

hype

the free issue

The Orient Express

Asian women in film and theatre speak out

Fiona Xie

Meet the Genie

WIN Jimmy Eat World and The Calling CDs & movie passes to Captain Corelli's Mandolin

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blip.

I watched the cashier scan the bar code of my pack of chips. The laser's glowing red gave my chips a bored, officious glance.

Funny how we're known to the state only by the earmark of an Identity Card, but all that most machines are interested in is the static line of numbers the bar code registers. *Blip.*

Funny how the West has tagged Singapore as a place of rules and restraints, but join in the strange preoccupation with the "Asian values" debate, and in the same breath, the exotica of the east. *Blip.*

Funny how a woman is seen first as a (house)wife and mother, second as a professional, but if she doesn't "save on one hairdo and use the money for breast-cancer screening", she isn't seen at all. *Blip.*

Funny how some freedom-fighters wave their peaceful pickets, but scream madly for revolution and blood. *Blip.*

What's freedom to anybody, anyway?

To want to spearhead an issue fronting freedom seems contrived, grandiose... even *bourgeois* these days. I see all of us grappling with what garb to don to best look different, what opinion to give to best sound unique, and what career to choose to best seem individual.

Yes, yes, we are free to do what we want.

If you believe you are free, you are – your perception is your immediate reality. Functioning as a young person in Singapore can be quite a confusing undertaking, given all this freedom-speak.

Freedom and Singapore are not exactly synonymous. Are we looking for freedom at all? Are we seeking liberation from what boundaries we have – social, political, governmental, hierarchal, parental – or, nope, count me out, I'm already free to do as I please?

Perhaps some answers lie in recognising the antithesis of freedom, and the accorded freedoms we each have.

For freedom does exist, in a multiplicity of interpretations. **hype** takes a personal look into what freedom may mean to all of us, in the ways we're most familiar with – our everyday lives. Even if you think there is no true freedom, you can have the last laugh knowing you at least asked about it.

Perhaps some answers lie in the asking. A dear friend and teacher once said to me that maybe one day we will be the butterfly that fans a thunderstorm.

Not save the world. Not cure cancer. Just fan a thunderstorm.

blip.

e-von yeung



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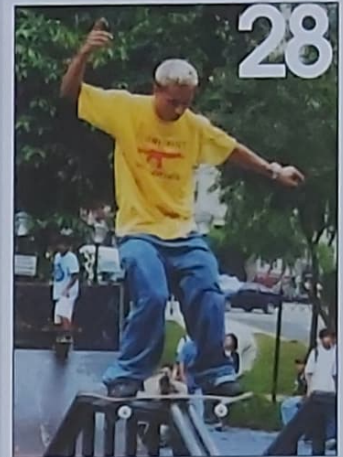
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Pulp Friction



Even the rag you step on at home can be a piece of art! Discover textiles and other materials in a sensual combination with paints and compositional patterning.

Unlike paintings and sculptures, the artworks in this exhibition combine the senses of sight and touch to give a more impactful message.

Some of the featured artists are Goh Beng Kwan (collage art), December Pang (prints and thread works), Eng Tow (hand-made paper) and Lee Su Lian (contemporary art pieces exploring the theme and narratives).

Get bedazzled by the myriad of lustrous colours. You might want to do something with that bathroom rag at home after this exhibition.

alywin chew

Galleries 5, 6, 7 & 8, Singapore Art Museum
12 September - 18 November 2001

Tuesday - Sunday: 9am - 6pm
Except Friday till 9pm
Closed on Monday

Tel: 332 3222

More information available at www.nhb.gov.sg/SAM/sam.shtml

Robbie Williams Live in Concert



Arguably the hottest act to hit Singapore this year, Mr Rock DJ himself will be performing at the Singapore Indoor Stadium for an exclusive one-night only concert. Robbie Williams, the most successful solo artist after breaking away from defunct boy band, Take That, has already released four solo albums to date. With his sexy charm and powerful vocals, he has won the hearts of millions of fans worldwide.

Robbie will be belting out tunes from his albums, *Life Thru a Lens*, *I've Been Expecting You*, *The Ego Has Landed* and *Sing When You're Winning*. To make his act even hotter, he will also be performing his new releases, *Eternity* and *Let Love Be Your Energy*.

christina lai

Rondeau XVI

Rondeau, meaning "coming around" in French, represents Ngee Ann Polytechnic Concert Band (NPCB)'s dedication to unity and vision.

With 15 years of performing experience under its belt, the concert band is exploring music from the big band era for *Rondeau XVI*.

Head librarian and clarinetist Justin Loh reveals that *Rondeau XVI* will be an evening of exciting music as it would highlight some technically demanding pieces.

Under the baton of its resident conductor, Mr Yeo Poong Poh, NPCB will impress you with its selection of classical, jazz, pop and contemporary music at *Rondeau XVI*.

elissa chia



Victoria Concert Hall
29 December 2001
7pm

Tickets at \$8 (stall) and \$10 (circle)

For more information, contact Jia Miao at 9842 2418 or npcb@hotmail.com

Singapore Indoor Stadium
20 October 2001
8 pm

Tickets at \$121, \$81, \$61 (reserved seating) and \$101 (free standing)

For more information, call SISTIC at 348 5555 or visit www.sistic.com.sg

SSO Sounds of Asia Series



A bit of Hollywood comes to town with the Asian premiere of **Tan Dun's** (Crouching Tiger Hidden Dragon composer) **Concerto for Guitar and Orchestra (Yi²)**.

Tan Dun's most recent work will be performed by Grammy Award-winning American guitar virtuoso **Sharon Isbin**, with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, under the baton of maestro **Lim Yau**. This was "easily Tan Dun's most ambitious piece of writing to date", a review in *Scotland On Sunday* said.

The SSO Sounds of Asia Series displays the fire of the guitar with two vibrant guitar concertos on November 30 and December 1 – the other concerto being Joaquín Rodrigo's shimmering **Concierto de Aranjuez**, famous for its warm and beautiful slow movement.

The well-known **Capriccio Espagnol**, by orchestral master Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, finishes the evening with a blazing Spanish flourish.

george fu

Victoria Concert Hall
30 November (sold out) and 1 December 2001
8.15pm

Tickets (students' concession) at \$38, \$28, \$22 (\$17), \$17 (\$13), \$12 (\$9)

Freebie alert! Grab a free ZoCard off the racks in town and present your ticket to any SSO Sounds of Asia concert to receive 15% off at Shrooms (Chijmes)! Valid till 8 Dec 2001.

Jazz up your life

Chijazz is an annual independent jazz festival at Chijmes. Local and foreign bands playing all genres of jazz, from acid jazz to traditional jazz, during the four-hour marathon live performance are showcased.

For the last six years, Chijazz has enjoyed a fair amount of popularity among jazz lovers and the general public. So, if you would like to know what jazz is all about, come on down to Chijmes and soak in the ambient tunes that the invited jazz bands will perform from 5pm to 9pm.

Makeshift stalls offering a wide selection of food and beverages, as well as crafts and jazz memorabilia, add to the highlights of this festival.

erina xie

Chijazz at Chijmes' Lawn and Fountain Court
21 October 2001
5pm - 9pm

Admission is free

Tel: 337 7810
Fax: 337 9589



Hell 'O' Ween



However, if you are undecided, face paint and props will be provided. Activities for the night include a drama with performances such as **Burning of the Witches** and **The Vampires' Parade**. A contest will be held and there are attractive prizes for the best-dressed, so be creative while you're at it!

Let's not stay home this Halloween, join the expected crowd of 5,000 at a time when all the ghouls come out to

play! Expect an evening of fun and frights at **Hell 'O' Ween 2001**.


chiu jiayan

Sentosa, Parade Square
26 - 27 October 2001 (2 nights)
7pm - 5am

Tickets at
Pre-sold - \$25 (inclusive of island admission fee)
At the gate - \$25 (exclusive of island admission fee)
Students - \$20 (exclusive of island admission fee)
All prices inclusive of face paint and one drink

"Trick or treat" has a new definition here at this gruesome Sentosa party. Do not expect to be treated to any sweets. Set in **The Graveyard**, at Sentosa's Parade Square, one of the main highlights will be the décor. Making use of dilapidated British stone barracks, a battle-worn World War II setting is brought to life.

Halloween's a time to let your imagination run wild. Dress up as a pirate, to sail the seas or a pop star, dazzling the world.



Sashaying from the small screen's *My Genie* to the big screen's *One Leg Kicking*, she has made us sit up and take notice. **Elissa Chia** chats with rising sensation **Fiona Xie** and throws light on the dawn of her acting career.

my genie
in a bottle

"Hi! Sorry I'm late," said a vivacious Fiona Xie, as she charged into the conference room. After a long one-and-a-half hour wait, **hype** discovered why this pixie-faced 19-year-old newcomer was voted one of 8 Days' most likely to get on next year's list of Asia's 20 most beautiful stars.

The last few evening rays shining through the glass dome ceilings of the Annex Building accentuated her svelte figure. Fiona captured TV audiences with her innocence and vibrance in Channel 8's lighthearted Mandarin sitcom, *My Genie* and her English drama debut as a pitiful comfort woman in *A War Diary*, which she started filming in February.

From the way Fiona managed to speak in *My Genie*, no one could guess that this former Elite model can barely utter a coherent sentence in Mandarin without her script. In fact, the little "genie" was somewhat apprehensive of her playful, childish role when she first clinched the part. She found it rather embarrassing when she thought of what her peers would think of her.

However, she declared, "Hey, if I want to be an actress, I have to be professional about it. No matter what role. No matter how ugly it makes me look, no matter how bad it portrays me as. It is my job to portray the character well."

She noted, "I have to take it [in] good stride as well. It makes me think more." Undeniably, she enjoys what she is doing now and seeks to better herself by accepting challenging roles.

Fiona plays Lim Kay Tong's daughter and Mark Lee's dream girl in Eric Khoo's upcoming soccer comedy movie, *One Leg Kicking*, which depicts the sport that has become an island-wide obsession.

"The character I play is someone who stands up for her morals, and fulfils her dreams. I am the contrasting role in *One Leg Kicking* - everyone else is wacky and over-the-top, I'm more real-life."

She thoroughly enjoyed the movie-making experience but was not totally satisfied with her contribution to the production. "Of course, to be very honest, I wasn't able to participate so much in the movie because of my schedule. It was back to back and it was very, very tight, because I was juggling three projects at the same time," she explained. She sometimes has to handle three different shoots in a day.

When asked what was the most difficult barrier she had to overcome as an actress, she admitted, "It was quite a traumatic time when I first started out. More so, because I was dealing with a lot of personal persecution within myself like deciding, 'should I go into this, or should I not?' ...And then I had to deal with time schedule that I never worked before. This is so-called my first job. The pressure that came with it was a bit scary."

So, what made Fiona decide on acting half-way through her studies at Temasek Polytechnic? "I think this is not my final destination. This is something that I



"I'm not encouraging everyone to drop their books and I wouldn't say that I've dropped my books to come here, because I try to be in touch with my academic learning..."

chanced upon, and I'm taking it for the moment ...At the same time, I'm keeping my options in check; I'm continuing to learn. Keeping in touch with my studies as well as not letting go of learning. I think learning is a never-ending process, it doesn't mean that it has to be within the academic level."

She affirmed that the industry has given her hands-on experience in learning life's lessons, such as learning to work with different people, and tapping on the experience of veteran actors. "I'm not encouraging everyone to drop their books," she cautioned. "And I wouldn't say that I've dropped my books to come here, because I try to be in touch with my academic learning [while] exploring other creative parts like acting, for example, and drama."

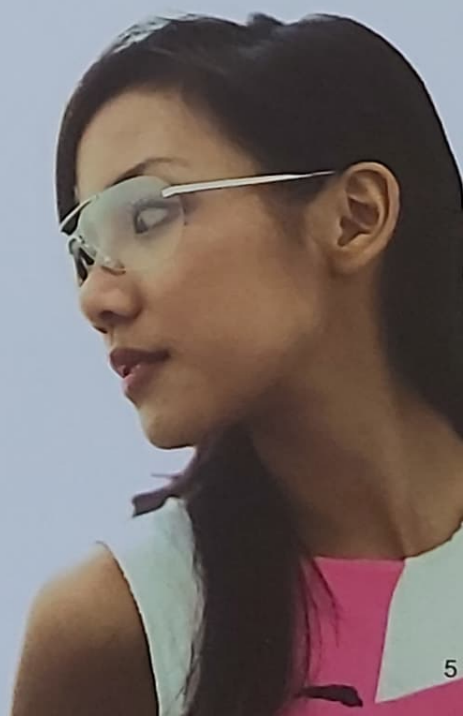
Perhaps the sudden fame triggered a gradual loss of "freedom" for Fiona. The way she carries herself is constantly under the scrutiny of the public eye. She feels that she can't stop people from speaking ill of her. "I think it's really tiring to keep explaining yourself all the time that's why I don't really bother sometimes anymore."

"I'm like, oh really ah? I'm like that? Okay, that's interesting to know. It's quite amusing sometimes how people can be so creative to even think about how I am."

"Of course, you'll get upset sometimes, it's only human to feel that," she said, with some anguish.

"Being misunderstood is very much part of the job ... These things will explain themselves after a while. So, I don't really bother. At the end of the day, have to let it go, and concentrate on what [I'm] doing."

Amidst the glitz and glamour, Fiona keeps afloat in this volatile industry with her self-motivation. The possibility of stardom fading out is certainly something any artiste is conscious of and concerned about. Even so, she reminds herself that, "tomorrow, there's gonna be someone who is coming up too. It's never-ending, so why get caught up with this?"



for the love of busking

A man with a beard, wearing a white t-shirt, is shown from the chest up, looking upwards with his mouth open. A torch with a flame is positioned directly above his mouth, and a small flame is visible inside his mouth. The background is dark and out of focus.

Admit it. Most of us are guilty of walking past street performers, better known as buskers, without giving them so much as a glance, much less a thought. **Chiu Jiayan** finds out about this unusual profession.

Imagine how much concentration busker Roy Payamal puts into his "ghost" act along Orchard Road in the humid Singapore weather: with his face and entire body painted silver, a plastic skeleton in his arms and a poster hanging beside him that says, "As we are born to live, we live only to learn. As we are born to learn, we learn only to love and the only love there is, is a love that lasts forever". Roy remains motionlessly perched on a platform for hours on end as the world passes him by.

This is just one of the many dazzling and enjoyable juggling, miming, or singing acts, among other performances by buskers. However, the only return they get for their hard work is usually just loose change from our pockets.

