on social media, many find new ways to stand out among the rest. That includes stepping out to reach a wider audience.

“When I went to renew my [busking] license, the workers told me there were so many people who applied that they have to limit it to 80 auditions,” he says.

After a decade of performing circus acts in school, Jonathan challenged

himself to try something different by busking on the streets. He started a slapstick comedy show, “The Annoying Brothers”, and contrary to its name, he sends more excitement than irritation through the audience with acts ranging from acrobatics to extinguishing blazing batons with his mouth.

Through performing along Orchard Road, he aims to change people's perspectives on busking as an art rather than a form of begging. While Jonathan firmly believes that busking is profitable, achieving long-term success without passion will be tough.

“It's the thrill, passion and audience that keeps me going,” he says.



The Annoying Brothers



Jarvis Quek

Photos courtesy of Janae Chan

Act II: Lady Killer

Like Jonathan, there are many young, bright things with a love for the arts and dream of making their mark in the arts industry. Jason Yu, 22, is one whose voice is a hit among the ladies.

“Every other week when I come here, I see him and many other buskers along Orchard [Road]. It's nice to hear the different styles, but his is my favourite,” says Gladys Chong, 18, a student.

Jason laughs off jokes about being a “lady killer” and expresses that he still gets shy when people come up and compliment him.

An occasional performer at bars, he describes the experience there as limiting. He regards busking on the streets as a platform where he can fully express himself without any expectations.

As one of the many new buskers, Jason explains that even though the competition in the area and music industry is increasing, the busking committee remains “very united” with a strong sense of camaraderie.

“Those with a lot of experience taught me how to work on my stage presence and gave me tips on how to hype up the audience. They're very selfless,” says Jason.

Act III: Master of Balance

Tracing back to experience, Jarvis Quek, 22, who is waiting to enter Singapore Institution of Technology (SIT), is one of the first youth buskers who started the “Busking for University” trend back in 2014.

He maintains a balance between work and play – while he is serious about becoming a successful musician, he emphasizes that education is still important. To him, busking is a mix of passion and realism.

Brian Wee, 20, who is undergoing National Service, says: “Buskers are increasing and the arts industry is developing, but busking for leisure and extra pocket money sounds more realistic than the pursuit for fame.”

Jarvis shares that busking was an outlet for him to gain confidence – after secondary school, many of his friends started living their own lives and he felt extremely lonely. Armed with just his guitar and his voice, he started singing at parks before moving on to more populated places such as Somerset.

He made a shot at fame and took part in The Voice in China, passing the first round of auditions. However, he wasn't ready to take on the Chinese market, didn't put his heart into the next audition and was eliminated.

Using it as a learning experience, he now performs more Chinese songs when he busks, which is a hit among the “aunties”.

He does not intend to stop busking any time soon as he takes delight in socialising with strangers and showcasing his original songs.

Jarvis says: “If there's one thing I regret, it's not starting busking earlier. It's a different kind of stage, not like any other. You will know when you experience it yourself.”

LOCO for LOCAL

Singapore's literary scene has often been one that is shrouded in mystery for the average Singaporean. RACHEL CHAN, KIMBERLY LIM and AUDREY LEONG find out the full 'story' about local literature

You step into a bookstore, intent on buying a good book that will help you through the weekend. You look at the books displayed under the bestsellers' list. *Me Before You*. *The Girl on the Train*. *Death of a Perm Sec*. You already know know the tragic, star-crossed love story that has been the biggest box office

hit for the past month or so. You also know the *Gone Girl*-esque, thriller novel that your friends have been raving about for the longest time. But what you don't know is the mystery novel centered around the suicide of a Singaporean politician in the 1980s. The synopsis at the back intrigues you but you end up getting *The Girl on the Train*, not even sure why yourself.



'Shelves with books' courtesy of Freepik

PROLOGUE

Singapore's literary scene took off a long time ago, where literary works started to slowly see the light of day.

Ms Chan Wai Han, author and business development manager of Ethos Books, says: "Even in the 1930s, there were literary works published in English and after World War II, more so with the 1950s batch of English undergraduates. Luminaries in the English Department at the University of Singapore like Edwin Thumboo and later Goh Poh Seng, Gopal Baratham, Robert Yeo, Arthur Yap, Lee Tzu Pheng came on the scene."

In the 1980s, *Little Ironies*, a book written by Singaporean author Christine Lim sold 30,000 to 40,000 copies islandwide alone, paving the

way for the interest in local literature. Despite making some waves of popularity, the local literary scene has always been faced with a difficult opponent: international literature.

In a survey conducted by HYPE, 82.9 per cent of respondents were unable to list the names of local authors even though almost all of them feel that the authors deserve more recognition.

"Authors help to chronicle creatively the life of the nation, beyond hard facts and figures. The best of authors stake their name on what they publish, and take risks with how they lead their lives in order to say what is necessary," says Ms Chan.

Last year, around 20,000 people attended the Singapore Writer's Festival organised by the National

Arts Council. Even though this was about the same number as the year before, the festival saw an 80 per cent increase in revenue as more people attended ticketed lectures.

However, even with this, in a survey done by the National Arts Council in April 2016, only 16 per cent of Singaporeans knew about the festival. Due to the lack of time and interest, many of them chose not to attend. The survey also found out that readers were more likely to feel that Singapore did not have enough local writers or local content.

In HYPE's survey, 86.7 per cent of the respondents reach out for international literary books rather than local ones. How did this become the case? Where has the audience for local literature gone?

CHAPTER ONE

You open up the newspapers and read that yet another Singaporean writer has won a fancy, American poetry award that you have never heard of. But you think that the more obscure the prize is, the more artsy the book is.

You check out the author's name and picture at the side. You've seen it a couple times at Kinokuniya but felt apprehensive about paying \$18.95 to read something you have no idea it's going to be good or bad. You decide to give it a shot anyway. It was good, better than you expected, so you recommend it to your friends. But they tell you that if they wanted to read contemporary poets, they would rather read Rupi Kaur or Clementine von Radics. You wonder why.

Ms Eileen Lee, co-founder of Books and Beer, says: "It's really a mentality, that home-grown things, like for example, home-grown singers don't make it big until they go overseas and they come back as opposed to them being home grown and supported all the way."

But where does this mind-set stem from?

Mr Ng Kah Gay, associate publisher of Ethos Books, believes: "There is very little awareness of Singapore literature in mainstream society, and without awareness, the reader does not even have a chance to be open-minded about Singapore literature."

Even though there has been many recent efforts to revive the interest in local literature such as READ! Singapore, National Reading Day and National Reading Movement, Ms Lee believes that these efforts do well only in attracting people who are already fans of Singapore literature.

Despite these campaigns initiated by the National Library Board, the 'ordinary man on the street' is still unexposed to Singapore's literary scene. The greatest challenge for local writers is to be able to reach the average Singaporean.

Mr Kenny Leck, owner of BooksActually, said in an interview with Publishing Perspectives: "The

reason why local literature sells so well at BooksActually is because we push it. I don't just shelve it in a corner. If other bookstores were willing to level up and devote an entire wall to, say, Amanda Lee Koe's *Ministry of Moral Panic*, they'd sell loads..."

Alicia Kong, 19, an Animation student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic agrees with that, saying that besides Kinokuniya, most major bookstores in Singapore do not even carry local literature.

However, the situation is getting better, slowly but surely. Ms Pooja Nansi, a Singaporean poet, summarises the Singapore literary scene in three words: "Small, brave and growing."

"I think there is so much happening in the local literary scene, as compared to ten years ago," she adds. "Those who were around from that time till now, either writing, publishing or reading within it are so passionate about it, which is why I would say that they're brave in the face of everything, to keep going."

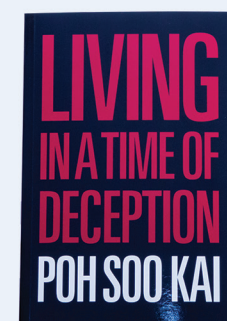
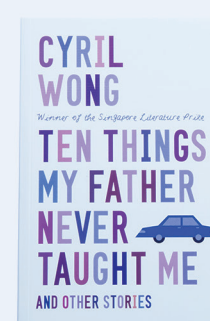
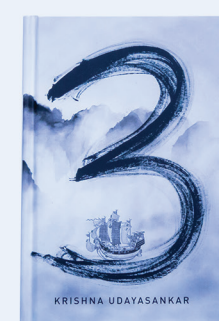
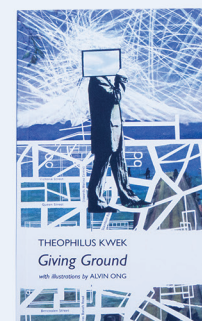
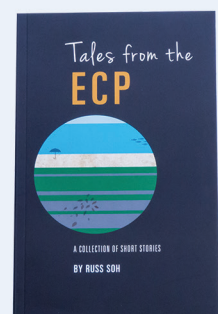
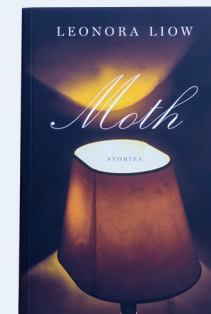


Photo courtesy of Eileen Teh

CHAPTER TWO

Before books are displayed neatly on cherry wood shelves and snatched by eager hands, a lot of preparation goes into birthing the pages. Publishing houses are the incubators of books, where editors, marketers and designers join forces to bring an author's work to life.

Mr Ng says: "The life of a book begins as a manuscript submitted to the publisher for consideration. If it gets accepted, it undergoes editing, design and layout work. Alongside these processes, publishers will be creating publicity materials and marketing the book to their target readers. After the book is printed, it gets distributed via bookshops, online and other retail channels."

In Singapore, many publishers such as Ethos Books, Math Paper Press and Epigram Books have brought recognition to authors like Cyril Wong and Alfian Sa'at.

However, has enough been done by publishers and authors to amplify homegrown literary voices?

