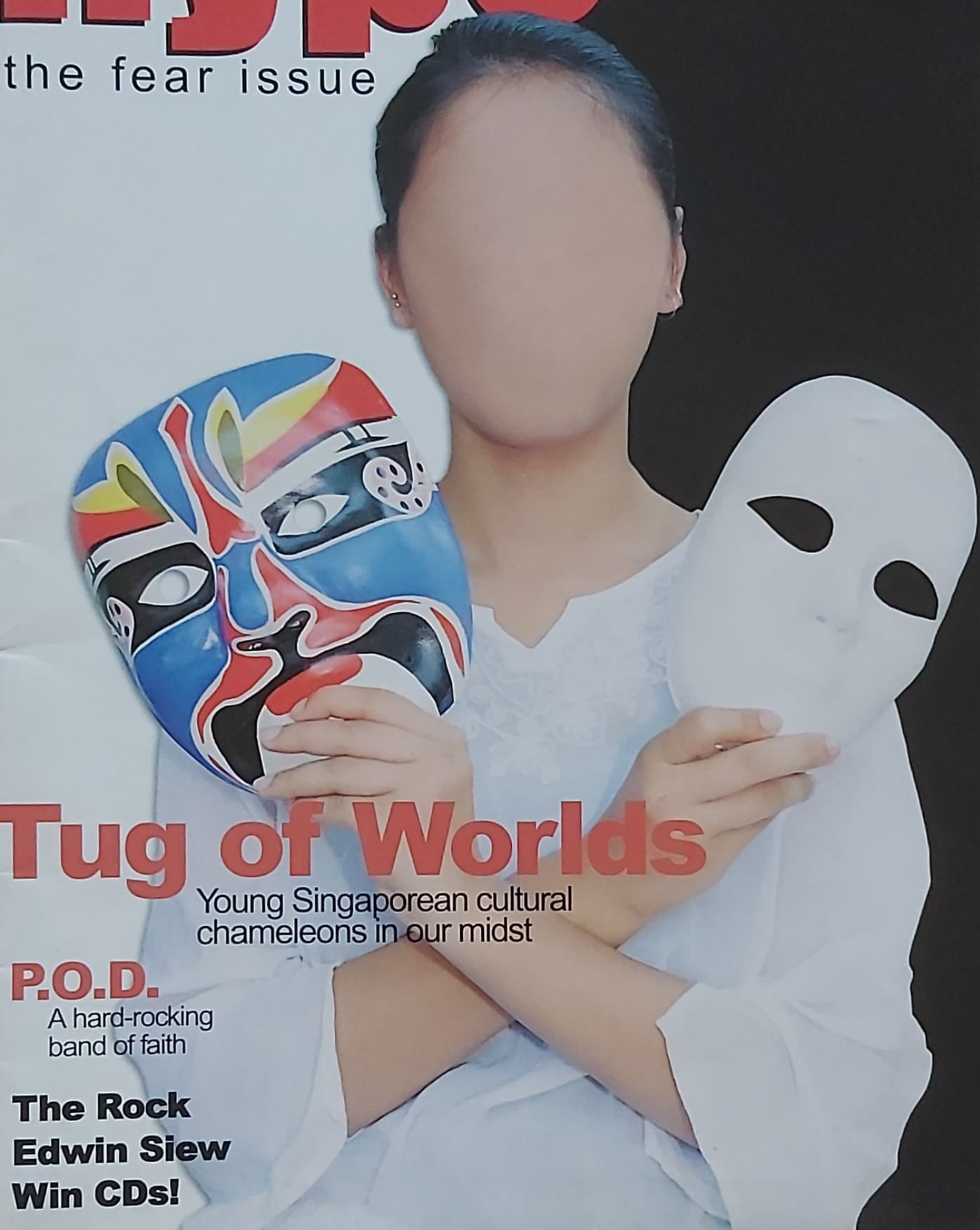


hype

the fear issue



Tug of Worlds

Young Singaporean cultural
chameleons in our midst

P.O.D.

A hard-rocking
band of faith

The Rock
Edwin Siew
Win CDs!

IF I were to measure the frequency and intensity of the moments of terror in my life, I'm sure the seismograph needle would erratically zigzag out of control and register an earth-shattering 10 on the Richter Scale. Ok, so maybe I'm exaggerating a little, but it's my world I'm talking about and we all know how fear can magnify our senses out of proportion.