The term *busker* is the combination of the Old French description of the *troubadour* meaning minstrel, poet, and singer with *basquer* meaning to "prowl". Busking became popular in Rome in the sixth century. As the only form of theatre for the next five centuries, buskers in the form of dancers, jugglers, singers, musicians, storytellers and magicians wandered freely about the streets, providing a form of entertainment to the people who showed appreciation for them with money.

Try telling your friends that you are considering joining the local busking scene.

Lim Chi Minh, 28, a senior research executive, and freelance professional juggler and fire-eater, notices that the typical reaction would be "wah lau, get a job". The courage that buskers take to break free from convention is often ridiculed and frowned upon. Rose Liang, a Sociology lecturer from the National University of Singapore believes that it is the "materialism of society" that discourages youths from considering busking as a career, or even as a side-line.

Ben Matthews, 30, picked up the art of juggling at the age of 15 as a challenge, and went on to actually busk in the streets of England at 20. In Singapore, his passion for busking was so strong that he quit his job as an English teacher to be a full-time professional juggler and unicyclist. In fact, Ben was the first person in Singapore to get a busking licence after the National Arts Council (NAC) lifted its ban on busking in December 1997.

He feels that busking has given him "so much freedom". He can work when he wants to or take the day off according to his moods. Enthusiastically, he said, "I am my own boss, I can do whatever I want!" In addition to busking, Ben performs at functions for a living. He is one of 57 licensed buskers in Singapore, performing mostly in Clarke Quay and Orchard Road.

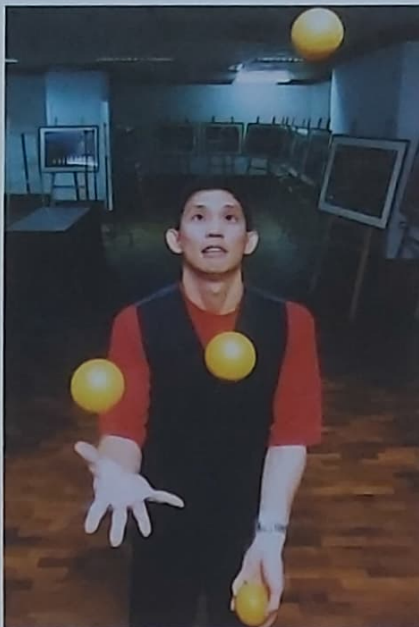
Self-fulfilment is what Ben gets at the end of the day, when he puts up "a really good show to make people laugh". This is what encourages and spurs him on to create all his original acts painstakingly. As the founder of Singapore Jugglers, he gathers

with fellow jugglers in the Youth Park every Friday evening to exchange juggling tricks.

What started out as a gathering of a few fellow jugglers has now become Singapore Jugglers, a group of about a hundred people with a burning interest in juggling. These enthusiasts show Ben that the local busking scene is "just beginning" to take off and it is "good to see busking slowly becoming popular".

The busking conditions in Singapore have been relaxed in an effort to match the NAC's efforts of "enlivening the streets of Singapore with the arts, making the arts accessible to the public and providing more avenues for artistic expression". The NAC welcomes the following busking activities - singing, playing of musical instruments, dance, acrobatic acts, juggling, clowning, portrait painting, caricature drawing, face-painting, or balloon sculpting.

John Lee, 16, the youngest member of



Raffles Junior College held a busking event on Orchard Road in August as part of their 20th anniversary celebrations, and to raise funds for charity. Student Teo Hui Sin, 18, performed a hip-hop dance item choreographed by RJC's Dance Club and felt that "it was a good experience". Being put in the shoes of a busker for the day, she realised that busking "requires a lot of patience and determination, plus a variety of acts to keep the public interested". She noted, "Many members of the public actually seemed to avoid our busking sites rather than coming forward to watch and donate."

Hui Sin said, "I don't think the effort a busker puts in actually pays off because few people bother to stop, watch and give money." However, many people do not know that busking is actually a way of giving back to society. Under NAC's busking regulations, "Buskers will deduct their personal expenses from their earnings, with a proportion of

The term busker is the combination of the Old French description of the *troubadour* meaning minstrel, poet, and singer with *basquer* meaning to "prowl"

Singapore Jugglers says he wants to try busking during the vacation after his 'O' Levels, before entering a tertiary institution. John used to join his friends to play pool or the guitar but felt that he wasn't skilled enough. In an effort "to be different" and to build self-confidence in doing something he was interested in, John picked up juggling. Now he has taught his friends how to juggle as well and he hopes to pursue juggling as a hobby "until I break some world record".

The satisfaction that lies behind juggling is tremendous. Chi Minh, who picked up juggling at 14, said, "Juggling is fun. As Walt Disney once said, it's kind of fun to do the impossible. Learning tricks is one way I push the envelope of my abilities."

It is in this way that sociologist Rose Liang sees busking as "developing of the self" and a form of self-expression, rather than entertainment. Such self-esteem and

confidence is built when appreciation is shown. A successful three-minute act might well have taken months to master, but the determination built through the process is a life-long trait.

Chi Minh added, "You're limited by your own creativity, self-motivation, desire and curiosity in juggling. Apart from the standard tricks you can learn, you can also devise sequences or do strange things that may amuse, shock or whatever."

Ms Liang, also felt that at this moment busking is "not something that dominates the arts scene. It's a marginal activity". This makes busking seem as if it is lacking "character". Koh Wee Lee, 25, a graduate from NUS who was the President of the NUS Juggling Club exclaimed, "my parents will kill me!" when asked what their response would be if he were to pursue a busking career.

their remaining earnings given to charity". It can be any amount, to a charity of their choice. This is a requirement from NAC if buskers "wish to re-apply for a busking licence in future".

One challenge for buskers in Singapore is to deal with the misperceptions that people have of them. Loh Koah Fong, the co-ordinator of Singapore Jugglers said, "A number of the buskers here are disabled... out of pity, people tend to give more to the disabled, who should be more in need. When able-bodied buskers perform, people would think they are out of a regular job and now working the streets for money."

In reality, buskers are earnest professional artistes who have challenged conventional notions of career choices. Pause the next time you walk past a busker and give a thought to the hard work, courage and most of all, passion behind the performance.



The 5th Singapore River Buskers Festival

Come November this year, the thriving stretch along the Singapore River will have more to offer than booze and boogie. Well, you'll probably still get that, but throw in about 20 international street performers in a nine-day long busking act, and you get Asia's second biggest street performing festival, after Japan.

Yup, the Singapore River Buskers Festival (SRBF) has joined the little band of "fests" on our busy shores - after our annual arts fest, film fest and writer's fest, the 5th SRBF is set to ignite the Singapore River with a varied repertoire of, among others, acrobatic stunts, puppeteering, musical performances, magic shows and stand-up comedy.

Gwyndara International is the event organiser which kicked off the first SRBF in '97 with the vision of making Singapore an international entertainment hub. This year, together with the Singapore Tourism Board, the organiser is bringing back the same nifty street performances, along with the same enthusiasm, talent and passion for busking.

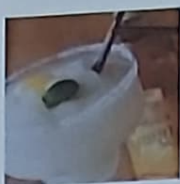
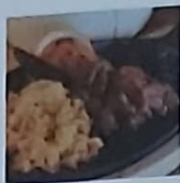
The 5th Singapore River Buskers Festival is set to hit town from 17 to 25 November, starting daily from 6.30pm to 10.30pm. Participating venues include Clarke Quay, Robertson Walk and Riverside Point.

jean tan guanjie

cafe iguana



30 Merchant Rd, #01-03 Riverside Point. Tel: 236 1275
Open Monday to Wednesday from 12pm to 1am; Thursday, Friday
and eve of Public Holidays from 12pm to 3am; Saturday from
11am to 3am; and Sunday from 11am to 1am



pictures courtesy of cafe iguana

Café Iguana proclaims itself to be "the first contemporary Mexican restaurant in Singapore". There is a fine line between Tex-Mex food (lots of cheese and sauces) and traditional Mexican cooking (lots of meat). Café Iguana aims to educate patrons on Mexican dining by luring them into its fuchsia-walled domain.

The food is reason enough to head to this restaurant-cum-bar – its charming American chef (who has cooked for Bill Clinton), whips up a delectable menu of sizzling beef fajitas, juicy sea scallops, and spicy salsa. An ideal starter would be the tequila prawns quesadillas (\$13.95) – six soft tacos topped with melted cheese and vegetable bits on tequila-seared prawns. Chilli-phobics would find salvation in the pan-roasted chicken (\$21.95), a simple affair that's only slightly spicy and served with a generous portion of peppery mashed potatoes. *Bueno!*

If food is secondary, select your poison from the four-metre high wine rack that contains over 130 types of tequila, priced between \$8.75 to \$17.95. Chill out with a Strawberry Margarita (\$9.75) and enjoy the sparkling beauty of Singapore River by night.

Si, the Iguana beckons.

jean tan guanjie

hype finds solace and savouries

Colourfully vandalised, Fatt Daddy's Rib Shack screams abandon. Patrons are encouraged to deface the furniture – be it with minuscule doodles or colossal spray art. The franchise exudes an affable ambience, from the scuffed pool table lounging behind the bar to the warm lighting and mahogany fixtures.

Fatt Daddy's Rib Shack offers American fare. It boasts a myriad of dishes ranging from \$7 to \$20 including chef specialties such as quarter-smoked chicken with chicken chipolata sausage. Also a specialty is fresh chicken rubbed with Daddy's special seasoning, slowly smoked over hickory wood with homemade barbeque sauce. If its service and milieu are not reason enough to visit the shack, its food might tip the scale. **hype** recommends you try the chipolata sausage which is stuffed with large chunks of succulent meat instead of the usual bland, minced concoction. Be forewarned though, the chipolata is more filling than your run-of-the-mill sausage!

Aside from Fatt Daddy's distinguishing graffiti factor, its welcoming atmosphere encourages an "unselfconscious" relaxation. All that is missing for a complete tune-out session are coconut trees and lounge chairs.

grace jadyen cheng

fatt daddy's



No. 9 Raffles Boulevard, #01-75 Millenia Walk. Tel: 333 0059
Open weekdays from 11am to 12am; Saturday from 12pm to 12am;
and Sunday from 12am to 10pm



pictures by grace jadyen cheng

happy daze



11 Maju Avenue, Serangoon Gardens. Tel: 285 2885
Open Monday to Thursday and Sunday from 12pm to 1am, and
Friday and Saturday from 12pm to 3am



pictures by louis kwok

Walking into Happy Daze, the latest sidewalk deli, is as though we had just stepped into someone's home and demanded a meal from them.

This humble retro café is the closest you will ever get to the disco era of the 70's.

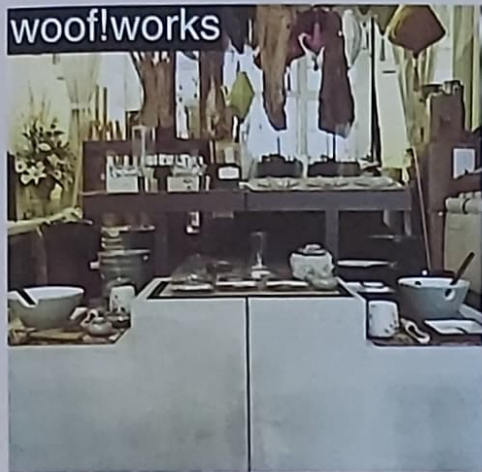
Happy Daze offers homely respite from urban hustle whilst you lounge in the comfort of chunky armchairs. From funky faux-fur chairs to frosted glass lamps and orange-lit clocks, everything is for sale; take your pick and turn your home into a 70's shrine.

In keeping with its homely ambience, the food is as comforting as Mum's cooking (or what Mum's not cooking). The spicy mackerel roe otah-otah (at \$1.20 per piece) packs a punch, though it comes off as rather oily for a grilled dish. The buttered kaya toast (\$1.30) tempts even the staunchest diet freak and spells competition for the signature Killiney household favourite. A bonus for the health conscious, the refreshing lettuce with lime and lettuce (\$4.50) is sure to please even the alfalfa sprout-noshing hypochondriac.

Judging by the crowd of casually clad yuppies hanging out happily at the café, regression has never looked so cool.

tristan chan jin wei

woof!works



11 Unity Street, #01-06, Robertson Walk. Tel: 887 0010
Open Monday to Thursday from 11am to 10pm; Friday and Saturday from 11am to 2am; and Sunday from 11am to 7pm



pictures by lous kwok

Rent a space, paint the walls, create a standard menu, and voila, that's another five-bucks-per-coffee café-clone that is as bland as the latte they serve.

Don't despair, though, because for every pathetic excuse of a café, there might actually be an original one like **Woof!Works Gallery**. The concept of the café-cum-gallery changes whenever inspiration hits: the fastest overhaul took place in three weeks, although the designers usually let their work stay up for three months.

The biggest draw about **Woof!Works** is the food. The local dishes by the Peranakan chef are enough to warrant a second visit. A clear favourite is the Nonya Ponteh Ayam (\$6.80) – succulent chicken simmered in mushroom and black bean sauce. While you're at it, order the spicy beef rendang (\$6.80) as well. The beef is tender, and the sauce excellent, teasing the taste buds with a hint of basil, chili and lemon grass. Finish up with a Longan Berry Freeze (\$5.20) and an apple crumble (\$3.50). Lean back on the velvety cushions, and let satisfaction envelope you like the sunshine pouring through the French windows.

jean tan guanjie

in the heart of our metropolis

On the top floor of Novena Square is a little-known garden terrace. Not a real garden terrace, but a café-cum-restaurant that looks like one. **Skylight Garden** is designed to look like an open-air garden. It has a huge tree for a backdrop and dangling creepers for its interior design. Unlike most places, **Skylight Garden** has no properly defined entrance – further emphasising its open space concept.

The food served is mainly Italian and French cuisine. One recommendation is the The SkyLight Seafood Suite. Dressed in Thai sauce, this dish is a tasty mix of seafood and capellini pasta. Another dish worth trying is SkyLight Codfish Caviar – baked codfish balls served in crispy pasta shaped like a basket.

Although expensive (\$20 each), the dishes are good value-for-money. The four varieties of set meals consist of soup, pasta and coffee or tea.