In HYPE's survey, out of 60 readers aged 16 to 25, only 13.3 per cent read local literary books, showing a number of young Singaporeans are still unfamiliar with the growing pool of local books.

Mr Jason Erik Lundberg, author and editor at Epigram Books, stresses:

"The biggest challenge is getting the book into as many readers' hands as possible, which is the same for any publisher, whether local or international... I do know that we work with Singaporean bookstores to try to make our titles as visible as possible."

Mr Ng adds: "As an independent publisher in an underdeveloped literary market, we have a limited budget to work with, and thus our marketing is usually limited to pre-existing supporters whom we can reach out to through social media and other 'organic' approaches. This does not help us in expanding our readership."

Although the issue of money continues to stress local publishing houses, there is another way to promote books – by sending them for competitions, book launches and reviewing, says Mr Lundberg.

"Book launches serve to celebrate the birth of a new title for the author and publisher. Often the audience comprises the family and friends of the author.

It may result in creating some awareness of other titles in the publisher's stable, but this may not translate into sales," says Ms Chan. "The effect of media reports can be however, very significant. There

is often a spike in demand for a particular title if the media publicity reaches the ears of a listening audience."

Sending books for competitions also allows authors to receive incentives like funding and possible book deals with world-renowned publishers. Even if authors don't win, being nominated for such prizes can gain them more recognition.

Will more Singaporeans want to try and introduce local literature into their reading sessions then?

Mr Anthony Koh Waugh, owner of Booktique, remains hopeful that the local literary scene flourishes eventually.

He emphasises: "As a bookseller, I see more books by new authors. Not just novelists but short story writers, playwrights and poets. [Some] are now more imaginative; some even challenge the boundaries and are going places.

"Aesthetically, their books look nicer. Marketing effort is also more aggressive... With modernisation, more Singaporeans are becoming more aware of what they are losing. This leaves room for the arts to enter as arts connect us to the world that we are living in. When Singapore's art scene grows, I believe so will our literary scene."

CHAPTER THREE

You sit in literature class, listening to your teacher talk about the foreshadowing in Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the story about racism in a country that you've always wanted to visit but never had the chance to.

Although you know the book was about racial discrimination in Alabama 40 years ago, you never really understood the characters – the way they spoke, the way they thought. You want to read about something relatable set in a place you knew, but just like visiting Alabama, you never had the chance to.

In a recent survey conducted by the National Arts Council, less than half of Singaporeans read at least one literary book a year. This falls below the 76 per cent that countries like the US holds.

These worrying numbers could have stemmed from the fact that literature has become a less popular O-level subject among students. The Straits Times cited a drop of over 500 students taking literature in 2015. Many students reasoned that literature is a "hard subject to score in", even as a half subject paired with social studies.

For someone who is both in the writing and teaching business, Ms Nansi says the belief that literature is a hard subject to score in is a myth.

"I've seen literature being taught as reading comprehension, memory work, or facts that are meant to be regurgitated... These teachers need to feel passion for what they are teaching in order for students to feel interested in the subject," she says.

Mr Koh adds: "We have to ask ourselves if the purpose of going to school is to score or to learn. I always quote Aristotle whenever I talk about education: 'Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.' I believe students should leave school becoming a better person than they were before. Reading literature not only helps to achieve that but also engages them in critical thinking. And critical thinking is very important in today's society."

The situation worsens for Singaporean authors, as most of the content provided in schools are international literature. In the 2017 O-levels, the only local prescribed text chosen is *Everything but the Brain* by Jean Tay.

Putting things into perspective, Ms Chan says: "This is partly due to the carry-over of the colonial mentality, where only the British and American texts are deemed good enough for the school system. Also, it was only over the last few years that general awareness and appreciation for Singapore literature picked up."

As someone who does read literature but not home-grown writing, Alicia says that works written by Singaporean authors were too close to home, taking away the feelings of escape often associated with reading, such as traveling to a fantastical world or reading about people you might never meet in daily life.

Is Singaporean literature doomed for failure? Those in the writing society say "no", believing that local literature is a gem yet to be properly uncovered by youths who are not getting the chance to discover it for themselves.

"Yes, there are not enough local titles that are of outstanding quality, and new and experimental work need to be informed by a bedrock of established writing," Ms Chan notes. "We are still building on the foundations of our literary house, and if our readers can keep their faith, this house will become sturdier over time."

The Ministry of Education is also taking an active stance in promoting Singaporean writers by introducing local texts into its reading programmes at different levels. In primary schools, students read and discuss stories by writers such as Christine Lim, Ho Lee-Ling and Sharon Ismail. In 2014, 38 schools had already implemented local books into their syllabus, an increase from 18 schools in 2011.

BY THE NUMBERS

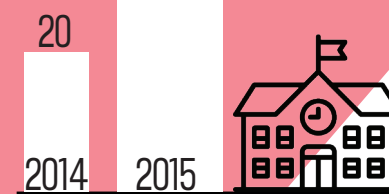
56% OR ABOUT 6 IN 10 of 1,105 Singaporeans and Permanent Residents have not read a literary book from March 2014 - 2015



OVER 500

less students taking English Literature as an O-Level subject in 2015

38 schools have implemented local books into their syllabus



EPILOGUE

While local literature is on the rise in Singapore, there is still so much to be done to improve and expose young Singaporeans to the beautiful side of the genre.

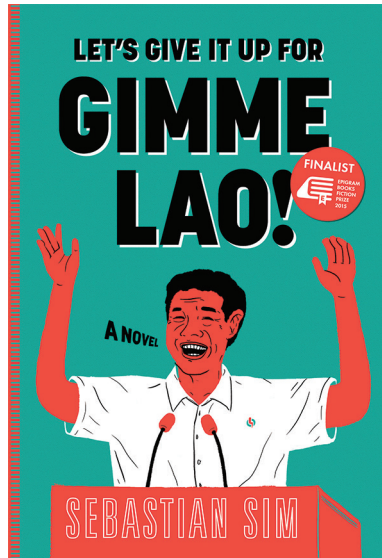
Looking on the much brighter side of things, Mr Lundberg leaves a strong and hopeful reminder: "Singapore has a very unique position in the world, in that we're a predominantly English-speaking country in Asia, which means that we are a bridge between East and West; in addition, Singapore has a culture

unique unto itself, and this is best examined by Singaporean writers."

SG Colouring Books

Stand a chance to win one of three Epigram colouring books inspired by Singapore's culture and landmarks! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

LOCAL LOVES



LET'S GIVE IT UP FOR GIMME LAO!
By Sebastian Sim
 Published by Epigram Books, 2016
 320 pages, \$24.90
 Available at all major bookstores
 & shop.epigrambooks.sg
 Reviewed by SWETHA S

GIVING IT UP FOR SEBASTIAN SIM

Let's Give It Up for Gimme Lao! explores contemporary issues in modern-day Singapore using a completely balanced voice.

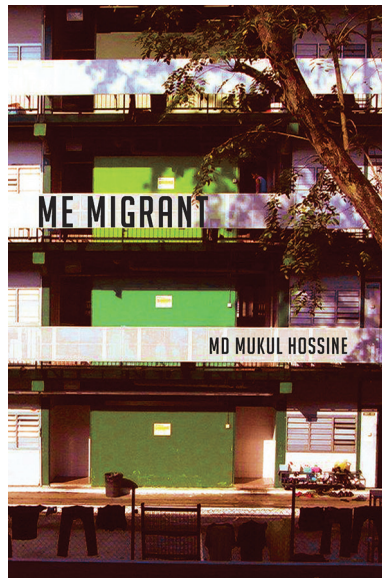
The book starts off with the birth and early life of Gimme Lao, but instead of focusing on the protagonist, it delves into the effects he has on the people around him and how he affects others' actions.

Readers are made to focus on the countless relationships between Gimme Lao and the people around him, giving closure in all his relationships. Sim brings to light contemporary issues in Singapore and

the world, but keeps the entire book grounded on Singaporean traditions.

According to Sim, Gimme Lao is the person he wanted to grow up to be. The language is kept clean, thus enabling a child-like innocence to surround the discussion of what society deems to be "taboo topics" and making such issues seem comical and light-hearted in certain chapters.

Sim's new book succeeds in tugging at the heartstrings of Singaporeans as he takes his reader through Gimme Lao's entire existence, allowing the reader to reminisce his or her own precious past.



ME, MIGRANT
By Md Mukul Hossine
 Published by Ethos Books, 2016
 68 pages, \$12
 Available at all major bookstores
 & ethosbooks.com.sg
 Reviewed by KIMBERLY LIM

ALONE TOGETHER

Me Migrant is a collection of poems that centres on loneliness and heartache, of wanting to belong and finding one's place in a foreign land.

Hossine's voice is candid and free of pretence, with colloquial simplicity that makes his poems feel raw and genuine. He does not dwell on the predictable hardships of Singapore's migrant workers but focuses on being away from one's home and loved ones. The collection was "trans-created" by one of the leading writers in today's local literary scene, Cyril Wong, and poet/photographer, Marc Nair.

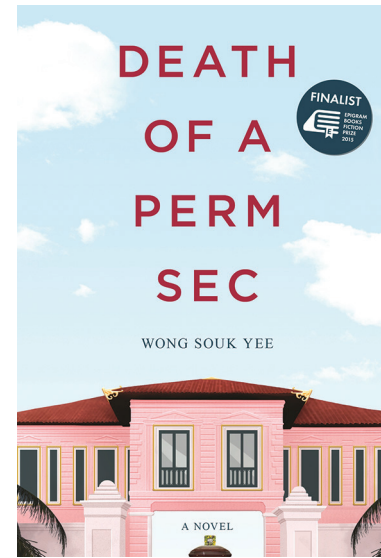
The eponymous poem, *Me Migrant*, provides a broad overview of Hossine's collection, giving readers a sense of his isolation and longing as he writes from behind the metaphorical barrier that stands between locals and foreigners: "Me migrant / Live outdoors / Outside from you". His language comes off as

overly simple, but there is an honesty flowing well throughout all his poems.