We've all experienced it before, some time or another. Whether it's a fight or flight state triggered by your survival alarm; a heart-stopping, rooted-to-the-ground, knee-buckling jolt; or a paralysing insecurity of the unknown, fear finds a way to creep into the many crevices of our lives. It's an emotion that we can't get rid of or avoid. We either live and grow with it, or face it head on and overcome it.

Who knows, you might even have been a willing victim of your own fears. Just ask yourself how many times you've been on a roller-coaster ride, entered a haunted house, or watched a horror movie? Only this time, there was an inexplicable thrill and buzz you got out of it. And somehow, watching other people confront their fears on the exploitative reality TV shows *Fear Factor* and *Scream Test* seemed equally appealing too. It's not about the contestants chowing down or lying in a tub of creepy crawlies, and performing ridiculous daredevil stunts, but rather their every facial nuance, flinch or cringe in the face of fear. And whether they eventually falter or win through. Then you realise, that like them – the only barrier between you and your fear, is you.

Fear exposes our vulnerabilities. It's what makes us human and reminds us that we are fallible. The set of fears that each of us has is unique and tells a lot about us. How we deal and respond to these fears also gives away who we are as a person. **hype** digs deeper into this issue to unmask the person behind the shadow of fear. The question then, is not what your fears say about you, but what you *want* your fears to say about you.

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printer

Oxford Graphic Printers Pte Ltd.

hype april 2002 no.14

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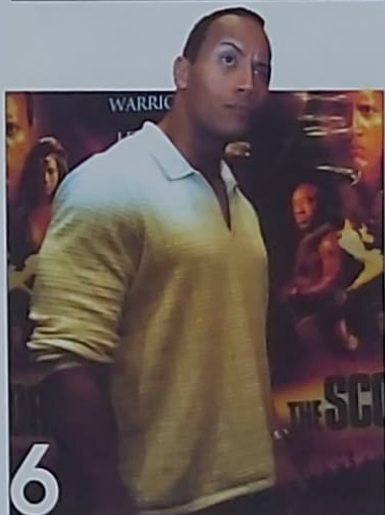
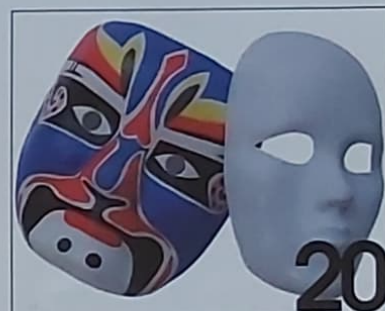
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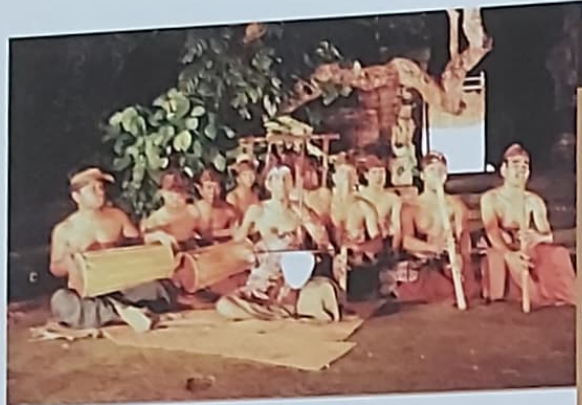
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Thailand's hottest band PRUve their worth

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Fears to ponder about online





The Festival Village

The Festival Village kick starts the Singapore Arts Festival with the traditional arts, craft, cuisine and village life of Asia and South America.

Featuring performances like folk music and dance by Tibetan group Zhongdian Diqing, the Festival is suitable for your parents and siblings as well. Of course, if you intend to party to Afro-Caribbean-Latin music of the Argentinean, Canadian and Brazilian groups, you might want to reconsider bringing your family.

If dancing is not your forte, then just watch the series of rites, Ritus Legong, believed to bring good fortune to rural communities in Indonesia. Performed by Indonesian group Arti Foundation, some haunting rites include a demon dance, puppetry in a ritual to the fertility goddess Dewi Sri and a trance-dance by two young virgins who "purify the village" by swaying to rhythmic chants.