The restaurant's posh interior may look a bit intimidating on first sight, but once you enter, your fears will subside. With the staff's smiling faces and efficient service, **Skylight Garden** offers a pleasant dining experience.

vaijanthi kupusamy

skylight garden

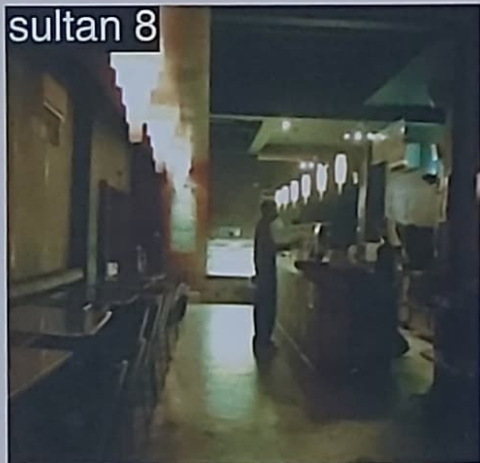


238 Thomson Road, Novena Square # 03-23/25. Tel: 258 0777
Open daily from 11.30am to 10pm



pictures by lous kwok

sultan 8



8 Mohamed Sultan Road, #01-01. Tel: 737 5181
Open Monday to Thursday from 10am to 3am; Friday and Saturday from 10am to 6am; closed on Sunday and Public Holidays



pictures by lous kwok

You've just knocked back a few rounds of Irish draughts, chugged down a couple of Moscow Mules and squeezed the living daylight out of your peeling wallet. It's three in the morning and you are struck with one of Man's basest needs – hunger.

Quashing that hunger has just gotten more convenient with **Sultan 8**. It boasts a trendy, cyber-aged décor which may put some people off as haughty or too genteel. But allay those fears – prices across the board are surprisingly affordable, considering its precinct.

Dishing out a mix of continental and local food, diners will be spoiled for choice. Be it the lamb chop or the peppery mee rebus, **Sultan 8's** culinary standards are right up there with the best. Dining is usually accompanied by mellow, chill-out music, which does well to whet the appetite or complement a conversation.

So, when the late night drinking spree hits home and the stomach is growling for a refuel, head on down to **Sultan 8** for that spot of supper and while you're at it, pull up a seat for that terrible hangover.

kenny tan



The Fast and the Furious

If you watched Sylvester Stallone's *Driven*, and enjoyed the high speed, heart-thumping scenes, then you will surely be fascinated by the blazing velocity and adrenaline-pumping stunts in *The Fast and the Furious*.

Directed by Rob Cohen (*Daylight*), the movie screams an endless stream of flashy cars, loud music and, of course, throngs of cheering groupies at the late night races. With the combination of turbochargers, nitrous oxide and computer-controlled fuel injections to boost his cars, the notorious Dominic (Vin Diesel) wins due respect, as well as money from illegal racing. Furthermore, Dominic and his gang are heavily involved in a chain of trailer hijackings, and the FBI is hot on their heels.

Brian (Paul Walker), an undercover cop, is on a mission to gain Dominic's trust and ultimately bring him to justice. As expected, Brian falls in love with Dominic's beautiful sister Mia (Jordana Brewster), and in the end has to choose between love and the call of duty.

The Fast and the Furious delivers what the title promises. However, too little is done to energise the two-dimensional plot. Much of the dialogue is too superficial to give depth and build the audience's impression of the characters.

Credit must be given, however, to the supporting actors and actresses such as Rick Yune (who plays a rich Chinese brat) and Michelle Rodriguez (Dominic's girlfriend), who significantly fill occasional awkward silences in certain scenes.

The Fast and the Furious offers two hours of excitement and fun, promising enough nerve-wracking action, coupled with beautiful cars and pretty faces, despite a predictable and disappointing plot. Opens 27 September 2001.

george fu

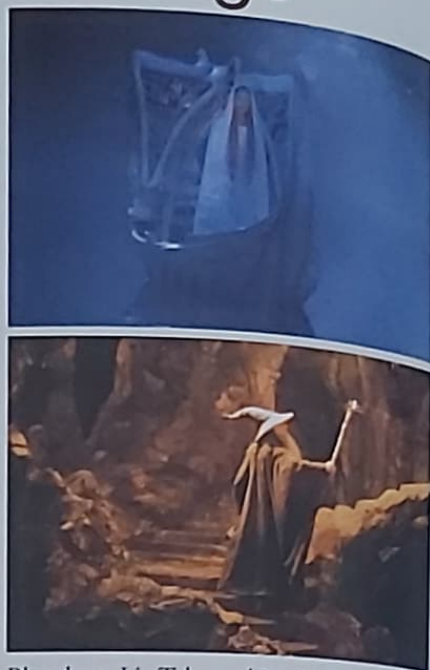
The Lord of the Rings

"Power can be held in the smallest of things." And this could be the next big thing since the 1970s *Star Wars* trilogy. Based on the 1949 trilogy by J. R.R. Tolkien, this long-anticipated movie is a stirring story about courage and the battle against the malevolent Dark Lord Sauron.

Elijah Wood is Frodo, a young hobbit who was given a magic ring by his cousin, Bilbo Baggins (Ian Holm). Soon, Frodo discovers the ring was the cause of a terrible war against Sauron, who created the ring to control everything in Middle-earth. Sauron knows where the ring is and vows to get it back. Fearing that history will repeat itself, Frodo leaves his hometown on an epic quest to destroy the cursed ring.

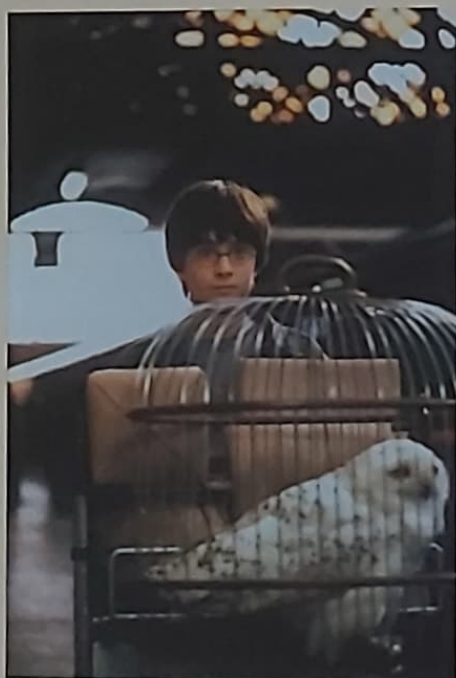
In a first-ever gargantuan cinematic endeavour, director Peter Jackson has worked with the same cast and crew and consecutively shot all three films. *The Fellowship of the Ring*, part one of the trilogy, opens on 19 December this year. The next two sequels, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* will be released in December 2002 and 2003 respectively.

With a shining cast including Cate



Blanchett, Liv Tyler and Ian McKellen, the fantasy tale that has become a classic and spawned a cult following of generations of fans worldwide is the One thing to rule them all. Opens 20 December 2001.

Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone



Be transported to a realm so original and ingenious, it can only come out of someone's exceptional imagination – that of author J.K. Rowling.

Based on the first of her phenomenally popular children's novels, *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone* is the much-awaited film millions of children and adults have

been looking forward to. The show chronicles the adventures and obstacles that our young accidental hero goes through as he embarks on a journey to become a wizard. Harry Potter (Daniel Radcliffe) is joined by his two best friends, Hermione (Emma Watson) and Ron (Rupert Grint).

Wonderfully recreated to bring out the fantasy of the magical world of wizardry, close attention is paid to details of the costumes, locations, settings and actors.

Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry boasts a castle with sprawling grounds, a magnificent Grand Hall for the Sorting ceremony and feast, twisting turns and corridors and a dark forbidden forest.

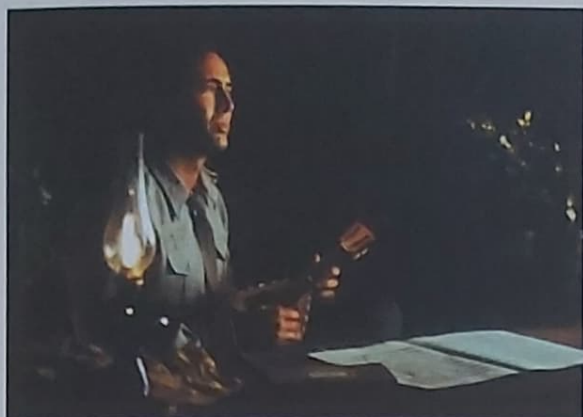
Other than Daniel Radcliffe who fits the role of Harry Potter snugly, Hedwig, the snowy messenger owl and Hagrid the gentle-giant of a gamekeeper, are also characters that appear exactly how readers imagine them to be.

Look out for the exciting Quidditch match, a game that is our equivalent of the World Cup, except that it is conducted in mid-air and involves a velocity-defying golden ball.

Expect to see flying broomsticks, a monstrous three-headed dog and bizarre-looking characters as well as haunting music that adds to the mystical atmosphere and setting. Opens 22 November 2001.

christina lai

Captain Corelli's Mandolin



Forget about leafing through boring textbooks when you can watch history unfold on the big screen instead. A love story adds that poignant touch. Following the likes of *Pearl Harbor*, *Captain Corelli's Mandolin* is a romantic war epic based on the best-selling novel by Louis de Bernieres.

Set in World War II, the Italians have invaded the tranquil Greek island of Cephallonia. Captain Antonio Corelli (Nicholas Cage), an Italian soldier and mandolin player, eventually wins over the

wary locals with his merry-making ways. He falls in love with Pelagia, played by the beautiful Spanish actress Penelope Cruz. The brutalities of war resurface when the Italians are forced to cooperate with the Greek partisans to battle against the Germans. Uncertainty and despair abounds when Corelli has to leave the island, possibly for good.

Filmed on location where the actual events took place, you'll be treated to a visual feast of the breathtaking scenery and the Cephallonian culture, which is vividly brought to life.

Academy Award winner Nicholas Cage turns in another strong performance. Passionately playing his mandolin, Cage deftly demonstrates a range of emotions, from fun-loving naivete to a seriousness engendered by war and his heartbreaking romance with Pelagia.

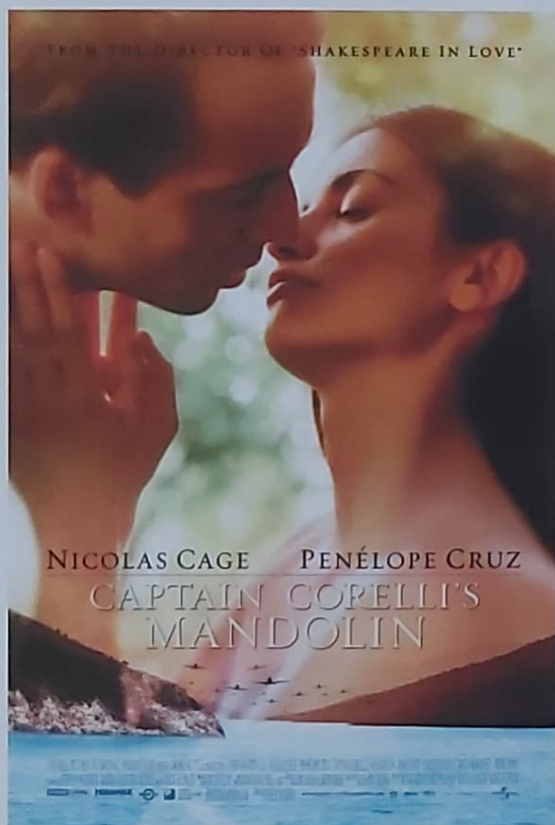
Cruz is stirring and intense in her role as Pelagia. However there seems to be a lack of chemistry between her and Cage, who are



cast together for the first time.

Directed by John Madden (*Shakespeare in Love*), you can expect an emotional roller-coaster ride.

leau yhin lynn



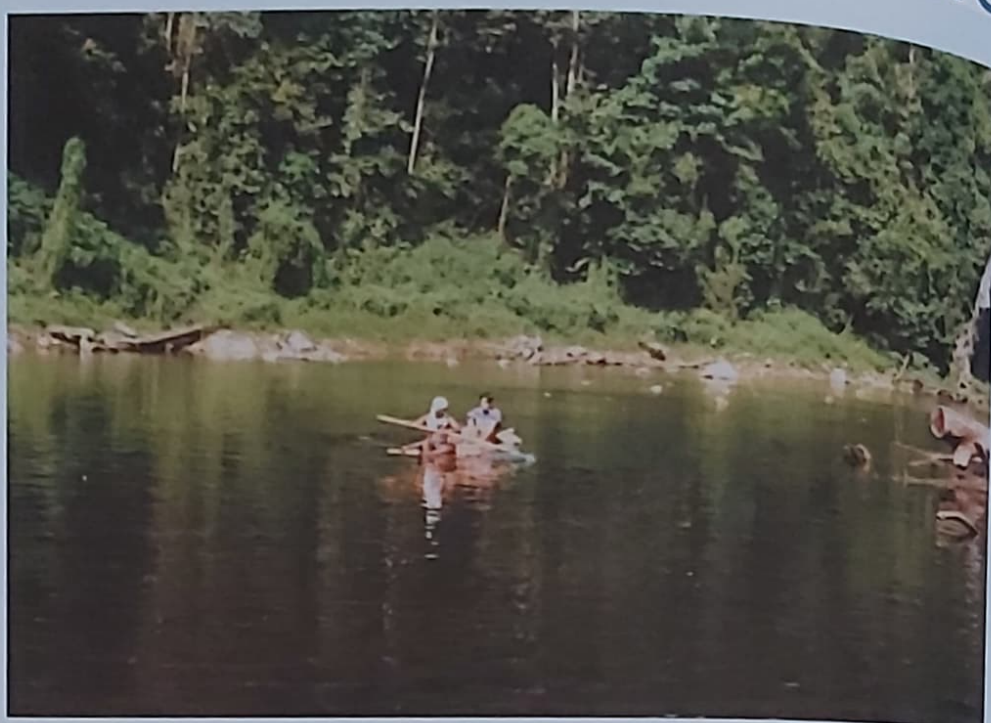
WIN!

Be the first 10 to tell us where the movie was filmed and win a pair of tickets to *Captain Corelli's Mandolin*. The next 10 will each win a movie poster. Email your answer, full name, IC number and contact number to hypemagazine@visto.com by 18 October 2001.

O p e n s 1 1 O c t o b e r 2 0 0 1

In the Deep of Lake Placid

So, you think you've been there. Done that. Malaysia holds zero attraction to you because – yawn! – what's *new*? **Jean Tan Guanjie** speaks up for Tasik Kenyir.