In response to Hossine's work, four poems by medical students from the National University of Singapore are included to create a bridge between locals and foreigners.

As the collection progresses, readers will gain a fuller understanding of his experiences in Singapore. In *Grandmother*, he reveals the close-knit relationship he had with his grandmother and how her death created a painful void in the places and things they used to share. This will hit home for anybody who has experienced loss.

Me Migrant takes a refreshing approach towards loneliness – Hossine's ability to capture the essence of living on your own in an unfamiliar city with an uncensored, child-like bluntness in his narrative style is what makes this book a truly memorable one.



DEATH OF A PERM SEC
By Wong Souk Yee
 Published by Epigram Books, 2016
 274 pages, \$24.90
 Available at all major bookstores
 & shop.epigrambooks.sg
 Reviewed by CINDY YONG

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

It's like a good game of connecting the dots and unravelling a series of twists and turns. Part drama, part mystery, part noir with a dash of local terms only a true blue Singaporean will know, this compelling novel is undoubtedly the masterpiece of a former political detainee.

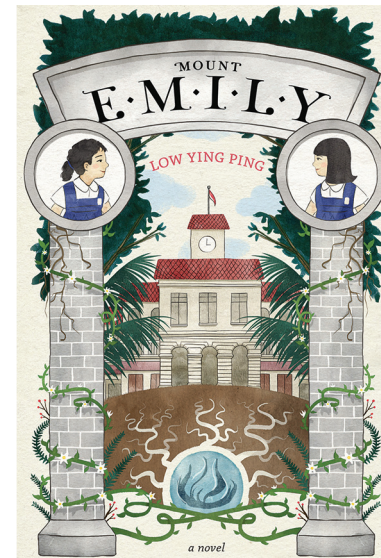
Set in 1980s Singapore, the story opens with the death of Chow Tze Teck, the permanent secretary of the Ministry of Housing. What appeared to be an apparent suicide triggered by a lethal concoction of alcohol, morphine and valium might not be simply fortuitous.

Fasten your seatbelt as *Death of a Perm Sec* takes you on a blood-tingling, rip-roaring bumper car ride – the sharp vicissitudes of the Chow family's lives, the underbelly of the Little Red Dot's political

chronicles, and the dubious investigations by a certain Crime Investigation Development inspector who is more than meets the eye.

As you read on, you begin to think this might not be a political yarn after all. First, you are led into the essence of governmental politics and the innermost thoughts of the Chow family. Then, you gasp at the short, erotic love accounts. The graphic depictions of some of the protagonists' sexual encounters and the whirlpool of vulgarities are precipitous.

Perhaps the jolt from political and sentimental to sensual is uncalled for. Nevertheless, the characters' distinct personalities and engaging lives fashioned what might have been a dull book about politics into an enjoyable read.



MOUNT EMILY
By Low Ying Ping, illustrated by Chee Jia Yi
 Published by Epigram Books, 2016
 154 pages, \$12.90
 Available at all major bookstores
 & shop.epigrambooks.sg
 Reviewed by RACHEL CHAN

A JOURNEY THROUGH TIME

Mount Emily, a debut novel by Low Ying Ping, is an enthralling novel where time does not stand still for two girls.

Patsy Goh and Elena Tan – two 13-year-old best friends from Mount Emily Girls' School – are transported back to the year 1987 on a quest to find a magic time crystal before the Midnight Warriors do.

Low's experience of being in an all-girls school is evident as she captures the most minute of details when crafting the setting of *Mount Emily*. With her eloquent style of writing and vivid descriptions, Low encapsulates the emotions of the main characters – especially when their friendship is put to the test, and they have to work out conflicts while navigating various obstacles.

Although *Mount Emily* is targeted at teenage girls, it touches on the deeper, darker emotions and imagery like death and finding oneself. The focus on Singapore's past and present will also tug at the heartstrings of older Singaporeans. Readers can identify with the secondary school legend or rumour told by seniors, inciting everyone – including Patsy and Elena – to investigate and end up in trouble.

All in all, *Mount Emily* is an easy read for all ages. Packed with adventure from start to finish, it will leave readers eager to flip to the next page to find out what happens.

Keep a lookout for the next exciting instalment of Mount Emily by Low Ying Ping, *Mount Emily Revisited*, out in late 2016. [E]

YA, Read This

What is it about *The Hunger Games*, *Divergent* and *The 5th Wave* franchises that make everyone scream for more? KIMBERLY LIM explores the trend of young adult fiction

Pour a good dose of teen spirit, rebelliousness and heroics into a dystopian world and throw in a dash of evil dictators, governments or aliens. Season the concoction with a steamy love triangle, self-discovery and a tasteful amount of character deaths.

Voilà! You have the recipe of a stereotypical successful young adult (YA) novel targeted at 13 to 18-year-olds. Despite the similarities in many of these stories, Blooming Twig discovered that the YA and children's publishing industry had a net revenue of US\$2.87 billion (S\$3.91 billion) last year, with adults over the age of 18 contributing to 55 per cent of book sales.

YA novels were initially labelled as silly teenage books but have become one of the most popular genres amongst people of all ages today. There are key features of YA that have got readers from all walks of life going gaga over the genre.

Strong Female Protagonists

Traditionally, superheroes are men in masks and dark capes, but in the world of YA fiction where anything

and everything is possible, the Geena Davis Institute found that 65 per cent of the genre's protagonists are young women.

This comes as no surprise since female writers such as J.K. Rowling, Veronica Roth, Suzanne Collins and Stephanie Meyer are dominating the genre.

Dr Lim Lee Ching, 42, editor of the Singapore Review of Books, says: "Young adult fiction tends to have a strong female portrayal that is very counter-traditional... That sense of empowerment in terms of how we understand gender roles in the world has its appeal."

Mrs Julie Lim, 54, an avid YA reader, believes that because a majority of YA readers are female, they would find the protagonists more relatable, which beckons the question of whether the "chicken or egg" comes first.

Relatable and Understandable

The language and writing style in YA novels are usually easy to grasp but not overly simple, allowing people outside the targeted age range to enjoy them as well. On top of that, YA novels often deal with problems and struggles that teenagers face and

authors would weave in themes and lessons that transcend the boundary of age.

David Levithan, author of the bestselling novel *Every Day*, said in an interview with The Atlantic: "The defining characteristic of YA literature is emotional truth."

Dr Lim explains that this "emotional truth" is something anyone who has ever been a teenager will be able to relate to, making the genre so popular across various age groups.

A Form of Escapism

Among the many sub-genres of YA fiction, the leading one is dystopia. A study done by Nielsen Bookscan found that sales for YA dystopian novels jumped 150 per cent after the release of *The Hunger Games* in 2008.

Charlene Chua, 19, a student at Nanyang Technological University, believes that YA novels deal with issues that teenagers face, but are placed in "a more interesting setting".

Even though most stories are based in far-off lands, the human relationships and characters are still something readers relate to and understand. **E**

We have five YA book bundles to give away! Flip to **page 98** to find out more.

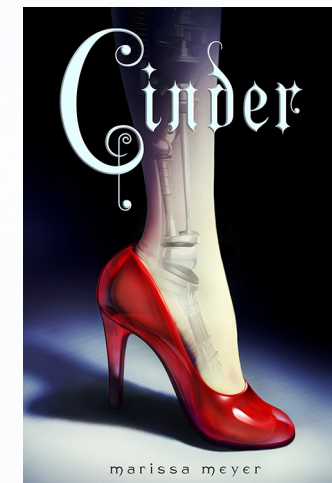
Books We Love

Light your scented candles, brew your favourite tea – or coffee – and get cosy with one of these bright, young reads that will transport you to places you've never been



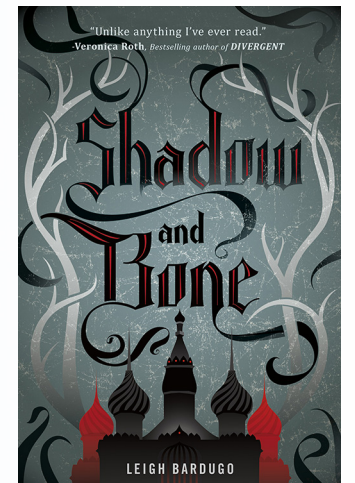
THRONE OF GLASS
Sarah J. Maas

In order to win back her freedom, an 18-year-old assassin will have to compete against cutthroats and murderers to serve as a weapon for the same tyrant who left her for dead.



CINDER
Marissa Meyer

A sci-fi retelling of Cinderella set in a futuristic world where Earthens and Lunars are on the brink of war, and the future of the world lies in the hands of a part-cyborg girl mechanic.



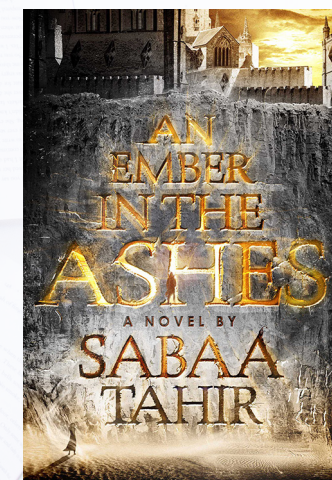
SHADOW AND BONE
Leigh Bardugo

In a world inspired by ancient Russia, people with special abilities are called Grishas. An orphan with innate powers unlike any other discovers she can change the fate of her nation.



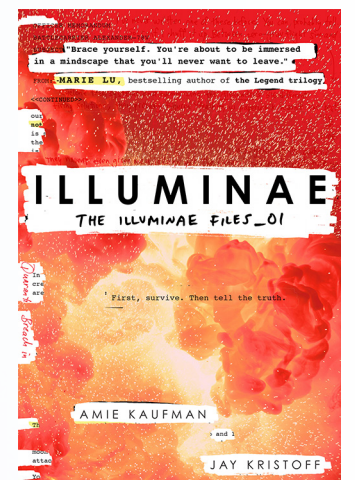
LEGEND
Marie Lu

Loosely inspired by *Les Misérables* and set in a futuristic dystopian USA, this novel follows an elite soldier's mission to avenge her brother's death and capture his rumoured murderer.