Have a taste of Shakespeare, Balinese style, when the Arti Foundation presents Macbeth through Gambuh, an ancient Balinese theatrical form. Entitled Gambuh Macbeth, this depiction of the Shakespearean tragedy is a festival special from 11pm from 1am.

In between the colourful acts, whet your appetite with ethnic cuisine or search for unique Asian craft at the stalls. Mark this festival in your diary - experiencing Asian arts and village life in one night can be fulfilling.

alyssa tan

Fort Canning Park
30 May to 1 June 2002
7.30pm to 11pm

Tickets at \$12

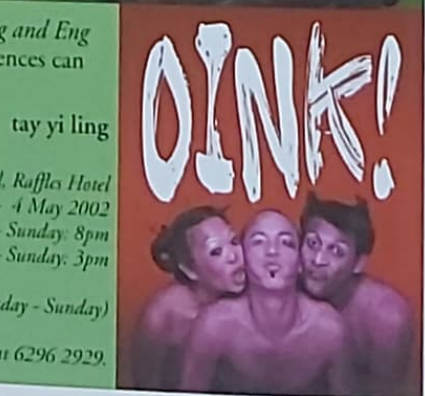
Animal Farm

Life is a farm. From the co-existing different species, eating to stay alive only to be slaughtered as someone else's food, right down to bad living conditions.

Life is a farm in this play, at least. Adapted from George Orwell's acclaimed novel, *Animal Farm* cleverly draws the parallel between the underlying theme of power corruption in the farmyard to that of modern society. Yes, now you can give a name to that tyrannical pig in your life that thinks he's the Tsar and you are his peasant.

Daringly dealing with modern issues of betrayal and bureaucracy, this play by W!LD RICE addresses many hidden agendas of modern society in its cleverly subtle yet expository theatrical form.

Adapted by Ian Wooldridge and directed by Ivan Heng, *Animal Farm* features an all-local star studded theatre cast. With leading names Lim Yu Beng, Pamela Oei and Selena Tan of *Chang and Eng* fame fronting this expectedly humorous play, audiences can be sure of a wickedly good time.



tay yi ling

Jubilee Hall, Raffles Hotel
19 April - 4 May 2002
Tuesday - Sunday: 8pm
Saturday - Sunday: 3pm

Tickets at \$29, \$39 (Tuesday - Wednesday) & \$36, \$46 (Thursday - Sunday)

For more information, call TicketCharge at 6296 2929.

Fame - The Musical

Fame has a price - this musical about a group of students from New York's High School for the Performing Arts takes you down the road to becoming famous.

Initially, an Academy Award winning film and long-running TV series, the show later took on the form of theatre due to its popularity. Fame has already played over 4,000 performances in three years throughout Europe and the United Kingdom, yet the demand for this energetic musical is still very high.

Fame portrays life in the performing arts industry, and the sacrifices made in order to become a star.

Nominated for two London Laurence Olivier Awards, the crew of Fame The Musical consists of a live seven-piece band and a cast of 27 dancers. The score of this highly acclaimed musical is written by Grammy Award winner, Steve Margoshes, with Jacques Levy filling in the lyrics.

Go on a journey of anguish, joy, revelation and loss with Fame this July and be dazzled for a whole evening!

lester lee

Kallang Theatre
4 - 14 July

Matinee performances - Tickets at \$90, \$75, \$60 and \$40 (students' concession)
Nightly performances - Tickets at \$110, \$90, \$70 and \$50 (students' concession)

Pops 'N' Classics 2002

Although Beethoven and Britney Spears aren't often paired, Ngee Ann Polytechnic Concert Band (NPCB) is offering just this in their annual Pops 'N' Classics concert on campus. Expect popular songs like Whitney Houston's *One Moment in Time*, lush melodies from the soundtrack of box-office hit *Princess Mononoke*, and of course, symphonic works like *La Quintessenza* by Johan de Meij. The NPCB, made up of about 60 members, combines nine different sections of wind and percussion instruments. If you enjoy jazz music, you'd appreciate the stage band who will incorporate big band music and swinging jazz in their performance.

The stage band, comprising student alumni, also plays slow ballads and pop music, with solo saxophone performances. It won't be difficult to find your favourite type of music from the wide variety – just take your pick.

Ngee Ann Polytechnic's Cultural Theatre 26
13 July 2002

Tickets at \$4



alyssa tan

Fiesta At Time Square

Boasting a variety of local and international gourmet dishes and scrumptious treats, the Singapore Food Festival's Fiesta at Time Square is not an event for the weight-conscious.