Due north of our tiny red dot of an island lies a neighbour. Strictly civil political relationship aside, we frequently visit this neighbour for cheap buys (the annual Mega Sale), hilltop holidays (strawberry farm, casino) and yummy food (asam laksa, hor fun). Complacently, we forget that this neighbour is *big*, thus capable of a few hidden tourist attractions that are uncommercialised and underrated. Tasik Kenyir, nestled in the inner reaches of Terengganu, is proof of that.

Erm, Tasik Kenyir? Where huh?

Whip out your atlas. Terengganu, whose jungle-clad peaks make it relatively cut off from the rest of the peninsula, is one of the east coast states of West Malaysia. Tasik Kenyir is a huge artificial lake – the largest in Southeast Asia in fact. Situated in the heart of the rainforest, Tasik Kenyir contains 14 waterfalls and about 340 tiny islands. Sentosa would be lost in this cradle of flora and fauna.

"It's like being in Brazil," gushed Pamela Neo, a one-time visitor. "Like the Amazon!" Well, maybe not. But compared to the miniscule nature reserves we have and the hectic pace of life in our concrete jungle, getting lost in the wildlife does seem like a treat.

Five-Star Hotels?

Be prepared for a less than pampered, luxurious stay if that is what you were hoping. Other than the swanky golf resort, where prices are way beyond student budgets, the only accommodation available is houseboats and floating chalets. However, to avoid the monsoon season, take your Kenyir holiday anytime from February to October.

If you're a student on a shoestring budget, then the floating Little Traveller's Resort, locally known as Uncle John's Resort, is a good choice. Operated by John Looser, the Little Traveller's Resort is located in a lagoon near the Lasir Waterfall. The best thing this floating chalet offers, other than its 12 cosy rooms (four beds in each) are its warm owners: Uncle and Auntie John.

"The three-hour boat ride to the chalet had made me sea-sick. I was puking and feeling really bad. Auntie John immediately helped me clean up, got me a cup of hot tea and told me to rest. She didn't even know my name yet!" Claire Teo, who visited Tasik Kenyir on a school trip several years ago, enthuses about the plump woman who spoke perfect English and fussed around her visitors like a mother hen.

Claire added, "Uncle John was a quiet man who was always smiling and asking, 'You want fish? For dinner? I go catch fish?' They made us feel at home immediately, although we were in the middle of a lake that seemed like another world to us."

The chalet, though humble, has everything you need. Three bathrooms. Twin beds. Clean sheets. The only luxury item is an old radio.

"At first it was quite a shock to see that the chalet has no television and no fans. I didn't even see a telephone. But as I later found out, the chalet was only a place to eat and sleep. In Auntie John's words, everything you need to keep you happy is out at the lake," Claire recalled of her nine-day holiday with the friendly couple.

"My only complaint is how the entire chalet will rock if someone runs on the deck. I felt quite insecure actually, like if I fall off my bunk at night the place will sink!" laughed Roy Yuan, who went to Tasik Kenyir with his girlfriend and another couple last year. "But the food! Auntie John is the best cook. Everything is fresh. Uncle John would catch the fish from the lake and Auntie John will fry it immediately. Heavenly!" drooled Roy.

Judging by the photographs of happy customers posted on the recreation area at the inn's spacious deck, Uncle John's Resort – unstable structure and mosquitoes notwithstanding – is popular.

Nice view, nice place. But what's there to do?

You're at a lake that seems to stretch for miles. In the distance, you hear the distinct torrents of waterfalls. Treacherous rapids and rivers beckon.

Back in Singapore, we have the so-so beaches, and a dismal Sentosa lagoon. Here in Tasik Kenyir, you are surrounded by 38,000 hectares of sparkling water fenced in by lush scenery. What's there to do? Let's break it down for you.



Waterfalls

Sunlight pierces through the dense jungle, surges down from the jagged lines of a mountain as glittering water cascades down in walls – Tasik Kenyir has 14 of such natural beauties.

Lasir Waterfall is a scene right out of a travel book – the steep, vertical rush of water plunges to join a series of five rapids. Rent a kayak (cost included with the chalet package) and kayak right up to the waterfall.

Then there are the equally beautiful Tembat, Pertang and Saok waterfalls; Saok is famous for the rocky, gruelling climb up the waterfall itself. Enjoy the sweet triumph after you have overcome the challenging terrain. Sit by the edge of the waterfall and listen to the shrill cries of the crickets and other insects in the hot afternoon sun. Definitely an experience straight out of *Survivor*; and not for the faint-hearted.

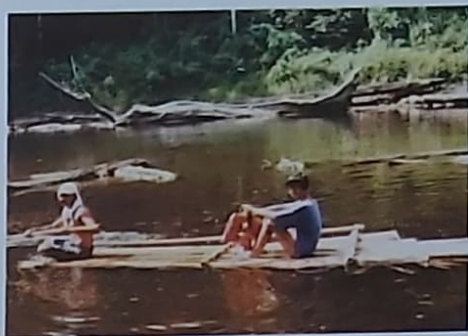


Jungle and Water Trekking

If you're up for a nature trek, Uncle John is happy to dispatch an experienced (albeit *really* fierce looking) guide to take you through the maze-like trails in the rainforest. Although jungle trekking through the dense foliage on uneven ground does not exactly make it a petting zoo, the adventure seldom goes beyond two hours, and most visitors are rewarded by the experience of the wilderness.

The tropical jungle shrouding the lake is estimated to be thousands of years old, and in this untouched world, crystal clear streams merge into the lake, towering trees stretch into the sky, and the lines of wild flowers grow unheeded on the hillside.

Water trekking is basically a downhill hike in the waist-high waters of the lake. And while you amble clumsily through the waters, watch with exasperation as skinny little kids half your age deftly manoeuvre the same trek at twice your speed.



Water Sports

Uncle John is not just good at spearing fish for your dinner. He also has a personal boathouse and rows of canoes, kayaks, paddleboats and dinghys tied to the resort. He will be glad to speed you around the lake on a banana boat, teach you how to canoe or take you out on a raft; while Auntie John makes sure you're safe with a lifejacket on. Budget check: for any tour package, non-motor water sports like canoeing or kayaking, are free-of-charge.

And if you're feeling really, really brave, do what the locals do for fun: shoot the rapids, or jump into the lake à la Tarzan from the midpoint after climbing up the side of a waterfall.

Caves

One of the few less strenuous activities is visiting the limestone caves. Bewah and Taat are two such cavern formations that are about an hour and a half away from the resort by boat.

"I didn't want to go look at some old caves at first," Roy admitted. "But Uncle John persuaded us to go, sort of like paying ...homage, something every visitor did. So we went. The scenery on the way there was great, and we had a nice picnic by the caves. I took some cool pictures. So, yeah, I'm glad I went."

'Nuff said.

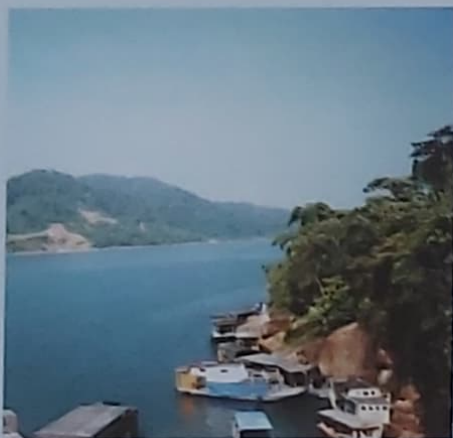
Nothing bad meh?

Despite the picturesque scenery, friendly locals and relatively comfortable living conditions, first-time visitors usually have difficulties dealing with the standards of hygiene and safety in such a remote area. It helps to remember that holidaying in Tasik Kenyir is more rough-it-out than live-it-up. Having been there personally, the hygiene issue is more or less subjective, and tolerable.

"We're not sure how clean the water is although we were in the water so much. I remember using the boat's toilet when we were going to the waterfall, and I realise the 'toilet' was really a hole leading to the very waters we were supposed to swim in!" Claire remembered. "It disturbed me a for a while, but I just took it as a part of the entire Lake Kenyir experience."

Safety was another issue. Jungle and water trekking are done at your own risk as no protective gear is provided. All water sports require lifejackets, but you can forget about lifeguards or whistles.

"I took part in the water trek and realised my guide was a 16-year-old kid," mused Pamela, who holidayed at the same resort two years ago. "It made me quite uneasy. We followed the trail and he was in front, but no guide was behind and I kept thinking 'If I fall, how? Will he be able to save me?'"



Be enchanted by simple pleasures

Tasik Kenyir may not always come up as the ideal holiday destination, but when it comes to being different and affordable, past visitors would usually give a really big smile, pull out their photo albums and say, "Yes, go!"

I know I would, and I have been there, eating Auntie John's wonderful sambal fried fish, tumbling down rapids and trekking

through the same waters.

And my best memory was sitting down at the edge of the lake, with my feet dangling in the sun-warmed waters, and watching the sun set over the emerald skyline of this charming, isolated world.

Itinerary

Day 1

- Meet at Kenyir Dam and transfer to Uncle John's Resort by boat (about 45 minutes)/ Arrival/ Check-in
- Lunch/Cruising to Lasir Waterfall/ Tea break/ Free activities (non-motor watersports - canoeing, kayak, paddle boat, swimming).
- Dinner/Fishing around the chalet.

Day 2

- Breakfast/Boat trip to Lasir Waterfall for jungle trekking (3 to 4 hours)
- Packed Lunch/Back to resort/ Leisure (canoeing, swimming, fishing)/Tea
- Dinner

Day 3

- Breakfast/Leisure (swimming, fishing)/ Transfer back to Kenyir Dam

Rates:

3-day, 2-night tour package: RM 250

Includes:

1. Accommodation at Uncle John's Resort
2. Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner/coffee & tea
3. Return boat transfer
4. Sightseeing trips
5. Guide

Resort Information:

Uncle John's Resort
PO Box 117
20710 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu
Malaysia

Tel: 09-6229564

Fax: 09-6229369

www.unclejohnsresort.com

Your Personal Guide to packing for Tasik Kenyir

1. Pack Lightly and Practically

You're going to be roughing it out, so forget shirts or pretty sundresses. The practical get-up here is cotton T-shirts, singlets, bermudas, and trek pants. Throw in a jacket in case it gets chilly at night. Other must-haves include a camera, torch, insect repellent, caps and extra socks.

2. Comfy Footwear

Basically, you need a good pair of trek shoes and comfortable pair of sandals - flip-flops are too flimsy. Sports sandals are ideal for water trekking and casual wear at the chalet, while the trek shoes will come in handy for land trekking.

3. Medication

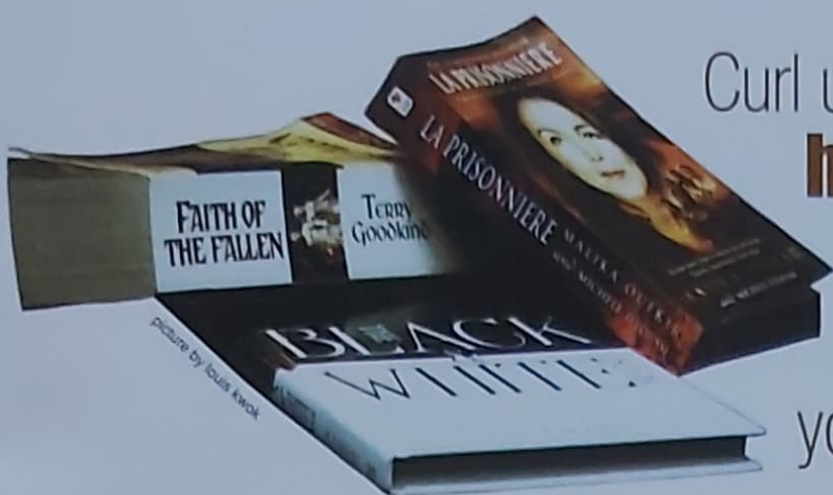
You'll be travelling a lot: the coach ride to Terengganu is about 14 hours, and the boat ride to the resort takes about three. If you have motion sickness, or if you want to safeguard against it, then stock up on over-the-counter garlic pills and arm yourself with that trusty bottle of medicated oil. Also, pack a personal first aid kit of plasters, antiseptic cream, sun-block lotion and charcoal tablets. Just to be on the safe side, you may want to take anti-malaria pills before you go.

4. Snacks

Sorry, but Auntie John doesn't provide room service, so lug along a pack or two of biscuits to satisfy night hunger pangs. And sweets (like Hacks) are a good way of preventing those stomach somersaults during those lengthy boat rides.

5. Miscellaneous

Sunglasses, a book for the bus ride, Vitamin C tablets, and wet tissues are some optional items to consider. Now you're all set for the wilderness! Have fun!



Curl up in a cosy corner as **hype** recommends three literary treats to stir the tastebuds of your imagination.

Faith of the Fallen

by Terry Goodkind

"Freedom requires effort if it is to be won and vigilance if it is to be maintained. People just don't value freedom until it's taken away." – Richard Rahl

The sixth fantasy in The Sword of Truth series, Faith of the Fallen brings readers back to the New World, ravaged by troops of the Old World Order and bent on uniting the two lands. A New World in the clutches of the Order is about to enter a dark period of malevolence and enslavement under the iron fists of Jagang the Just, the ruthless ruler of the Old World.

Standing in the way of Jagang's conquest is Richard Rahl, champion of the New World – Seeker and stoic war wizard. Only he can thwart Jagang's evil ambitions and save his homeland.

Author Terry Goodkind is a brilliant writer with a creative, inventive mind. In a literary genre such as fantasy, it is always going to be easy to run away with perplexing ideas and bamboozle the eventual story line; to get carried away and leave readers baffled. Goodkind however, has masterfully packaged his stories so well that there is nary a loose end.

And even if interested readers have failed to get hold of the previous five books, reading the sixth on its own is just as satisfying and comprehensible. Faith of the Fallen can exist as a single read or be pieced together with the rest and enjoyed in their entirety.

The theme of freedom is predominant in Faith of the Fallen and Goodkind has done well in depicting the two ends of the spectrum – the rulers and the ruled; the masters and the servants. Readers can see into the minds, feel the taint of evil men and commiserate with the peasantry – all so real, so lifelike. *Available at Borders.*

kenny tan

La Prisonniere

by Malika Oufkir

Since the age of four, Malika was adopted by the king of Morocco as a companion to his daughter. She grew up locked away in the palace and court of Rabat. Living away from her family, Malika was not free to choose anything she wanted in life. The king decided everything for her.

When Malika turned 19 in 1972, her father, who was the king's closest aide, was arrested and executed for attempting to assassinate the king. Although innocent, Malika was imprisoned, along with her beloved mother and five younger siblings under brutal conditions in a desert jail.