AN EMBER IN THE ASHES
Sabaa Tahir

Worlds collide when the finest soldier in the Empire's military academy meets a spy from the rebellion. Gritty and raw, expect bloodshed and brutality in their struggle for freedom.



ILLUMINAE
Jay Kristoff & Amie Kaufman

Told through hacked documents like emails, interviews and medical reports, this sci-fi novel follows a girl's struggle to survive after her home planet is destroyed in the year 2575.



Whip your phones out and let AUDREY LEONG show you what apps are worth your internal storage space

It has been reported that 80 per cent of an average person's time is spent on digital devices. It might make sense to use some of that time to be productive or do something that benefits you beyond simple entertainment. However, the wide array of apps available can be quite daunting. Fear not, because here's a starter's guide to apps that will help you in your everyday life.

PRODUCTIVITY

TRELLO

This app organises all your assignments and puts them in "cards" and "stacks" that will drop down to reveal the details of your tasks for the day. It is available in 16 languages and you can access your information on trello.com, as well as across numerous electronic devices.

Cleavan Whitnell, 22, a graduate from Lasalle School of the Arts, says: "Trello has inspired me to tackle more complex goals, such as starting blogs and coding my phone." She adds that the app has a blog that she gets directed to when searching for questions, making learning from the Trello blog "very intuitive".

Free on the App Store and Google Play Store

FOREST

For every half hour that you do not touch your phone, Forest will let you grow a tree; but open any other applications and your cute little sapling will wither away. The goal is to plant even more seeds, showing the fruits of your phone forbearance in the form of your own virtual forest.

"The whole design of the application is great, it's easy to use and has a great concept, but I would really like the next update [to have] more interactive elements," says Thaddeus Loh, 19, a student.

\$2.98 on the App Store, free on the Google Play Store

EXERCISE

WALKR

"It makes you forget that you're actually walking to get fit," Thaddeus says, commending Walkr's effort to turn walking into a game that makes staying healthy fun.

The app is a pedometer that uses the rhythm of the device and location services to track the number of steps taken, converting them into "energy" within the game. The generated energy would allow you to run your own galaxy of creatively designed planets and build space fleets with your friends. Taking small steps is the first way to fitness!

Free on the App Store and Google Play Store

SWORKIT

SWORKIT allows users to put together personalised workouts complete with video demonstrations, allowing you to keep fit even if it's just for five minutes a day. Remember that beach body you wanted? Anna Magee from healthista.com says that SWORKIT is great if you want to be able to change up little things every day.

During the sessions, the application rarely gives you two similar workouts in a row, making it less tiring on the body and making sure you have the stamina to complete it. Your dream body might not stay a dream for much longer.

Free on the App Store and Google Play Store

LIFESTYLE

DUOLINGO

Learning another language has never been quicker. "The repetition of the words and phrases really helped me to grasp Spanish better," says Lydia Leong, 19, who is currently pursuing a diploma in Accountancy at Ngee Ann Polytechnic. "Duolingo teaches you conversational phrases right off the bat, something that makes the language more interesting to learn, especially for me."

Like SWORKIT, the minimum amount of time you need to spend on the app is five minutes a day, so it can be done on the bus ride to work or school, and you'll be saying *muy bien* ('very good' in Spanish), in no time.

Free on the App Store and Google Play Store

ROCKET ALARM

Wake up to the sound of music, feedback-filled walkie-talkie commands and beeping noises that simulate a spaceship at touchdown. The only way to switch it off is by solving logic puzzles of varying levels of difficulty, like the "align-the-dots" challenge where two points have to be aligned.

The only downside is that the app doesn't work on silent mode. While we wait for them to solve the glitch, fall in love with the design of the application and sci-fi themed alarm settings, blasting your morning off to a great start.

Free on the App Store and Google Play Store 

Heritage Lost

AMANDA LEO, ANGELICA CHONG and REBECCA LEO find out what youths think about Singapore's heritage and why they should care

At the recent Singapore HeritageFest 2016, more than 70 per cent of the 100 events were sold out. Among those who turned up, most of them were adults and senior citizens. Does the fact that not many youths turned up for the Singapore HeritageFest events mean that they are not interested in Singapore's legacy?

What is "heritage"? It is the passing on of traditions and practices from generations to generations. In a survey conducted by HYPE, youth listed traditional food, places and culture as their interpretation of Singapore's heritage.

According to a TODAY online article dated Jan 27, 2014, "85.6 per cent

of respondents (youths) found it important to understand Singapore's heritage, but only 15 per cent would seek out information about it, despite more than half (55 per cent) saying they felt there were widely accessible materials on the topic".

71.4 per cent of youths are triggered to find out more about Singapore's heritage by stories of the past – meaning the Singaporean experience and imparting Singapore spirit.

Despite 96.1 per cent of respondents from HYPE's survey agreeing that it is vital to know about Singapore's heritage, a shocking 70.9 per cent do not care about it. This is backed up by the fact that youths do not mind losing "dialect", "manners" and the "conservative mindset".

To Care or Not to Care

HYPE's survey found that 69.7 per cent of youths feel that Singapore's heritage is important as it concerns their roots.

Three of the most important things about Singapore Heritage to youths from the online survey results include values like filial piety, history and culture.

Ms Joyce Kingsly, 42, the organiser of the Indian Food Trail for the Singapore HeritageFest 2016, says in an email interview: "It's important that the youths today know the details of heritage like practices, reasons and history behind traditional food culture in order to pass the appreciation to the next generation. It would be

Schools are formative years for the young and information passed on in these years are key to their understanding and help shape their interest in the later part of their lives.

Elaine Ng, director of Sector Development (Traditional Arts & Dance), National Arts Council

awful if wrong information is passed down to our children who'll either lose the interest or importance to keep it alive."

Programmes for Youths

"Various school programmes exist, like the Heritage Corners for Schools and Heritage Trail Guide Training programme to engage students at the primary and secondary levels," said a spokesperson for the National Heritage Board (NHB) in an email interview.

Other programmes organised by NHB for youths this year include the Resilience Trails, Singapore in Stamps, National Stamp Collecting Competition Workshop, Monumental Walking Tours and Monuments to Our History Assembly Presentation – Total Defence Special.

The Botanic Gardens Heritage tours organised for primary and secondary school students aims to help students discover more about the park, as well as the origin of South-east Asia's rubber and orchid industries.

Moreover, students can get up close with the renowned *Tembusu* tree shown on the S\$5 currency note.

With its wide array of flora and fauna, students can connect with nature, making them more aware of the importance to conserve Singapore's natural heritage.

Ms Elaine Ng, director of Sector Development (Traditional Arts & Dance) in the National Arts Council, says in an email interview: "Schools are formative years for the young and information passed on in these years are key to their understanding and

help shape their interest in the later part of their lives".

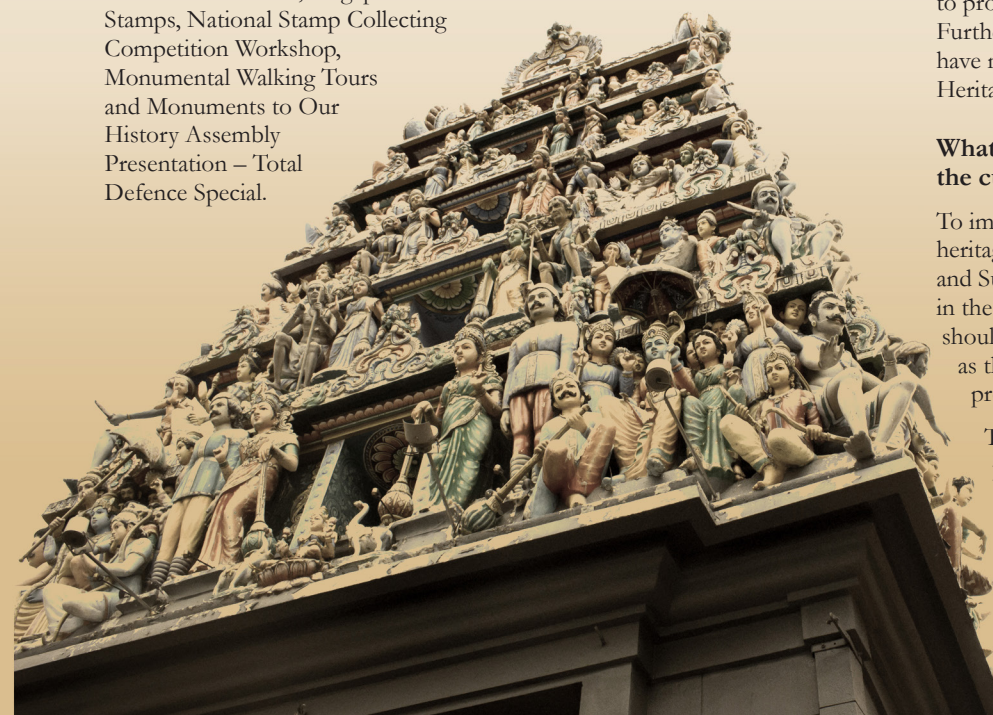
Furthermore, the online survey results show that a majority of youths feel that schools are the most relevant source of information about Singapore Heritage. Other than providing information on heritage, schools also play a part in preserving Singapore Heritage. When it comes to preservation, schools are mainly looking to retain bilingualism, whereby English is the first language and Chinese is the second. This is because preserving Chinese is vital in retaining one's identity and roots.

Despite these efforts, the online survey shows that 52.4 per cent of youths are unaware of the efforts to promote Singapore Heritage. Furthermore, 53 per cent of youths have not heard about the Singapore Heritage Festival.

What should be done to improve the current efforts?

To improve the current efforts, heritage programmes like the Heritage and Sustainable Urbanism Symposium in the Singapore HeritageFest 2016 should issue more tickets in future as the tickets for this particular programme were sold out.

This symposium connects preservation pioneers from





France and Singapore, as well as present-day regional practitioners. They shared about their contributions in the implementation of policies and the management of conservation methods, reclamation and repeated usage of heritage buildings.

Besides that, some youths also indicated that getting celebrities to bring them on tours as the programme line-up's incentives and creativity, as well as an interesting article would get them interested in finding out about Singapore Heritage.

Sophia Goh Liang Hui, 19, a graduate from Serangoon Junior College, says: "Since social media and celebrities are trending among youths, these two tools can be used to

improve the popularity of heritage among youths. For instance, a short clip can be posted on social networking sites like Instagram or Facebook on the heritage events and delivered in a fun and exciting way by a celebrity. There could even be a drama series or movie about the different heritage events in Singapore to promote them."

This is backed up with the online survey by HYPE, which shows that youths – 78.8 per cent – want to find out more about their heritage through the Internet, which includes social media platforms.

As the adage goes: "A person without the knowledge of his past, origin and culture is like a tree with no roots." Hence, it is vital for youths to know and care about their heritage.

It's important that the youths today know the details of heritage like practices, reasons and history behind traditional food culture in order to pass the appreciation to the next generation.

Joyce Kingsly, organiser of the Indian Food Trail (Singapore HeritageFest 2016)

Preserve Food Heritage

Hawker centres are an integral part of Singapore's food heritage. However, based on an online TODAY article dated Jul 26, 2013, hawker centres are at risk of dying out and need to be saved.

Mdm Siti Leonita, 29, a stall owner of Hussain Muslim Food at Kovan 209 Food Centre, says that hawker centres, which are part of Singapore Heritage should be preserved as the shared tables at hawker centres allow youths to socialise and mingle more with one another.

There are other reasons to emphasise the importance as to why Singapore's Food Heritage should be here to stay. "Our rich and unique food varieties should live on and information of its heritage should be passed on from generations to generations. Otherwise, in 50 years, we'll lose our ethnic and national identity," explains Ms Kingsly. [F]

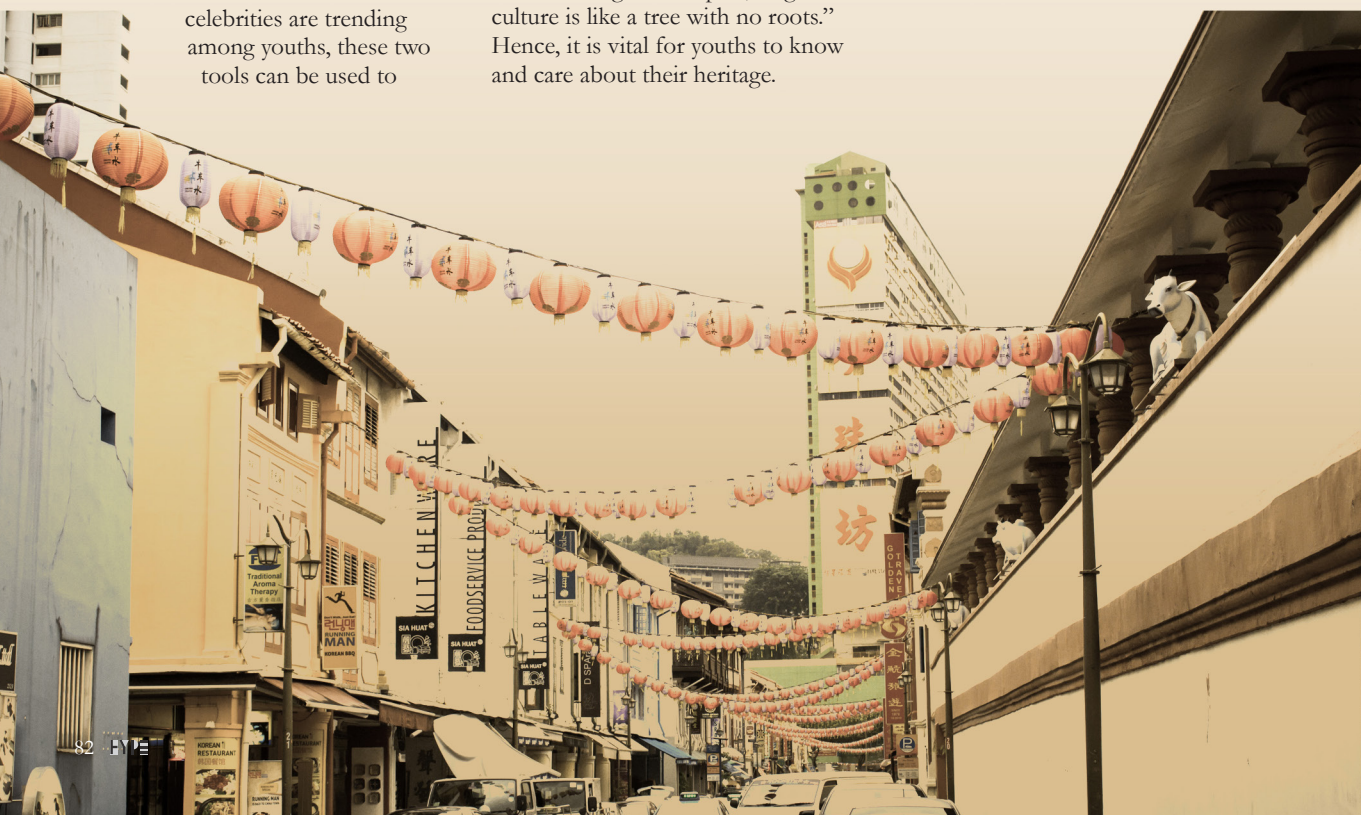


Our rich and unique food varieties should live on and information of its heritage should be passed on from generations to generations. Otherwise, in 50 years, we'll lose our ethnic and national identity.

– Joyce Kingsly, organiser of the Indian Food Trail (Singapore HeritageFest 2016)

Since social media and celebrities are trending among youths, these two tools can be used to improve the popularity of heritage among youths.

– Sophia Goh Liang Hui, 19



Photos courtesy of Eileen Teh
Stamp marks courtesy of Freepik



NUMB TO TERROR

MEU CINDY YONG

Before the fasting month of Ramadan drew to a close, bombings that struck three cities in Saudi Arabia, including a notable blast that took place in the vicinity of the Prophet's Mosque, sent shock waves across the Islamic community. All these took place within an exhaustive week of terrorist assaults in Bangladesh, Iraq and Turkey – countries that are predominantly Muslim.

Somehow, I did not bat an eyelid. What once used to be a “bolt of lightning” has now become something I am strangely expectant towards.

On June 30, in wake of the Istanbul attack, my classmate voiced out on Twitter: “I think the saddest part of it all was that when I heard about the Istanbul terrorist attacks, I was not surprised or devastated. I guess this is really happening. We are getting so used to hearing about all these horrible things that we are slowly becoming desensitized.”

Earlier this year, a Reddit user commented of how people have become so desensitized to terrorism that the terror attack in Brussels was “off the front page in less than 10 hours”.

Somehow, I did not bat an eyelid. What once used to be a “bolt of lightning” has now become something I am strangely expectant towards.

Months ago, following the terrorist attacks in Brussels, Scott Brown, chief economist of American diversified financial services company Raymond James, noted that the United States financial markets have possibly turned numb against terrorism. Are we on the brink of being economically desensitized to terrorism as well?

Amid the suicide bombings and mass shootings that are reported in the course of the 24-hour news cycle, we have slowly come to terms with the fact that terrorism is now a 21st century way of life. No longer are we shaken by these reports of terror attacks – the typical coffee break conversations and social media trends about the recent Orlando shooting and Istanbul airport explosion have ceased to exist in less than a week.

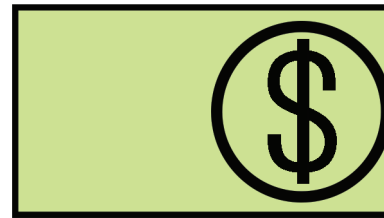
Closer to home, the Minister for Home Affairs and Law, Mr K Shanmugam, announced in March that in view of the recent terror threats, Singapore will be taking extra

measures, such as installing police cameras at 10,000 Housing and Development Board blocks and multi-storey carparks to tighten local counter-terrorism measures.

Though it is extremely convenient for us to think that the responsibility to ensure the personal safety of the citizens is solely the government's, we ourselves have a part to play in preventing passive behaviour and a complacent attitude towards terrorism from manifesting in our surroundings. If we are conditioned to tolerate the diabolical acts of terrorism, we are only giving the green light for this vicious cycle of successful terror attacks to repeat and not helping to put a stop to evil.

We should not be comfortable with the idea that it is normal for such senseless acts to happen. Let us not be numb in the face of terrorism. Rather, let us all stand together with those who suffer and be on our guard for any terror loopholes. **[F]**

Reality Cheque



Starting your own business might be enticing and exciting but LIM YUAN XIU finds out about the need to count your costs before jumping on the bandwagon

Driven by promises of flexible working hours, a healthy work-life balance and a bigger pay cheque, more young adults are chasing their dreams of starting their own enterprises.

Regarded as an entrepreneurial hub, Singapore has developed a thriving start-up community with Singapore start-up complex, JTC LaunchPad @ one-north, dubbed by The Economist as “the world's most tightly packed entrepreneurial ecosystem”.

Making up a part of this growing network of entrepreneurs are youths armed with fervent passion, wide-eyed optimism and visions of grandeur. However, for many of them reality sets in all too quickly.

Mr Dennis Tay, 31, founder of Naiise, a design retailer, says: “Many youths start their business with the mind-set that they want to be their own boss and they can do anything they want. That's a huge misconception. You're actually the biggest servant in the entire company.”

He adds: “Many think that starting a business is just all about passion and they jump into it. But it's not so simple, you need to be really careful about it and have an action plan.”

These are the realities when you launch your own business.

You'll have to endure long hours

Starting a new business requires a lot of dedication, planning and endless hours of hard work, especially in the initial stages. While there are no longer fixed working hours, you will find yourself putting in longer hours than what you expected.