They were locked up with rats and given mouldy and rotten food. Hunger was always an issue and "hunger turns [them] into monsters". Their attempt to escape by digging a tunnel was successful for only five days. 20 years later, Malika was free to begin a new life, yet the memories of the past could never be erased.

Filled with Malika's painful memories, this real-life account takes on a serious style and provides vivid descriptions of her experiences and surroundings. It is interesting to read about Malika's portrayal of the indulgent culture of "East meets West" in the royal family.

The start of the book, filled with information about her family background might seem slow-paced to the reader. However, Malika offsets that by narrating this heart-wrenching story with such detail that one can feel the pain and anguish from the loss of freedom she experienced throughout her life. It is also an inspiring story about the will to survive and finally to taste freedom. *Available at MPH.*

chiu jiayan

The Black & White Book

by R.P. Moore

Do you see the cup half-filled or half-empty? R.P. Moore seeks to present you with different perspectives to life by sharing excerpts of real situations. The collection of stories and anecdotes are personal, having been drawn from Moore's life experiences as well as those of his close friends.

Aiming to convey the extremes of life's situations, all left and right pages are printed against black or white backgrounds – positive situations are presented against white and negative against black. The powerfully emotive language Moore adopts further augments this minimalist approach.

Moore coaxes his readers out of their comfort zones, to view the world out of the proverbial box. He brings up situations that the layman identifies with, and sheds light on the circumstances that give rise to the incident. In one of his shortest dialectics, Moore writes "Fear" on a black backdrop, and on the opposite white page, "Love". As readers are presented with both sides of a situation, they garner an understanding and therefore, patience.

The book's content flutters between being down-to-earth and fantastical – it is presented unassumingly to seem childishly innocent and yet deals with painfully real facets of the world. In seeking to generate empathy and compassion on many planes of being – forgiveness of the spirit or acceptance of the psyche, The Black and White Book encourages freedom of the readers' physical, mental and spiritual existence. *Available at Borders.*

grace jadyan cheng

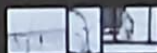


This new section showcases photo essays by our school's student photographers. In this issue, we explore their take on freedom.



Louis Kwok

Death, as an ultimate form of freedom, a release from worldly chaos, an entry to eternal tranquility.





Illumination, that which
dispels the darkness and
leads to freedom.

Diana Cheong



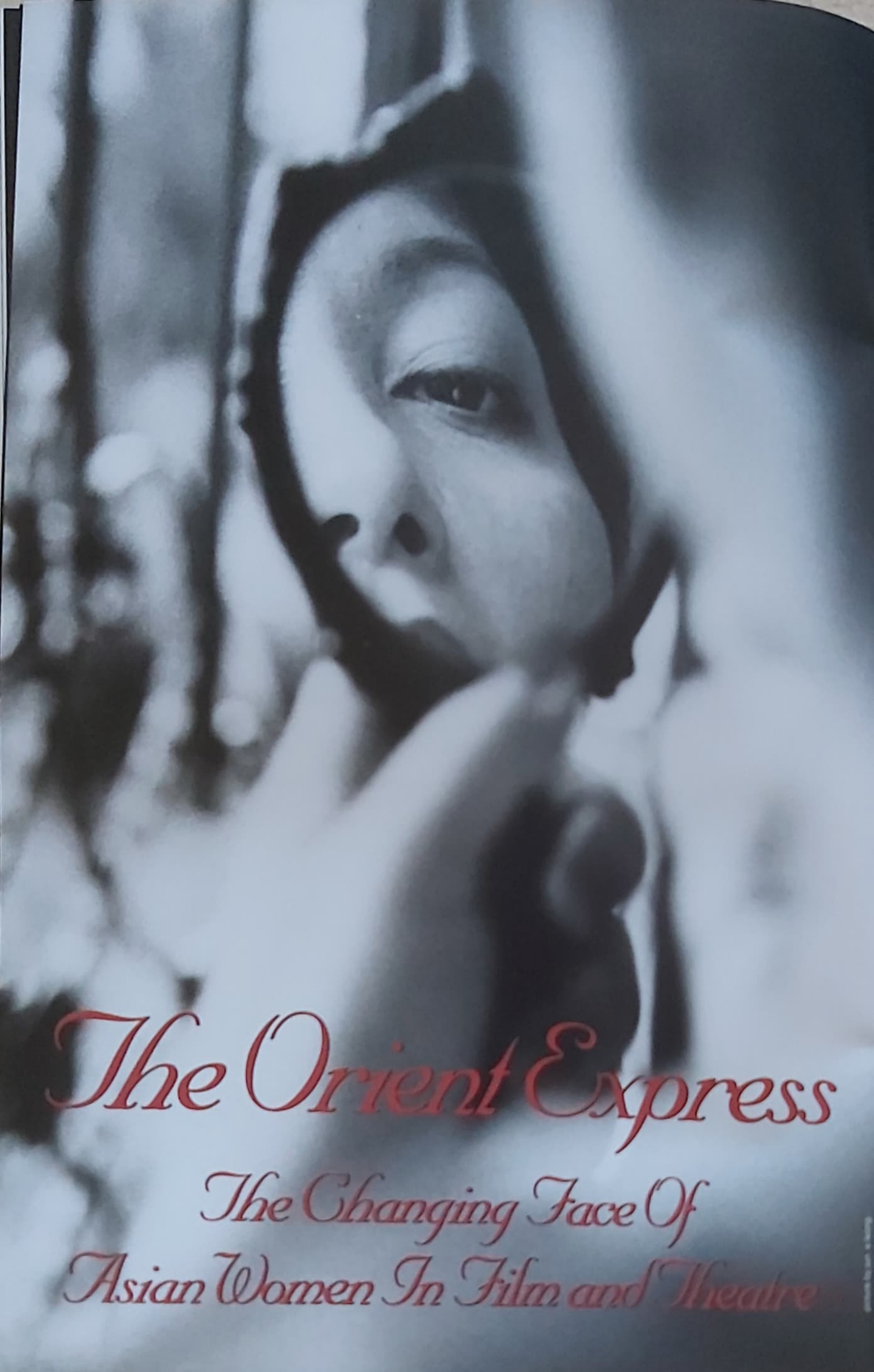
With the limitless territories of the sea come
limitless possibilities and the freedom to dream.

Sheryl Leow



"What a free society offers to the individual is much more
than what he would be able to do if only he were free."
- F.A. Hayek

Melissa Yap



The Orient Express

*The Changing Face Of
Asian Women In Film and Theatre*

Are women free these days to make choices without being bound by the commercial bottomline of well-worn stereotypes? Tristan Chan Jin Wei investigates the challenges local film and theatre actresses face today.

Julia Roberts was a *Pretty Woman* only because she played a hooker. So were Mira Sorvino in *Mighty Aphrodite*, Jennifer Jason Leigh in *Georgia*, Elisabeth Shue in *Leaving Las Vegas* and Sharon Stone in *Casino*, all contenders at the laughable 1996 Oscars. According to Arnold Wayne Jones' *The Envelope Please: The Ultimate Academy Awards Trivia Quizbook*, 44% of Best Actress and Supporting Actress nominees played long suffering wives, girlfriends or molls, and another 29% were bitches, bimbos and you guessed it, whores. Singapore's Annabelle Chong made it to Cannes with her sexcapades reconfigured to become an art form. Is the asset-endowed prostitute the only credible role given to women nowadays?

Western films have long been enamoured of Oriental mysticism – heightened feminine stereotypes of the fragile flower and exotic vacuous face. Cue exhibit nymphs, belles, Suzie Wongs, matriarchs, wide-eyed virgins and kungfu kick-ass chicks. Reeking of east exotica overkill, such films also often feature country girls with pigtails on bicycles, maidens with flower baskets, smoke spirals from incense sticks and

gratuitous Chinese operas in the background. Imperialising images in *Double Happiness* and *The*

Wedding Banquet are also guilty of reducing Asian women to highly-strung secondary props. Think Ming Na's insecure wife in *One Night Stand*, Michelle Yeoh's spy sidekick in *Tomorrow Never Dies*, Zhang Ziyi's docile damsel in *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* and Neo Swee Lin's cunning concubine in *Anna And The King*.

"Hollywood does seem to have a fascination with the East nowadays," Wendy Ng, director of local play *Stone Moon*, says, "However, I don't think many of them are aware that this 'oriental grandeur' is in fact overhyped. I was very amused to see Mandy Moore's new music video that confused Thai and Chinese cultures utterly. To them, all of it was just oriental and it made no difference."

On the upside, Deedee Lynn Magno of *Miss Saigon* elaborates in an earlier

interview with FHM, "The good thing about all this is that more Asian actresses are working...no matter what roles they're getting now, the more Asian faces we have up there, the more this stereotype of Asia is going to be gradually subverted, for sure."

Joan Chen, for example, directed her opus *Xiu Xiu*, which preserved a strong feminine voice despite the prostitute-protagonist, and blew the cruelty of the Cultural Revolution wide open. The mother of re-invention, Joan Chen switched from Taipan actress to credible Hollywood director of *Autumn In New York*. How does an Asian woman director further her artistic visions, without them being foiled by commercial restraints of a male-dominated industry?

The Sent Down Girl: Singaporean Female Stereotypes

Are local productions suggesting only the painfully obvious and dated – that women have no identity beyond the wife, that women need to be thin and beautiful to garner respect and that women

need to be men to survive in this world?

On female stereotypes, Faith Lew, theatre practitioner for non-profit theatre organisation Faith Works commented, "A true stereotype does not have a voice. Such characters often serve as foils to the protagonist, and as not much screen time is dedicated to their stories, they fade into the background, serving merely as plot movers."

Jennifer Paz, theatre actress in *The Fantasticks*, agreed to the resilience of such binding stereotypes in an interview with e-zine *The*

Flying Inkpot, "Stereotypes are here to stay in Singapore and other countries. Actors all over the world can choose to let the stereotype rule them, or choose to work hard to bring stereotypes to true life."

"No character that is well played, whether seemingly stereotyped or not, is to be ashamed of."



Paradise Road: The Path to New Feminine Images

Before tackling the media vernacular, Singaporean women must fight against the uphill battle of dogmatic sexism here. Feminist literature has long opined the state as unfairly patriarchal; despite such patriarchal pressures, a feminist undercurrent in local theatre and film is defining the parameters where these feminist voices may be heard.

Sociology professor in gender studies at the National University of Singapore, Dr Nirmala Purushotam professed in the anthology *Women In Asia: Tradition, Modernity And Globalisation*, "Singaporean women require a blueprint that will involve working with and forging bonds with ourselves, we need to recognize the gossamer threads we may desire are only a web of someone else's construction, a trap." These gossamer threads of patriarchal culture Singaporean women presently contend with have to be unravelled.

The solution is surfacing in a variety of ways. Instead of the standard "mother, daughter or wife" roles that define the modern Singaporean woman, plays are attempting a broad social inquiry into women's identities and the arrested emotional development of Singapore's consciousness.

Deborah Png, a stage thespian, suggests that there is a "fat virgin in every one of us – male, skinny or fat". Four of her works – *Best Foot Forward*, *Mixed Signals*, *BreasTissues* and *The Diary Of A Madwoman* – have helped advance the local women's movement and helped define the Singaporean female persona. All co-produced and directed with playwright



Ovidia Yu, her plays tackled issues such as the severity of breast cancer, trans-sexual surgery, female genital mutilation and the vagaries of femininity. While Yu saw the need to reclaim women's sexuality, stage director and actress Beatrice Chia chose to explore its intricacies.

Chia, stage director and actress in *Triple Nine* and *Happy Belly*, stirred ripples when her controversial adaptation of cult hit, *Shopping And F***ing*, hit local shores after its London premiere. Tired of the proverbial Asian flower stigma and the "Pinkerton syndrome", she views sexuality as a tool of empowerment, not something to be ashamed of.

"A woman portrayed as a sex object can be a strong woman character if she is aware of the power of her sexuality and obviously controls it. This is allowable as a powerful woman; forceful, influential and independent can announce her thriving sexuality. Her power lies not so much in her sexuality but her influence."

Her *Mail Order Brides And Oriental Takeaways* comprised presentations of patriarchal injustices and the plight of the women who suffer as "male order brides" – the antithesis to a woman's right to choose who she should marry. Thus, behind the facade of stunning multimedia images and soft silhouettes are real people – real women with real lives.

"...so-called 'Third World' societies tend to be very conservative, and there is resistance to things like progress for women in most of these societies. Men like to see themselves as still in control."

- Dr Timothy White

Adelina Ong, actress nominee at last year's Life! Theatre Awards for *Postcards From Persephone* and co-founder of Singapore's premier feminist theatre group *Livid Room Productions*, says, "I'm not so sure I agree that there haven't been meaty roles for local women in film. I think there were quite a number of strong women in *12 Storeys*, *Stories About Love* and *A Sharp Pencil*. All look set with strong women."

"On the other hand, there have been so many Western films that have also failed to portray non-stereotypical women. For example, Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone With The Wind* and Penelope Anne Miller in *The Odyssey*." Scarlett O'Hara was reduced to a hapless damsel while Penelope Anne Miller played a needy mistress.

Conversely, film should not elevate social realities into a lofty illusion. Dr Timothy R. White, senior lecturer of film studies at the National University of Singapore, said, "Of course it's not good, but it's largely a function of society; these stereotypes are present throughout society, film did create them. It would be good if movies took the initiative to try to change this, but film is a commercial medium, not a public service."

He also said that limiting women actresses the most is the age factor; it is possible for men to play a variety of roles including sexually attractive and active characters until they are pretty old (think Mel Gibson, Harrison Ford, and Clint Eastwood).

However, women are pretty much limited to roles of mothers when they get past about 45 or even before that. Case in point, Michelle Pfeiffer and Isabella Rossellini shed their luscious locks to play frumpy mothers in spartan gear when they were late thirty-somethings.

An expert on Asian-Pacific cinema, Dr White also commented, "But it's probably because so-called 'Third World' societies tend to be very conservative, and there is resistance to things like progress for

"A woman portrayed as a sex object can be a strong woman character if she is aware of the power of her sexuality and obviously controls it."

- Beatrice Chia



Wrestling With Womanhood

Julia Roberts once said, "I'm too tall to be a woman. I am somewhere between a chick and a broad."

She has played everything from a hooker with a heart to a runaway bride, and won an Oscar for her role in *Erin Brokovich*.

Here are five other great women roles – leading ladies fighting for causes in their reel portraits of real lives ...