“When I first started Naiise, I worked 20 hours a day and ran the entire business alone for close to a year. That's the reality of things; there was always something that had to be done that needed my attention,” says Mr Tay.

You're actually the biggest servant in the entire company.

Mr Dennis Tay, Naiise's founder

Your income may be low and unstable

You will not get your pot of gold immediately. In fact, you may not get that pot of gold for years to come.

During the early phases of your start-up, most of your funds will be spent investing in your business and you're likely not going to be making much money. Most entrepreneurs do not take a salary during the early years of operation – at least not until they are certain the business has a steady revenue.

Ms Jacqueline Goh, 26, founder of The Fingersmith Letterpress, a letterpress printing company, says: “For the first two years, I didn't take much of a salary and I had to cut back a lot on my personal spending. I even stopped going out with my friends.”

Be aware of your costs

Often, many adolescent start-ups fail as they run out of money and the business becomes unsustainable. Therefore, it is crucial to keep your costs as low as possible and wisely invest your money on things you need, not things you think a business should *probably* have.

Contrary to popular belief, Mr Tay says: “You don't need money to make money.”

Starting his company with only \$3,000, he feels that while it's essential to keep abreast of your expenses, it's more important for the business to create intangible value. He advises: “When you create value in your business, you will give people reason to shop and work with you. Then, the money will come.”

Despite the potential difficulties, being an entrepreneur is still a dream for many youths. Having her heart set on starting her own business one day, Isabel Tan, 19, a Ngee Ann Polytechnic student, says she will continue working towards her goal, believing that “your dream is the only thing in life worth living for”. **[F]**



READY, SET, UPGRADE!

VEU BENJAMIN CHUA

Not too long ago, I met up with a close friend from secondary school. She had chosen the junior college route after O-levels, while I had chosen to go to polytechnic. She completed A-levels last year and is now waiting to enter a local university.

Her plans for the near future are: to study Business Administration at one of our prestigious local universities, head out into the industry, and perhaps pick up a Masters of Business Administration degree if circumstances allowed.

As a graduating polytechnic student, I am all too aware of the fact that I would soon be applying for spots in these same universities as well.

I wondered whether my educational path post-graduation would be as smooth as what my friend has planned for herself. I'm sure those of us in polytechnic would have considered entering the workforce with our diploma before furthering our education.

A significant number of us – 59.4 per cent of all polytechnic graduates in full-time employment, as of 2014, do opt for that route.

While it is certainly all right and even encouraged that polytechnic graduates test the waters of the industry, it is important that we do not stagnate.

While it is certainly all right and even encouraged that polytechnic graduates test the waters of the industry, it is important that we do not stagnate. By stagnating and not upgrading, we stand to lose out as the industry becomes more competitive.

In this regard, the SkillsFuture scheme would be a step that should be considered. For the uninitiated, SkillsFuture is an attempt by the government to give all Singaporeans the chance to learn and develop, regardless of age or educational level.

For polytechnic and Institute of Technical Education graduates, the Earn and Learn programme attaches fresh graduates to engaging employers. Employers provide industry-standard training and mentorship, while the hired graduate embarks on industry projects and training.

It's very much like the polytechnic curriculum, where lecturers are on hand to provide guidance, and

offers an excellent opportunity for networking and career progression, and will certainly help stick one's foot through the industry door.

Already, SkillsFuture is being acknowledged by large companies that send their employees for such courses and training. It was reported in July this year that telecommunications giant Singtel is allowing employees to take two days off each year to attend SkillsFuture upgrading courses.

While all of these sounds excellent on paper, reality calls and we have yet to see how the SkillsFuture programmes stack up against the tried and tested certificates from elite institutions. It is most definitely unrealistic to expect the diploma to match the degree in terms of job prospects, salary and other benefits overnight, and expectations have to be balanced to prevent disappointment.

However, from the evidence so far, it looks optimistic for all of us aspiring upgraders. **F**



DANGER OF LOVING SELF ABOVE ALL

VEU REBECCA LEO

The percentage of narcissistic college students has risen by over half to 30 per cent, according to a 2010 study by the Society of Social Psychological and Personality Science based in the US.

Dictionaries define narcissism as the “gratification derived from admiration of one's own physical or mental attributes”.

The prevalence of narcissism can be seen from the book *The Narcissism Epidemic*, where US psychology professors Jean Twenge and Keith Campbell show the rise in narcissism is as quick as obesity, becoming more common since the 1980s.

A long time ago, narcissism was only talked about in the mental health profession. Youths faced the issue of inadequate self-esteem instead. This could be attributed to the non-existence of social media as the first social media site, Six Degrees, was established in 1997.

In contrast, youths today rely on the number of likes on their social media platforms to boost their self-esteem. The more likes, the higher the level of confidence.

When youths become self-centred and obsessed with their own fame and image, they may forget to simply care for the people around them.”

While social media platforms like Instagram don't result directly in narcissism, studies show that they accelerate the focus on oneself. Inevitably, this is seen when youths post a photograph on their social media accounts and constantly check back for “likes” and comments that contain words of admiration.

This type of self-love based on the “likes” and comments of others has resulted in frivolous social comparison and taken a toll on youths as they attempt to present a nice online persona for others to see.

When youths become self-centred and obsessed with their own fame and image, they may forget to simply care for the people around them, thereby adversely affecting societal bonds. As research has shown that people who place emphasis on their money, fame and image are more susceptible to anxiety and depression, the issue of narcissism needs to be addressed.

Undeniably, narcissism can be a huge cost because research has shown that while narcissists frequently possess a deep sense of fulfilment, they cause chaos and agony to others. According to The Guardian and Psychology Today, narcissism is linked to decreased honesty and a rise in aggression. Youths sacrifice integrity when they mask their real self online to gain more acceptance from others. Aggression sometimes surfaces when a “like” is not received.

Narcissism is a precarious road to take. When one's self-esteem relies on the measure of love that others have for one, retweets, “likes” or views, one will find it difficult to truly love oneself. Hence, when self-love is dependent on the extent of “attention” or “approval” others give, this is not genuine self-love. Self-love – or better, self-esteem – should come from within. Youths should start living beyond social media and those who love them for who they are will be naturally attracted. **F**

BACK IN THE SADDLE



Photo courtesy of Gemma Foo

A 20-year-old Singaporean Para-equestrian gets into an accident prior to one of the biggest moments of her life. AMANDA LEO finds out how she's getting back on the road to the Paralympics

Six months before the Rio 2016 Summer Paralympics and 10,000 km away from home, Gemma Rose Foo, 20, was rushed to a hospital in Cologne, Germany, after falling off her horse during training.

Gemma was discovered to have a swollen rib and ruptured spleen that had bled into her abdomen. She was immediately sent for surgery followed by a two-day stay in the intensive care unit and another fortnight in the hospital before flying back to Singapore.

"I was definitely shocked and traumatised at the same time because I would usually expect external cuts instead of internal bleeding," says Gemma with a heavy sigh.

Gemma was born prematurely at 24 weeks and was diagnosed with cerebral palsy. To aid her in balancing and coordination, horse riding was included in her physical therapy.

The Journey

In the years leading up to the accident, Gemma was one of the youngest competitors to ride in the London 2012 Paralympic Games and qualified for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games after contesting through numerous competitions in Europe.

Together with Maximillian Tan Chern, 29, and Laurentia Tan Yen Yi, 37, they make up Singapore's para-equestrian team and had managed to earn the Asian Paralympian Team slot after attaining the best scores in Asia.

Gemma chirps with a wide grin: "We were definitely thrilled because since we started this team six years ago, we have achieved quite a lot in this short ride together."

In preparation for the Rio 2016 Paralympic Equestrian events, she had trained twice a week in Singapore with a local school horse. These sessions enabled her to keep in shape before she flew to Germany where she trained with her own horse, Cassis Royal, up to two to three times a day for sessions lasting 45 minutes.



Photo courtesy of RayTohgraphy/Singapore Disability Sports Council

I just want to make my family and my coach proud. It's going to be a long trip, but we'll definitely make it.

— Gemma Rose Foo, 20

The Recovery

However, all seemed to have gone down the drain when she was unable to ride for roughly three months due to the severity of the injury and complicated operation.

"Falling off the horse is part and parcel of horse riding as there are always risks in sports like this," says Maximillian, full-time Para-equestrian and one of Gemma's teammates. "However, we did not expect the fall to disrupt Gemma's training plans."

During the recovery period, Gemma's mother, Mdm Jacqueline Lim, 51, had felt "devastated and helpless" because Gemma had never suffered such a serious injury in her riding career before. However, Mdm Lim and the rest of Gemma's family dealt with it well and no tears were shed.

"My family has been there for me since the start of my sporting career. I'm entirely grateful for their unwavering support during the ups and downs," Gemma says with a contented smile.

Gemma's teammates, Maximillian and Tan also played a huge role in Gemma's recovery period.

"Once Laurentia and I got the clearance from the hospital, we visited Gemma as much as we could to give her moral support. After the training sessions, we went to the hospital or wherever she lived to visit her," says Maximillian.

The Comeback

Despite the recent injury, Gemma is gearing up to ride to the best of her abilities at the 2016 Paralympic Games held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in September.

Mr Volker Eubel, 54, Singapore's national equestrian coach and Gemma's trainer for five years, says in an email interview with HYPE: "Gemma has a strong will to improve her skills and succeed, which results in better marks in the competition. To be able to witness this is very impressive and inspiring to her team members and me."

With only about two to three months to train after her recovery period, Gemma does not have starry-eyed expectations for herself or her horse.

She says while flashing a grin: "I just want to make my family and my coach proud. It's going to be a long trip, but we'll definitely make it." □



“ASKING FOR IT”

VIEW ISABELLE LIEW

It is expected that the perpetrator of any crime would be the one thrust in the spotlight and blamed for it. Sadly, in cases of sexual harassment – be it rape or molestation – people seem to focus on the victim; what they’re wearing in such instances, or their level of intoxication, as if to blame them for such a tragedy.