Sally Field
(1979/ *Norma Rae*)

Sally Field made us really like her as a poverty-stricken Southern textile mill worker named Norma Rae. This tough woman wrestles with her fatal attraction to a New York labour organiser (Ron Leibman). Norma tackles the union by rallying small town troops, who are going deaf from the din of machinery and suffering from the effects of "brown lung" disease.



Meryl Streep
(1983/ *Silkwood*)

Meryl Streep plays Karen Silkwood, a spunky uneducated factory worker in an Oklahoma plutonium plant. Taking on the nuclear power industry, she tried to uphold justice by attempting to expose her company's environmentally-hazardous slipshod methods. She died mysteriously just before doing so.

women in most of these societies. Men like to see themselves as still in control."

The comedies tend to perpetuate the stereotypes, but the dramas such as Zoe Tay's recent turn in *The Tree* and Eric Khoo's *Mee Pok Man* especially, offer more diversity in roles for women. These changes are unlikely to die out with the increasingly powerful and vocal Asian-American community in the American media. An example is the Asian adaptation of hit musical *Rent*, which is demanding a more balanced portrayal of Asians, both male and female.

But Tan Kheng Hua, actress in television's *Phua Chu Kang*, *A War Diary* and *Masters Of The Sea*, feels differently about victimised women – "I don't feel the threat of the types of 'poor thing' women stereotypes that you are talking about mainly because I have been blessed in being given lots of 'strong' and 'in control' women to play, mostly in theatre."

"Examples are *Mergers And Accusations*, *Wills and Secession*, *Pillow Talk*, and *Autumn Tomyam*. All of them discuss women who have minds of their own, who speak up and fight for what they feel is right."

Speaking of her experiences in television melodrama and comedy, she says, "In general, there is an amount of stereotyping going on mostly on television where I feel portrayal of characters tend to be more superficially performed and written."

"I would really love to see on mass media, like television, more in depth characterisation, as written and as performed."

"The Singaporean market is very limited, not enough to sustain real life women as we know them. Also, we can't really blame local cinema too much. They are far too young and they're suffering so much already to get people to watch. I don't blame them for trying to gain audiences simply by portraying more 'commercially' viable images."

Farewell To My Concubine: The Future of the Asian Archetype

On the world stage, the industry has to abandon the formulaic justification of feminine strength as mere luck and pluck; its challenge now lies in the double-edged attempt to keep afloat financially and encourage artistic freedom.

New artistic freedom has brought with it an unhealthy fear of women's sexuality. Films such as *Raise the Red Lantern* and *Farewell to My Concubine* continue to depict women's bodies as sex tools for furthering self-absorbed desires.

The future of women directors is uncertain, as Jane Campion and Sylvia Chang have only just begun to break into the male bastions of feature-filmmaking. Whether these women will be their own Dorothy Arzner – the first woman to work in the male-powered studio system in early 1900 – remains to be seen.

The peal of the cinematic gong will sound the long-awaited arrival of the self-sufficient Asian actress. Beatrice Chia believes, "The West still wants to hang on to the mysticism of the Eastern women but are slowly accepting that we do not have to be fragile little flowers."

After a good decade of overt servings of



Chinese culture from Wayne Wang's *Eat A Bowl Of Tea*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *Dim Sum*, *Miss Wonton* and *Chinese Box*, let's hope the tired story of Chinese

immigrant pursuing great American enlightenment, will eventually bury itself now that it has seen better days.

Beneath the crouching tigers and hidden dragons of Asian cinema, one could well ask when directors will see that there is money to be made from audiences ready for more than token females, and worn-out stereotypes.



"I don't feel the threat of the types of 'poor thing' women stereotypes...I have been blessed in being given lots of 'strong' and 'in control' women to play..."

- Tan Kheng Hua



Sigourney Weaver
(1988/ *Gorillas In The Mist*)

Sigourney Weaver played another type of "alien" – a self-taught anthropologist Dian Fossey, who lived in her own reclusive planet of the apes. Dian died from fighting to protect the endangered mountain gorillas of the Rwandan rainforest against brutal poachers and indifferent government officials. She was eventually found murdered on the premises of the jungle campsite.



Susan Sarandon
(1995/ *Dead Man Walking*)

Susan Sarandon's Sister Helen Prejean, a liberal Catholic nun working in an inner-city slum, faced ostracism when she befriended and complied to help a convicted child-killer on death row, played by Sean Penn. She attempted to abolish the strictures of capital punishment.



Cate Blanchett
(1998/ *Elizabeth*)

Cate Blanchett, in her portrayal of an iron-willed maiden, transformed England's Queen Elizabeth I from an old picture in a history book into a flesh-and-blood female politician. The virgin queen politicked her way through 16th century court intrigue, bringing her near-bankrupt empire back to its famed glory – and at great personal cost.

I'm the Boss of me now!

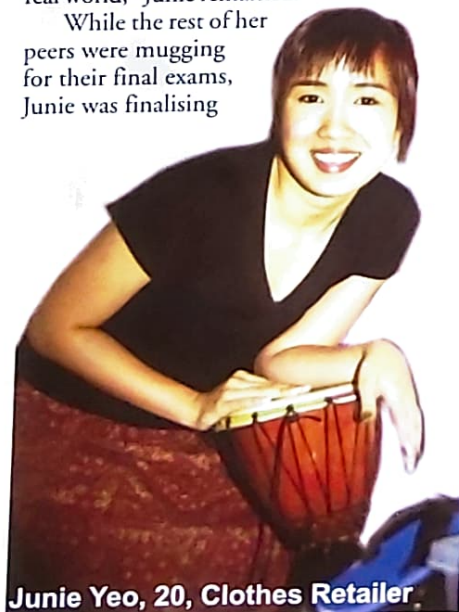
Brand New Towkay

Being an entrepreneur is like a sugarcoated pill – sweet on the outside, bitter within; the entire experience of being young and working hard to attain your dreams is sublimely bitter-sweet.

"When you're your own boss, you're really your own slave at the same time. You do practically *everything*," Junie Yeo, 20, sighed. It has been a busy year that saw her graduate with a diploma in Mass Communication, conceptualise and execute a full business plan. The result of it is Tart, a clothes/bikini/bag shop tucked along the thriving corridors of Far East Plaza in Scotts Road.

"The decision to start a business was easy. The execution was not. I went back to the books. I took my marketing textbook, sat down and drew up a business plan. There were so many things to consider: my budget, the rental, the concept, the market, the target audience. I even consulted my lecturer! It definitely wasn't easy applying theory to the real world," Junie remarked.

While the rest of her peers were mugging for their final exams, Junie was finalising



Junie Yeo, 20, Clothes Retailer

her plan, scouting for an agent, negotiating leases, locating a contractor and contacting wholesalers, on top of her schoolwork. She even flew to Indonesia for her supplies one week before her final exams.

"Being your own boss isn't glamorous," said Junie firmly. "It's a small business, but I do basically everything. I'm the sales coordinator, the accounts manager, the supplier, the designer. My friends go partying after their work, but after I close for the day, I have to do stock taking, clean up my inventory, total the accounts, bank in the money and still must find time to tidy up the shop."

One year into business, Junie is still repaying the \$15,000 loan she took from her mother as capital and is also agonising over the business slowdown brought about by the economic nosedive earlier this year.

"It's really tough doing your own business. I was in Bangkok a while back for supplies, and I was sick as a dog. I was lugging almost 60 kg worth of clothes in the market and I was thinking 'I didn't slog three years in Mass Comm for this!'" Junie exclaimed.

"Setting up my own shop has taught me contentment. I don't want the Singapore Dream," Junie confided. "Tart is a stepping stone for me. Five years down the road I want to open another shop and I want to have completed my university studies. I'm much more independent and focused than I was before."

A War Diary

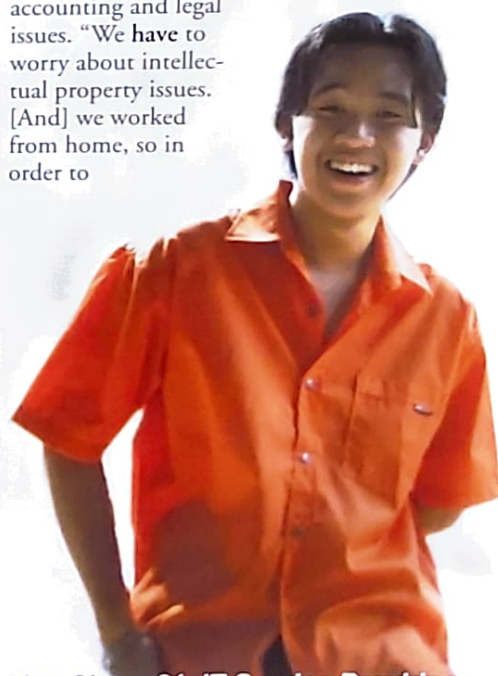
Alva Chew never wanted to be an employee. He wanted to satisfy his own expectations, fulfill his own ambitions and with that mindset, the first-year NTU Business student went into the crash-and-burn dot-com world. The 21-year-old, armed with \$600, a laptop and a partner, set up Stridec Systems, an IT service provider that does software development, website

As the Singapore Dream – a stable job, the 5Cs – hovers seductively over our HDB flats, there are the few who trek off the beaten path. Jean Tan Guanjie discovers three young people who have embraced entrepreneurship with gusto.

development and computer maintenance.

"I didn't think too much about the money and image of being an entrepreneur," Alva admitted. "Stridec Systems was born out of convenience for the IT sector. After intensive research and realising that the market would always need such expertise, I went ahead and started my company."

Sounds simple enough. But thinking through the business plans was nothing compared to sorting out accounting and legal issues. "We have to worry about intellectual property issues. [And] we worked from home, so in order to



Alva Chew, 21, IT Service Provider

register with the Registry of Companies (ROC), we had to come up with a detailed business plan to qualify for the technopreneur scheme. There were so many marketing details we didn't know yet, so many plans we couldn't finalise, but the plan called for an exhaustive five-year plan that really taxed us."

While he never thought that striking out on his own would be easy, Alva soon learnt

that while passion can spur a vision, only hard work can make a wonderful concept materialise into a profitable business. Sacrifices are the call of the day, and the possibility of failure beckons every minute.

"I assume that every day is the last. I don't take it for granted that I'd be an entrepreneur for a lifetime. When I have to work through the night to develop a programme and still have to rush for lecture the next day, I get tired and frustrated. But my motto is that a business opportunity only comes knocking once," Alva commented. "In fact, I consider studies as secondary. It would back up my present experience, but my passion is in my business."

It was, therefore, a moment of personal victory for Alva when Stridec Systems became officially registered with the ROC. His hard work – the late nights, the running around to secure contacts, the difficulties in juggling his university studies and running his company – have paid off.

"I assume that every day is the last. I don't take it for granted that I'd be an entrepreneur for a lifetime...But my motto is that a business opportunity only comes knocking once."

- Alva Chew

"In the end, I may not have a very impressive academic record, but my working experience has given me a competitive edge beyond classroom learning, beyond what my general degree can offer," Alva affirms. "When my peers begin their working life, I want to be a staple player in the IT industry."

Eating Air?

Investing time, money and energy into building a personal career is an alluring prospect. Yet behind the glossy name cards and the feel-good label of an entrepreneur lurk the stark choices these young bosses have to make: do I make studies or business my first priority? Can I afford to go clubbing with my friends tonight when the accounts haven't been settled? My client's meeting coincides with an important lecture. Who or what gets my attention first?

Allan Lim is all too familiar with these choices. Towkay Lim – as his friends affectionately call him – runs a branch of E.S. Furniture Trading, a family-owned furniture wholesale business. To complement his business, the 19-year-old is simultaneously pursuing a diploma in Business Administration with Singapore Polytechnic and a part-time interior designing course with the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. Though his company is small, Allan has laid out plans for its future: e-retailing, expansion into every single district in Singapore, and incorporating personal services into a non-service sector. "I want to sell more than a



Allan Lim, 19, Furniture Trading

design or a piece of dining table. I want to sell service, to make my customers feel that only my company can provide the best for them. That's my plan," Allan explained. "My father can keep his rules in his company, but I want a chance to do something different with mine."

But while Allan admitted that he is lucky to have a family background which led him to have a personal company at his age, the flip side is that managing this business has left him with virtually no time for himself. "I have two separate courses to study. I rush to my shop immediately after school, and I spend all my weekends doing my accounts, checking my stock and calling my customers. I even study for my tests and exams right in my office," Allan confided.

"I can't just do things spontaneously because I have too many responsibilities. I like the challenges and enjoy the experience [of managing a business], but I don't have time, unlike my friends. I'm always busy, always either in school or at the shop. But if my working hard now means I can make my business successful, then, everything is worth it."

Money No Enough

In their world of businesses and profits, you sometimes forget that these entrepreneurs – a term they hardly see fit to use on themselves – are young.

They are as energetic and idealistic as any one of us; they also seek adventure and play. But their vision for the future is so strong that despite the many trade-offs among their personal, social and work life, you get the feeling that they are happy.

As Junie aptly puts it, "It's not about how much sales I've made or how successful people think I am. I measure success in the contentment I get in seeing my vision, a plan on paper, becoming an actual business."

Entre-ssentials!

Kartik Gesan only has an "O" level certificate to his name. Fresh out of National Service, the 23-year-old invested \$5000 as capital to start his own business. One year later, he is managing a general service company that dispenses contractors, general workers, DJs and web designers. Here are his five entrepreneur essentials:

1. Be focused

"Be very sure of what field you are interested in tackling. Study the market and analyse the current business situations. Seek out contacts. Business is all about what and who you know."

2. Take risks

"One can't expect gain without taking risks. Success is seldom a one-shot thing. Risk and risk again until you are able to achieve your aim. Being afraid doesn't help."

3. Be professional

"You're young. People don't always take you seriously. It's up to you to act professionally to gain their trust in your capabilities. Be confident of your business and make sure you're able to deliver your services as you promised."

4. Have a vision

"Know where you want to be in five years' time. Have a plan and stick to it. Business involves a lot of planning and adhering to long-term goals."

5. Maintain your reputation

"Your image says everything. If you make your client a promise, make sure you stick to it. Give them one chance to doubt your credibility, and you lose them forever."

SO YOU WANNA BE A ROCK STAR?

by June thein

"I got my first real six-string. Bought it at the five-and-dime. Played it till my fingers bled. It was the summer of '69. Me and some guys from school. Had a band and we tried real hard. Jimmy quit and Jody got married. I shoulda known we'd never get far..."

When Bryan Adams sang this in his 1984 hit, "Summer of '69", he sounded the fate of many bands that have come and gone.

Still, new generations of aspiring young musicians, like 17-year-old Ng Liangzhi, believe that with hard work, success isn't too many drumbeats away.

Liangzhi is aware that "the market in Singapore is really small". But a motivation greater than fame and money is what keeps many musicians like him going.

"I'm doing it for the love of music," he explained.

An organisation that creates musical platforms for artistes and bands, Awakening Productions, helps aspiring musicians like Liangzhi.

Glenn Lim, director of Awakening, recognised that it is hard to make it big as a band in Singapore. "It's just at hobby standard. Everybody is just in it for the fun of it. Nothing too serious," he said.

Serious or not, musicians are still getting together and making music. But what does it take to start a band and stay together to reach a certain level of success?

SEE YOU WHEN YOU GET THERE

Glenn said frankly, "You have to be very objective when you start a band. You have to set goals."

The time taken to achieve any amount of success depends on the band itself. Glenn said, "The band determines their own timeline based on their objectives. Based on how fast they want to see themselves go. How fast they want to get themselves heard."

"That determination to drive the band's success has to got to come from the individual members or the band leader himself."

IT'S (NOT) ALL ABOUT THE MONEY

Recognition may be a more feasible objective than fame and money. This isn't the hardest task in the world if your band puts in much hard work and professionalism.

Local band Crown of Thorns knew they had achieved some degree of success when strangers started recognising them.

The band may not be earning millions or getting mobbed by crazed fans, but at least it's not ending up where countless other bands are - oblivion.

WORK IT BABY, WORK IT!

You could be the best band in the world, but it's useless if only your neighbour's cat hears your music.

Most bands don't have the luxury of having a manager, so getting exposure has to be the band's own effort. Glenn suggests that bands go to more gigs, and understand how to sell themselves.

It also helps to carry a demo tape around with you when you're going around peddling your band. Glenn explained that a demo tape could be a passport to your first gig or even a record deal.

YOU WERE MEANT FOR ME

Being in a band is like starting a relationship.

According to Glenn, "When you're starting a band, it's best to find like-minded musicians, around the same age group, who have similar taste in terms of the bands they like and artistes they listen to."

Crown of Thorns guitarist Eugene Choy remarked that it's all about compromise, "You can't have a band member with a big ego. The band will break up because everybody will not be working together."

FOREVER AND A DAY

Like any relationship, a band has to have the desire to stay together.

Crown of Thorns has weekly jamming sessions that last up to four hours. They have managed to do that without fail for the two-and-a-half years they have been together.

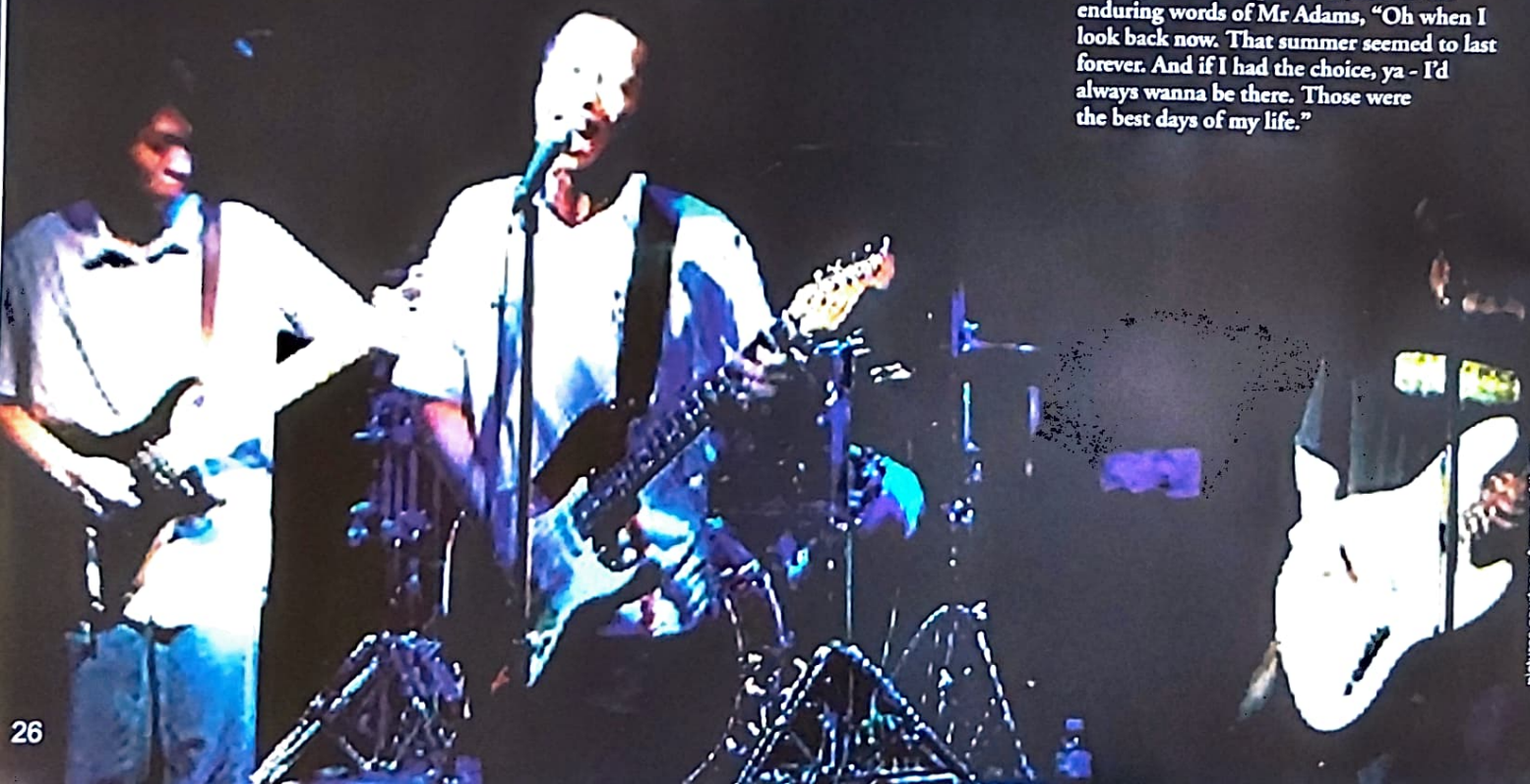
Drummer Mark Chan acknowledged that although their weekly jamming sessions can sometimes be "a bit of a pain", the band still carries on. Above everything else, it's the "fun" factor that has kept the band together.

Part of Glenn's job is scouting for new bands - the key thing that he looks out for is the band members' commitment.

TIME OF YOUR LIFE

To make a business out of your band, you probably will have to sweat, maybe even bleed; and even then success or failure could be a matter of how the cookie crumbles.

But hey, if the chicken can cross the road, so can you, in a leap of faith; and in the enduring words of Mr Adams, "Oh when I look back now. That summer seemed to last forever. And if I had the choice, ya - I'd always wanna be there. Those were the best days of my life."



picture courtesy of crown of thorns

JIMMY EAT WORLD



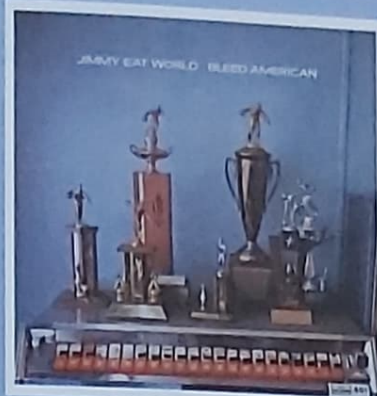
"Jimmy eats what?"

As a band, Jimmy Eat World may not ring a bell, but the Arizona quartet was actually formed in February '94. Barely out of high school, they released several singles, some collaborative efforts with other bands, and a self-titled LP the same year.

After a reassembling – Rick Burch took the place of original bassist Mitch Porter – the band joined the label Capitol, recorded and released "Static Prevail" and "Clarity" in '96.

Lukewarm responses to their two albums prompted Capitol to drop the band, but luckily for the four Mesa lads, DreamWorks picked them up after listening to their self-engineered efforts in *Bleed American*.

The band has chalked up seven years in producing, performing and touring experience. With new marketing and packaging consideration given by their new label, Jimmy Eat World looks poised to rock ours.



Universal

BLEED AMERICAN

There is something very nice about Jim Adkins' voice. The lead vocalist of Jimmy Eat World has a likeable, smooth, hopeful-little-boy kind of voice – not unlike Blur's Damon Albarn, without the crisp Brit accent.

There is something equally nice about the album as well; it's an undemanding pop folder, made for easy listening. For those seeking respite from the nonsensical Gorillaz or the depressing Wallflowers, *Bleed American* is a credible effort – nothing revolutionary, but nothing displeasing either.

The title track, "Bleed American" is an in-your-face jibe at America. "I'm not alone because the TV's on/I'm not crazy because I take the right pills" Adkins declares, with the clean guitar acoustics complementing the simple lyrics. It's a clever title track, paving

the way for the theme of dissatisfaction and loneliness that runs through the rest of the 11 tracks. "The Middle" is a radio-friendly power-pop tune with a sticking chorus – again, Adkins' boyish voice is the instrument that does an otherwise forgettable song justice. "Hear You Me" is arguably the strongest track in the album, achieving a comfortable balance between acoustic and electric guitars. The lyrics border on being sappy, but are somehow fitting for the almost-ballad.

Sonically, the band delivers an alternate pop blend, marrying indie-pop and soft-punk to deliver a – you guessed it – nice album. Not fantastic, not mind-blowing, just nice.

jean tan guanjie

WIN Bleed American CDs!

"I'm not alone because the TV's on/I'm not crazy because I take the right pills"

Which track in Jimmy Eat World's album do these lyrics appear in?

The first FIVE correct answers sent to hypemagazine@visto.com will win one *Bleed American* CD and fridge magnet each!

Include your full name, IC number and contact number.

THE CALLING



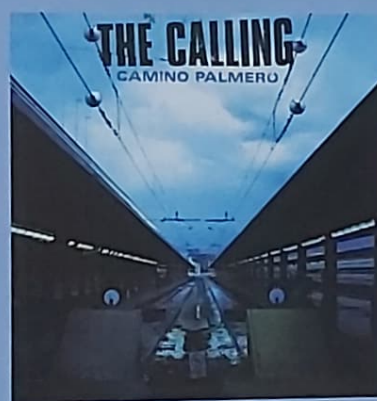
Interesting way to start a band – date your lead vocalist's sister. That was how things kicked off for The Calling, with guitarist, Aaron Kamin, dating lead vocalist Alex Band's older sister.

Back then, Alex was only 15, and Aaron wasn't interested to form a band with someone so young. However, after listening to Alex sing, the age factor suddenly didn't matter. The two started jamming together, sometimes getting Alex's sister annoyed because Aaron seemed more interested in his music than her.

The duo was offered a deal by RCA and a few years later, they formed the band Generation Gap. Indeed, there was a generation gap in the band, with the drummer aged 58 and their bass player, 40.

After the band split, Alex and Aaron started writing songs.

The duo soon found other members to form The Calling.



BMG

CAMINO PALMERO

The Calling is a new rock band from Southern California that aims to move people by emphasising their song-writing efforts.

They got their first big break when they performed "Wherever You Will Go" in the movie, *Coyote Ugly*.

The Calling strives to be different from other bands by viewing things in life from a macro level and being onlookers of life's bigger picture.

Every song in *Camino Palmero* surges with Alex Band's passionate vocals. His voice sears through every song, giving the lyrics more conviction.

The songs in the album are upbeat and captivating, with a focus on love, sorrow and wonder.

A catchy rock tune complements lyrics like "Is there love without hate?/Is there pleasure without pain?" in the track "Final Answer". You can't help but pause and think a bit after listening.

Despite the minimal usage of electric guitar distortion, the songs retain their passion and energy. The strumming of the acoustic guitar resounds through all the songs, giving them a clean-sounding feel.

Drumbeats are tame, with smooth bass lines, and hardly any fancy instrumental solos. The band keeps their style simple yet catchy.

Though The Calling may sound a little fresh from the oven, they're a promising new band following the paths of Creed and Lifehouse.

Good lyrics and spirited emotions in the songs make *Camino Palmero* your calling.

alywin chew

Listen out for The Calling on Radio Heatwave's Fresh and Juicy, Mondays 4 - 5pm. A BMG new releases special.

WIN Camino Palmero CDs!

Who is The Calling's lead vocalist?

The first FIVE correct answers sent to hypemagazine@visto.com will win one *Camino Palmero* CD each!

Include your full name, IC number and contact number.

LIFE ON THE extreme



THERE IS AN ADVENTUROUS STREAK IN EACH OF US WAITING TO BURST OUT. TO LIVE AN EXCITING LIFE OF CHALLENGES AND SURPRISES INSTEAD OF THE MONOTONY AND ROUTINE OF SCHOOL WE ARE SO ACCUSTOMED TO. WHILE MOST OF US WILL NEVER SUMMON THE COURAGE TO SKY-DIVE OFF A PLANE, VAIJANTHI KUPUSAMY DISCOVERS ALTERNATE SPORTS THAT SCREAM EQUAL **RISK, THRILL AND DANGER.**

pictures courtesy of suter tan, sulaiman ahmid and debby ng

Not the ordinary sports like badminton or tennis, but extreme sports such as wakeboarding, stunt biking and skateboarding. These have been gaining popularity over the years, proving that there is a bunch of Singaporeans who dare to push their limits.

Extreme Wakeboarder

Suter Tan, 30, national wakeboarder, currently ranked number two in Singapore. Chief instructor, William Water Sports Centre, Sembawang.



Suter Tan, 30, shares a special relationship with the sea. He has grown up with it since he was seven. His father, a sportsman himself, had introduced young Suter to water sports by teaching him water skiing. Suter then picked up wakeboarding in 1994.

He loves doing what many of us may not dare to try. Standing on his wakeboard, he grips a 70-metre rope pulled by a speeding boat at 35 km/h, slides his board off the water, slices the wake and flips 180 degrees in mid-air before landing on the water again, all in a total of 10 seconds. As he whoops his victory cry, even a million bucks cannot buy what he is feeling now.

Despite the surge in adrenaline after each successful trick, Suter admits that there is the fear of injury at the back of his mind.