The most recent sentencing of a molestation case in Singapore saw a male dentist being jailed six weeks for molesting a woman on the MRT in 2014. This incident inspired a Straits Times forum article titled “Mind how we dress in public”, which conveyed that women should not be wearing revealing clothing, as it does not reflect well on their “modesty and upbringing”. This comment, perceived as policing women’s freedom to choose how to dress, shed light on how victim blaming attitudes unfortunately remain prevalent in the world.

Males should not objectify and sexualise females – what is so sexual about a bra strap that girls have to cover them up? A person’s modesty and upbringing is not reflected in the appearance of the victim, but rather in the actions of the perpetrators.

“A person’s modesty and upbringing is not reflected in the appearance of the victim, but rather in the actions of the perpetrators.”

These victim blaming attitudes culminated in the controversy sparked by the 2015 Stanford University rape case, with many comments surfacing on the Internet blaming the victim for being drunk, and that her unconsciousness holds no account of the rape happening.

Intoxication is not a call for rape – it only means that the victim is in a vulnerable position, vulnerable enough to be unable to fight back, rendering herself unconscious.

The perpetrator, at his very core, would already have the intention to commit such an act in the first place, without taking into account the victim’s appearance. The perpetrator would see the vulnerability of his target and swoop in and take advantage of the victim’s body for his own sexual pleasure.

Shockingly, it’s clear that many take the side of the rapist, with his father stating that the “20 minutes of action” shouldn’t ruin his son’s life and swimming career. The judge

himself also dismissed the case, saying: “A prison sentence would have a severe impact on him... I think he will not be a danger to others.” Hence, the perpetrator got away with a light sentence – six months in jail with probation.

When the culture of victim blaming is internalised by the victim, it would exacerbate the psychological distress they are already experiencing, affecting them even more. The road to recovery is already onerous to begin with, but when the victims are conditioned to believe they should be blamed for their suffering, the torment of the process is considerably heightened.

This culture is not only harmful to victims all across the globe, but also worsens the debilitating trauma sustained from the assault and undermines women’s right to wear what they want.

They are never, in any way, “asking for it”. **[F]**



VOLUNTOURING FOR GOOD

VIEW JOLENE GINA ABELARDE

At 19, I have been to five trips to volunteer overseas and yet, I am very much against the very entry of short-term volunteers into foreign countries. Called “voluntourists”, the group of eager volunteers, made up largely of youth from first-world countries who flood third-world countries – leaving their ivory towers, maybe getting a bit of scuff on their shoes and go home preaching: “I’m so appreciative of my potable water and working toilets” and “I really like feeling like I made a difference”.

If you have not yet heard of it, voluntourism is the next big thing. According to the US Tourism Research and Marketing of the Association of Tourism and Leisure Education in 2008, voluntourism has grown to 1.6 million voluntourists a year. Singapore’s Youth Expedition Project supported more than 1,184 young people to volunteer overseas in just 2015 alone.

As a volunteer at the same church in Laos for the past five years, I find problems with the spike in short-term voluntourism among youths.

You think you are going to help but... here is the truth: they are helping you

“You think you are going to help but... here is the truth: they are helping you more than you them.”

more than you them. You go there and you get an overseas experience, an almost complete, immersive welcome into another culture. You get to experience life in another world and a glimpse of a simpler life.

They get separation anxiety. When volunteering overseas short term, students eventually forget the children they visit, photos pushed aside. However, the children may begin losing faith in people. The children’s innocence becomes tainted by continually being visited by different older “brothers and sisters” every month or so, then being forgotten and recycled as icons of poverty for the next batch of student voluntourists. Hardly seems like fair trade.

Maybe youth today are going to these countries with the wrong mindset. Fact is, you are not going there to help – you are going there to learn.

Look around you and compare. Youth go to these countries and they see people worse off than them – lower,

in need of help, poorer, dirtier – but maybe these hosts do not even want that help. Look around and see, how although their Gross Domestic Product is duller than your country’s, their smiles shine that much brighter.

What’s more, should you not already be appreciative? You have parents who can shelter you, a government that can afford to send you overseas and food to fill your stomach. Perhaps we should really sit up in bed one day, and remember just how appreciative we should already be.

So how do we remedy this epidemic? The truth is, I do not know for sure. In my humble opinion, volunteering from home is the only way to set a good mind-set for future volunteering opportunities.

Ultimately, it’s like what Confucius said: to achieve true world peace, you start with reforming yourself and building your home. This is perhaps where Singaporeans need to start: home. **[F]**

#TBT

SHARING CULTURE

Airbnb over the Hilton?
 Plateculture over a Philadelphia Philly
 Cheese Steak? Withlocals
 over DUCKtours? JOLENE GINA
 ABELARDE, BENJAMIN CHUA and
 SWETHA S find out if our generation is embracing
 the sharing economy

Think back to *kampung*: dirtier, smellier, hotter but also neighbourly, kindly, sharing. It's 2016 and the *kampung* spirit is doing an encore with the up and coming sharing economy.

The sharing economy is a term dedicated to online-based services that allow individuals to share owned resources with others who need them, usually for a fee. Buyers are matched with sellers, drivers with passengers, and of course, friends with friends.

HYPE conducted poll with 150 respondents and found that 83 per cent had participated in some form of the new sharing culture including rental site Airbnb and rental car applications Grab and Uber. While this is the latest trend in travelling in style – you can book castles on Airbnb and a BMW on Uber – as with all trends that come and go, we have to decide, is this worth keeping around?

In our poll, about 72 per cent of respondents felt that the sharing culture is a positive form of sharing, and could form the basis of a re-emergence of sharing, integrated deeply into our society once more. A survey respondent said that the sharing economy helps to build trust and form a more inclusive society, while another mentioned that the sharing culture will make sharing become trendy again.

In recent years, it has been suggested that Singaporeans, unlike days of old, no longer share as they did. The beloved *kampung* spirit deemed to be uniquely Singaporean is becoming a faint memory of the past and something many Singaporeans are fighting to keep alive.

The hailed about *kampung* spirit refers to how Singaporeans who used to live in communal villages where much was shared between friends, neighbours and family, be it a teaspoon of sugar, home-grown chillies or something immaterial like bonds of friendship. This gave Singaporeans opportunities to inculcate the sharing culture in their families, in the hope of continuing the practice among future generations. But globalisation and the development of Singapore into a first-world country seem to have created people who are more self-centred, placing themselves ahead of others.

"Youngsters now are so worried about thieves and their belongings they don't even want to share with their parents. Singapore used to be always sharing," says Mdm Hajrah Bibi Bte Abdul Majeed, 62, a homemaker.



BLAST TO THE PAST

Mdm Abitha Majeed, 51, a pre-school principal, fondly remembers how as a girl she would be sent out with her siblings to "distribute and share food to the different neighbours" in their small village.

"We would grow vegetables and herbs in our gardens and give them to our neighbours without them asking. Even doing favours for people in the village was natural. This was what Singapore used to be."

She also shares that in olden-day Singapore, sharing was not limited to just material items and instead, had become a way of life.

"Neighbours would come over for Eid; our Chinese neighbours from the next *kampung* would organise a halal table just for Muslim neighbours during Chinese New Year; Hindu neighbours would invite us to decorate their houses for Deepavali," she says.



BACK TO THE FUTURE

Shandie Lim, 22, a National University of Singapore undergraduate, takes constant road trips outside of Singapore when she visits her partner in the UK and according to her, has never once regretted her choice in choosing Airbnb.

“We usually set our budget at S\$75 per night. We chose Airbnb because it’s so much cheaper than hotels, especially in Europe. You just have to choose wisely by reading previous guests’ reviews,” says Shandie.

LESSONS FROM THE SHARING ECONOMY

Despite all the positive things that can be said, one might stop to question if this is the sort of sharing we want to perpetuate. While 72.2 per cent of respondents in HYPE’s poll agreed that sharing economies provided a positive platform to share and care, there have been many other instances whereby there were negative forms of sharing.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic Mass Communication student, Low Yok Yun, 19, recounted her experience of being harassed by an Uber driver when she was visiting Vietnam. Uber is also a sharing economy platform, which car rides are shared. She says: “After I was harassed, I reported it to the local Uber office, who completely dismissed my case.”

That being said, how exactly can these sharing economy platforms help bring back the sharing culture in Singapore?

From the sharing economy, we can learn to share the way we did in the past. The platforms provided by the sharing economy: Airbnb, Withlocals and PlateCulture have shown that we have not lost the ability or willingness to share, and we should integrate those sharing practises into our daily lives.

As always, change starts by taking the first step, and it could start with you. Why wait for a booking over PlateCulture to share your recipes and culinary skill? There are so many more people closer, in terms of proximity and to the heart, who would appreciate a similar act of sharing.

NEXT STEP

Sharing economy platforms like PlateCulture, Withlocals, Airbnb, Uber and Grab have provided people around the globe with opportunities to share their homes, culture and lives with others.

While there are horror stories, there is always a good side to everything. Sharing economy platforms are increasing in numbers and contributing to some people’s incomes. If we all looked at things with a more positive perspective and with an open mind to the idea of sharing, maybe the sharing economy wouldn’t seem so bad after all.

Airbnb

Airbnb is the most prominent service in the sharing economy, and is a platform for sharing accommodation – be it a shady attic, apartment room or a luxurious suite. With more than 60 million users worldwide sharing on Airbnb and an estimated 500,000 Airbnb stays every night in 57,000 cities, Airbnb is a fast-rising trend.

Airbnb’s 2016 campaign, “Live Like A Local” is all about encouraging hosts to help their guests live like a local and share their way of life, something that goes way beyond what a conventional hotel can offer.

Gan Jiacy, 19, a Sociology student at the National University of Singapore, says that she once had a host prepare traditional Korean breakfasts every morning, and that truly helped her understand Korean culture better.