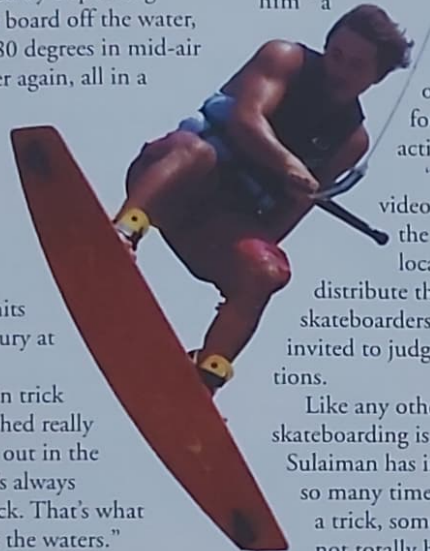
"When there's a certain trick I've tried before and I crashed really hard...the next time I go out in the water and try again, there's always something holding me back. That's what you call fear - you respect the waters."

It is inevitable that one has to "crash hard" in wakeboarding. It takes at least three to four one-hour sessions to get a stunt right. That too depends on one's capability. There are over a hundred stunts in wakeboarding, so that could mean a lot of falling while learning.

Suter says, "You have to fall to learn, but you also have to train yourself to fall in the proper manner." That's not something many sporting enthusiasts know at the beginning so they learn the hard way. In all extreme sports, landing in a way that minimises risk is as crucial as performing the trick itself. Fall the wrong way and you're in for trouble.

If anything goes wrong, "you're gonna crash real hard because you're hitting the water...in a split second. It's like banging on a solid wall," says Suter.

But Suter is not deterred. He loves the wind tousling his hair, and the sea spray in his face. Being on the water is his only way to get away from the city and let his mind run totally wild.



Extreme Skateboarder



Sulaiman Ahmid, full-time skateboarder.

They call him "Man Toyo" on the skateboarding scene because he's that famous. Known for his skateboarding prowess, Sulaiman Ahmid, 27, has competed in so many

competitions that he cannot remember the exact number. His most recent win was in June. He was crowned champion in the Phillips X-Rage 2001 competition.

Sulaiman is considered one of Singapore's pioneer skateboarders. When his father bought him "a board with wheels" in 1985, skateboarding was hardly known. He admits that he was one of those who set the history for the sport by being really active in the scene.

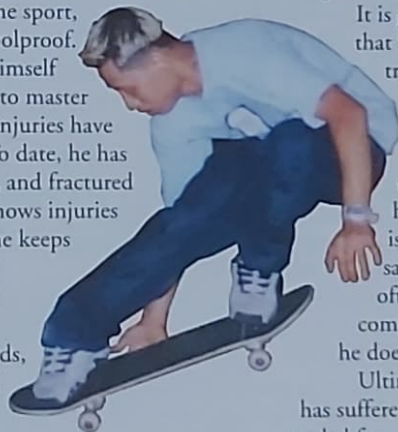
"I would watch American videos of skateboarding and learn the tricks. Then I would make local skateboarding videos and distribute them to other [amateur] skateboarders," he says. He has also been invited to judge local skateboarding competitions.

Like any other extreme sport, skateboarding is never foolproof. Sulaiman has injured himself so many times trying to master a trick, some of his injuries have not totally healed. To date, he has broken his middle finger, and fractured his wrist and knee. He knows injuries are inevitable as long as he keeps skateboarding but he has decided to live life to the max. No controls, no boundaries. In other words, he is going to skateboard for as long as his body can hold out.

"Sometimes, I tell myself that I am old, I want to quit. But I can't. It's a passion in my blood. I may drop off for a while, go to other sports but the feeling of pulling off a trick - it is something you cannot get anywhere else," he says.

And while pulling off the trick, Sulaiman says he is consumed by a particular feeling when he is momentarily in the air.

"When I'm up in the air on my board, my full concentration is on pulling off the trick. And when I do that, I feel like I'm floating."



Extreme Stunt Bikers



John Koh, 16, student, and Mohd Sulaiman, 17, full-time stuntbiker.

John Koh, 16, spent a thousand dollars on his BMX freestyle bike last year. He wanted the perfect bike so he bought

separate parts and built the bike himself. He says it is worth it because "you need a [sturdier] bike than normal to absorb the impact of landing during stunts".

John is especially careful now after his injury in a competition last year. It was during a one-minute run, when he rode his bike up the ramp, leapt into the air and spun his bike 360 degrees that in a split second, he lost his footing and crashed, shoulder first on the ground. He dislocated his shoulder and could not practise for some time, but he was back on track as soon as he recovered.

"I can't just give it up. I know adults say what's the point of flying around when you end up in hospital but...it's the excitement," he says.

Mohd Sulaiman, 17, cannot help but nod in agreement. He says, "I love extreme games. It feels good when I'm in the air."

It is precisely for this feel-good feeling, that Sulaiman loves the "Superman" trick. As the name suggests, a biker in mid-air has to throw his legs out behind the bike and extend them such that they are parallel to the ground, while keeping his hands on the handlebars. The aim is to look like he is flying. Sulaiman says he does not try that trick very often. He only does it when he is in a competition. As extreme as he may be, he does not want to take risks too often.

Ultimately, despite all the injuries he has suffered, including a head injury which needed four stitches to close, he insists he is happy. He would never give up stunt biking for something like say, basketball. He says stunt biking offers just too much of a challenge to resist. It is a sense of adventure, to him a liberating feeling, that makes him push himself to the highest level possible.

For some, extreme sports are a form of release from the monotony of life. Beyond the don't-give-a-damn and hungry-for-challenge attitudes, these daredevils believe the adrenaline rush is worth risking life and limb for.

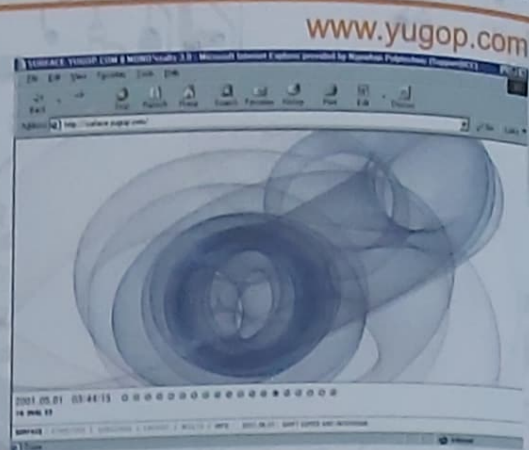
hype discovers that freedom on the Net goes beyond choosing from over 200 different email domains and writing online journals

An online portfolio by web author, Yugop Nakamura, yugop.com explores new expressions with interactivity. Once inside, you are taken through a journey of inspiring and experimental Flash techniques.

The immersive motion of your mouse interacting with the graphics on-screen will captivate you. Creating digital artwork without the fancy effects of Photoshop has never been this easy.

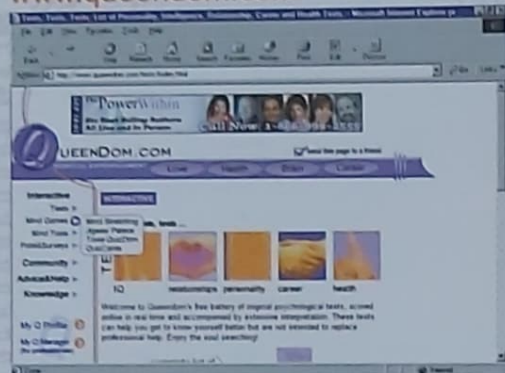
By using Nakamura's graphics, you can create your own artwork from a real-time recording of mouse keystrokes. The result will impress you. There are 18 links to choose from, each with a different surprise. Clicking on "Line x 50", for example, enables you to draw an art piece with your mouse using the lines Nakamura has created.

Navigation around the site is smooth, though the pages may take a while to load due to the Flash images. For a visually captivating experience, feast your eyes on Nakamura's concepts and techniques at www.yugop.com



christina lai

www.queendom.com



joby lim

Those who seek an in-depth analysis of their psychological profile but do not wish to risk the danger of being ridiculed by a shrink *a la* Ally McBeal, will find some form of reprieve in www.queendom.com.

While the website may be visually bland, the range and depth of its aptitude tests and games will blow you away faster than you can say "Jung!". Put yourself through the Procrastination Test, and find out once and for all why you are stuck doing homework while your friends boogie their lives away on Friday nights.

You can also pick up some anger management skills and learn how to keep your cool when the Ah Beng next to you pulls out his mobile phone and shamelessly tries out every single one of his 42 ring tones.

The website also offers advice on mental health, as well as discussion forums for topics such as health and love.

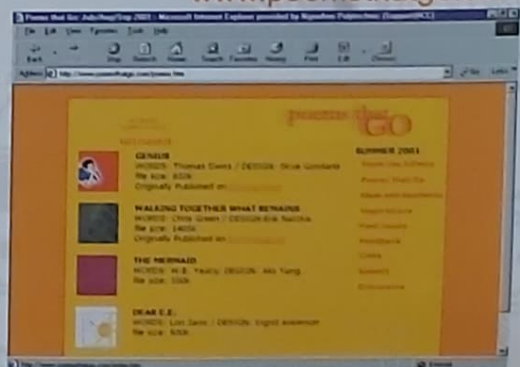
queendom.com is the final jewel in your crown of self-empowerment and knowledge.

Rediscover poetry with the fusion of music and animation. Definitely not your usual text-heavy poetry sites, www.poemsthatgo.com offers animated poetry and beautiful graphics. A new form of poetry is being explored through the integration of various art forms in this site, whose mission is "to unite words, design, music and motion, and to celebrate poetry through technology of the Internet".

Bre treated to bright, cheerful colours that can make any piece of poetry come alive. Different-sized browsers and visually rich content create a break from monotony but might take a while to load.

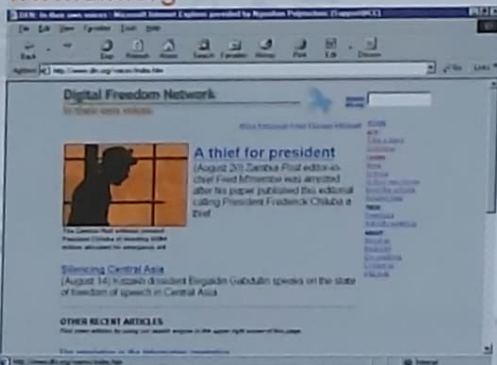
"Cruising" by Ingrid Ankerson highlights the element of freedom - a group of friends driving around their town in Wisconsin, "eyeing life through a car... [they] couldn't yet take to the world". Exploring the streets freely, they hope to "find love driving past". poemsthatgo.com even allows you to submit your own work. Begin an exploration of a fusion that will leave you creatively satisfied.

www.poemsthatgo.com



chiu jayyan

www.dfn.org



june thin

Ten minutes into visiting the Digital Freedom Network, I've already signed a protest letter to the Russian government, voiced my concerns regarding an American activist jailed in Peru, and signed four more other pre-written protest letters to several governing bodies. I could almost call myself an activist of sorts. At least that's what the people behind www.dfn.org would want me to believe.

dfn.org brings activism to the Net in very digestible chunks - encouraging even those who are indifferent to become activists with just a click of the mouse. The site utilises the Internet's lack of censorship to highlight controversial issues prohibited in traditional media. Stories of freedom advocates coerced into silence make one realise there are things the powers-that-be don't want us to know.

dfn.org is not only a good read, it is almost inspiring. By how much? I'll let you know when my negotiations with the Laotian government go well.

Retreat to an exclusive sanctuary where you lord over all – your room. Leau Yhin Lynn explores this prized territory where you set the rules and count the spoils.

Perfumed Cushions

The natural blend of essential oils, petals and botanicals from these pillows lightly scents the room with a delicate fragrance and lulls you to sleep. Rich details on the cushions like embroidery, silk casing and gold ribbons add a touch of opulence to your little kingdom.

\$45-\$52. Available at Lifestorey, #04-01, Pacific Plaza.

Decision Maker

The decision-making version of Russian roulette. Spin the big matte silver ball atop the ball bearings below if you can't decide what or who to conquer next. The red ball bearing on the base points to what you have to do. The constructive advice ranges from "Yes", "No", "Maybe", "Pray", to "Ask Mom". If you still can't decide, you can always use this as a paperweight instead.

\$48. Available at Nova efx, #03-33, Novena Square.

Flower Light Bulb

Night falls and everything is enveloped in darkness except for one illumination – two flowers radiating violet and leaves glowing green in a clear globe, transforming your abode with a magical shimmer. Warning: Not suitable for those who expect this to light up the whole room or are into loud, flashing neon signs.

\$18 for the bulb, \$18 for the metal stand. Available at Nova efx, #03-33, Novena Square.

Mini Mirror Balls

Turn your room into a mini dance floor. Hang up a few of these retro mini mirror balls, play some groovy music and with some imagination, you could be the next best disco king or queen the world never knew. So let your hair down – whether it's the Para Para or the funky chicken dance, go ahead and dance away – no one's watching.

\$2.50 each. Available at Homeworks, #01-62/63, Great World City.

Budweiser Phone

Wassup?! Don't worry when this 16cm-tall Budweiser starts ringing – you ain't that sloshed – it's actually a telephone pretending to be a Budweiser. The earpiece and mouthpiece at the side of the can are easy to miss, and the circular keypad's hidden at the bottom. Even James Bond might have owned one as a teenager.

\$39.90. Available at #03-125A, Yew 'N' Me Boutique, Far East Plaza.



Wooflworks Gallery

Get **10% discount** off all food and drinks when you present this coupon and your NP student pass.

Promotion valid till 31 December 2001.
11 Unity Street, Robertson Walk, S(237995)



Skylight Garden Café and Restaurant

Get **15% discount** off the *a la carte* menu when you present this coupon and your NP student pass.

Promotion valid till 31 December 2001.
238 Thomson Road, Novena Square, S(307683)



Sultan 8

Get **10% discount** off all food and drinks when you present this coupon and your NP student pass.

Promotion valid till 31 December 2001.
8 Mohamed Sultan Road, S(238958)



Fatt Daddy's Rib Shack

Get **one free dessert** (below \$5 nett) with a minimum of \$15 spent in one receipt when you present this coupon and your NP student pass.

Promotion valid till 31 December 2001.
9 Raffles Boulevard, Millenia Walk, S(039596)



Café Iguana

Buy one and get **one free frozen house margarita** when you present this coupon and your NP student pass.

**Not applicable during daily Margarita Madness*

Promotion valid till 31 December 2001.
30 Merchant Road, Riverside Point, S(058282)



Each-a-cup

Get free pearls and discounts of **up to \$0.60 off** any drink when you present this coupon.

Promotion valid till 31 October 2001.
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I never existed.

Freedom