PlateCulture

PlateCulture is another noteworthy player in the sharing economy. It allows home cooks to share their authentic family recipes with the world in the comfort of their own home. With PlateCulture, one can experience food culture from all over the world in one location, especially in a global city such as Singapore. To add on to this global experience, more than one party of guests are likely to be hosted at the same dinner party, so it can be a wonderful way to spend a night with great company.

Withlocals

Withlocals is another sharing economy player that has left its mark on Singapore. Tours Withlocals is the epitome of sharing experiences with others; it puts guests in contact with local hosts who can show you all the best their city can offer from the perspective of a local.

Instead of mass tourism, being guided by someone who is hosting from the heart is without a doubt much better and genuine than someone who is doing it for a salary. Their willingness to share is something that is reminiscent of sharing as how our parents knew it. [E]

NO THANKS, SHARING ECONOMY

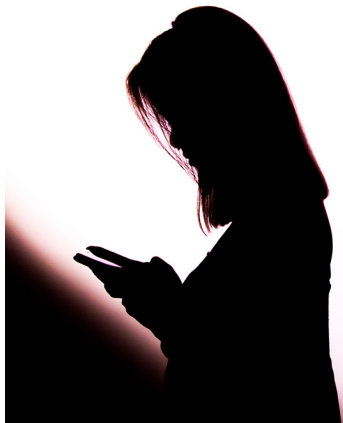
While these sharing economy platforms are considerably convenient, inexpensive and full of incentives, how sure are we that these platforms are foolproof, safe and are not owned by some crazy maniac who’s just out to possibly put you in a horror movie set in his household?

Thulasi Manoharan, 21, a student and avid traveller, prefers sticking to traditional lodging options. Thulasi says: “You never know what lies behind doors owned by random locals. I’d rather spend a little bit more money and time in looking for a hotel or an inn instead of putting up at someone’s home ... [it] feels like we’re invading their privacy.”

Photos courtesy of StockSnap

New Romantics

Navigate the world of dating with JOLENE GINA ABELARDE and unravel the myriad of labels and stages that defines the once simple action of two people starting out on a romantic relationship



When Lionel Chang, 19, asked his current girlfriend to become “official”, they had already held hands and exchanged sweet nothings. Now, this might seem a little scandalous... but they were already dating, after all. So – what is dating in today’s social media rampant age?

The question seems straightforward enough, but the answer might not be as such. Youth today go through multiple stages before progressing into a stable, long-term relationship. Here are the four layers:



1 Talking

The first stage, “talking”, is a time when interaction remains online – the modern-day equivalent of passing notes in class.

“We had to text for a week before we affirmed the mutual attraction,” says Elnathan Heng, 19.

In some cases, there is an additional stage before texting – interaction via social media. This can come in the form of comments on posts, before exchanging numbers and moving on to one-on-one conversations.

2 Hanging Out

Next comes physical interaction – “hanging out” or “seeing each other”. The millennial has also seen the popularity of group dating: not a group date, but having a group of friends tag along.

“Group dating is good for new relationships, when you still don’t know each other well enough and you are not comfortable with each other,” says Ms Suki Tong-Berman, 51, a lecturer at Ngee Ann Polytechnic who teaches a relationships module.



3 Dating

Dating only comes after youths have successfully manoeuvred the previous two awkward stages.

According to the University of California, each generation has developed a new form of dating to add to the relationship spectrum and the main contribution of the 21st century is the hook-up.

“Youth today don’t mind having sex even if they don’t see a future [together],” says Mdm Giaw Yin Yin, 74, a retiree and former social worker. “It’s a lot more casual than in my era, when we took a long time before getting to that stage.”

Mrs Yeo Lay Keng, 47, a business owner and mother of two, says, “Now, dating is more for fun and companionship and not so much about finding a lifelong partner.”



4 It's Official!

Perhaps the only thing that has not changed is the stage of “going steady”. This is a mutual decision to be in a committed relationship.

Researchers from the University of California say technology has played a tremendous role in causing youth to desire more stages prior to serious dating.

Now that texting, online dating, social media and other forms of asynchronous communication are available, it removes the need for charm; some see it more like dropping a line in the water and hoping for a bite.

Ultimately, then and now, it is irrefutable that the universal key to maintaining a healthy relationship is good communication – and who knows, with the dragged out layers of courtship, it might breed some time for that. **[E]**



Photos courtesy of Eileen Teh



We have some goodies in store for you! To enter, simply email your answers to the respective questions to **hypesg.trimedia@gmail.com**. Include your full name, NRIC and phone number in your entry. (Hint: some of the answers are found in the respective articles.)



X2

Autographed Greyson Chance Tote Bag

What is the name of Greyson Chance's latest EP?
(Giveaway courtesy of Universal Music Singapore, ends Oct 7)



X1

Autographed Disco Hue EP

Who are the Disco Hue members?
(Giveaway courtesy of Disco Hue, ends Oct 7)



X3 sets Artisan Granola Bars

How many granola flavours does Eastern Granola offer?
(Giveaway courtesy of Eastern Granola, ends Oct 7)

X3 pairs Innamorati Two Tickets



What is the name of Innamorati Two's director?
(Giveaway courtesy of Toy Factory Productions, ends Sep 20)



X3 pairs

Wicked Tickets

What is the name of the actress playing Elphaba?
(Giveaway courtesy of BASE Entertainment Asia, ends Sep 20)



X1

Two-box Carpe Librum Subscription + Chance to Curate Nov/Dec Box

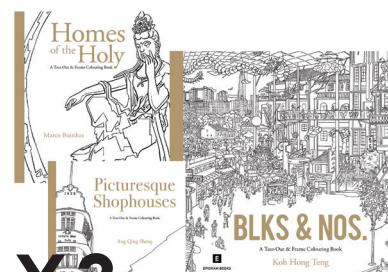
What is the theme of the Jul/Aug Carpe Librum box?
(Giveaway courtesy of Carpe Librum, ends Sep 20)



X5

YA Book Bundles

Tell us why you love/would love to read young adult (YA) books.
(Giveaway courtesy of Penguin Books Singapore, ends Oct 7)



X3

Singaporean Colouring Books

Tell us your favourite local author and why you love his/her work.
(Giveaway courtesy of Epigram Books, ends Oct 7)

midea



Singapore's first youth-led media conglomerate, m:idea, was established in 2009, at the School of Film & Media Studies in Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

Through six media units (Trimedia Publishing, CTV Productions, Radio Heatwave, Inspire Design, Klix Photography and m:idea marcomm), we offer editorial, media production, creative and campaign management services as well as media platforms for advertising placements.

For more information visit us at fmsmidea.com

Prison Officers help turn convicts' lives around



Singapore Prison Service officers balance secure custody of inmates with delivering a holistic rehabilitation programme to facilitate their return to society. They work tirelessly with volunteers and community partners to help inmates to make a positive change in their lives, which in turn contributes to a safe Singapore.

100 Policemen hunt down slash-and-rob gang



Police arrested a gang which went on a knife-wielding rampage that left one person dead, two others in intensive care and another with half his palm hacked off – all for \$400 cash and three cellphones. More than 100 officers from the Singapore Police Force conducted a 24-hour island wide manhunt and swiftly moved in on five culprits.

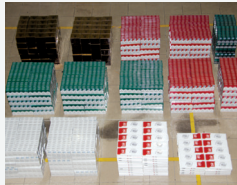
Narcotics officers seize \$1.3 million worth of 'Ice'

The relentless drive by the Central Narcotics Bureau (CNB) to weed out illicit drug activities in Singapore continues to bear fruit. Together with the Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA), CNB successfully foiled two attempts by a West African syndicate to traffic about 6.7kg of 'ice' worth over \$1,000,000. The interceptions were made in separate joint operations between the two agencies at Tan Checkpoint and Changi Airport.



ICA officers seize lorry with contraband goods

The passion of Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA) officers continues to soar as they thwart smuggling attempts at land checkpoints. A total of 2,387 cartons of contraband cigarettes of assorted brands, 697 bundles of chewing tobacco and a live sugar glider (a squirrel-like animal) were seized. Six men were arrested, while four cars, a motorcycle and a truck were detained and liable for forfeiture. As the same methods of concealment used by contraband smugglers could also be used by terrorists to smuggle arms and explosives into Singapore, ICA officers will continue to be vigilant in securing our borders.



120 firefighters battle 32-hour Bukom blaze

Over 100 Singapore Civil Defence Force (SCDF) firefighters successfully fought a complex and multi-dimensional fire which threatened to run out of control at a petrol refinery. Coloned Amwar Abdullah, SCDF Director of Operations, said the impact of the surging flames literally threw him metres back on two occasions. Perseverance, commitment to duty and expertise eventually paid off 32 hours later, when the massive fire was brought under control.



CNB takes down drug syndicate



Unseen by the public, the Central Narcotics Bureau's Special Task Force weathens out drugs and take-down traffickers. They are fighting fit and the sharpest shooters, with skills ranging from close-quarter restraint techniques against weapons-bearing assailants. Every year, this elite force busts about 25 syndicates. And their biggest haul to date is a 34kg heroin bust with a street value of \$5 million.

Swift Police work solves \$1 million robbery

Five men who impersonated Police officers to stage a brazen robbery were arrested after a 48-hour Police operation. The drama began last September at a shophouse in Dunlop Street. Three suspects, two in Police uniforms, accused two electronic-goods traders from India of illegal activities. They tied up the traders and drove off with \$1 million in cash. Two other suspects who acted as lookouts took off on foot. About \$850,000 in cash has been recovered.



Lionheart rescues victims from collapsed buildings

In a 36-hour exercise, SCDF's 76-man Lionheart Contingent raced to rescue victims from collapsed buildings. SCDF's experience from 13 humanitarian missions overseas proved vital to secure Heavy Urban Search and Rescue status. This ranking means that Lionheart has the operational capability for complex technical search and rescue operations in disaster-stricken urban settings. SCDF is the first force in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve this status, and has gone on to mentor the Chinese, Korean and Malaysian rescue teams to achieve similar status.



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