The 280 metre-long street at Millenia Walk will live up with a carnival of food, fashion and entertainment, for the first time. Tickle your tastebuds with old hawker favourites and cuisine from all over the world while you are treated with various performances and even a fashion parade where models will display clothes with food-themed designs.

There will also be a variety of games and telematches like the Chef's Race and the War of The Cheerleaders for the whole family.

Held from 29 March 2002 to 30 April 2002, this year's festival is the biggest ever with over 48 cookery events, workshops and food tours.

eiktha murli khemlani

Millenia Walk, Time Square
26 - 28 April 2002: 11am - 9pm

Admission is free.

For more information, call Rose Tong at 6434 9833

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)



DBS Arts Centre
7 - 10 May 2002: 8pm
11 - 12 May 2002: 2.30pm & 8pm

Tickets at \$86, \$66, \$46 (adults), \$46 (students), \$164 (family package - 2 adults & 2 students)

Forget all that you ever learned in literature classes about William Shakespeare's plays and be amazed by how his 37 plays can be presented in only 97 minutes! Not only that, the entire theatrical production is presented by just three actors.

Staged at the DBS Arts Centre, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* promises an evening of speedy hilarious treats. Influenced by The Marx Brothers and Monty Python, Peter Ackerman, the co-author of *Ice Age*, together with Jeremy Shamos and David Turner, uses different parts of their bodies to play over 100 of Shakespeare's characters while handling close to 100 props. Every gesture significantly represents different characters – they could be playing Hamlet yet mimicking Ophelia simultaneously, undoubtedly leaving rib-tickling memories for many.

For its remarkable performance, *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged)* also earned a nomination for Best New Comedy at the Olivier Awards in Britain and praise from critics in the arts scene. Go catch this much-anticipated play during the holidays – you won't regret it.

janet chin

payable on death

Christian rockers they are.

A Christian band they are not.

Hannah Teoh comes face-to-face with guitarist Marcos and drummer Wuv to find out if the fear of God is in

P.O.D.

picture courtesy of Warner Music

They ruffled a few church-going feathers during one of their Ozzfest performances when their stage backdrop featured a picture of Jesus Christ sporting Rastafarian dreadlocks.

P.O.D.'s (Payable On Death) hard-rocking, head-banging, I-love-tattoos image doesn't really fit in with the look of wholesome, squeaky-clean Christian pop groups *a la* Jars of Clay or Plus One. And they have no qualms about performing at Ozzfest, a yearly heavy metal extravaganza honouring the

grand-daddy of black metal, Ozzy Osbourne. Not even if it means sharing the stage with Mr Antichrist Superstar himself, Marilyn Manson.

"When people [ask], 'Why did P.O.D. do that?' Why not? We're musicians. We're not a Christian rock band, we're a rock band. We don't wanna be put in a box – 'Oh you can't play Ozzfest because there's a devil's head on the stage.' Hey man, that's not who we are," explains guitarist Marcos Curiel, 27.

"We look at it like those people need to hear more positivity than anything. Who's gonna get up there? dc Talk? You think dc Talk's gonna play on Ozzfest?" jibes Noah "Wuv" Bernardo Jr., 28, drummer and co-founder of P.O.D.

They emphasise that they're "not on a mission to convert the world", as Marcos put it – they just want to play to any audience that wants to listen, and spread a positive message in the process.

"We're writing rock music that hopefully makes a difference, and can encourage people that life isn't perfect, but we can get through it. If you wanna have fun, cool. You can have fun with P.O.D. but we're not gonna say a million cuss words or tell you to put your middle finger in the air," Marcos says.

Formed way back in 1992, the peas that made up the P.O.D. came together when Wuv invited cousin Sonny Sandoval to join him and Marcos during jam sessions. Bassist Traa Daniels was roped in the following year, and they've been rocking ever since.

Playing alongside big names like Papa Roach, Korn and Incubus, P.O.D.'s agenda didn't include producing a platinum-selling album, *The Fundamental Elements of Southtown* – "I don't think we had goals!" Wuv confesses. "We just wanted to play, and our mentality's still the same. We love playing music and we always wanted to be a band that had something to say, and be positive, and the things that make us positive is our faith in God, so that drives a lot of how we write songs, and our attitude in life, and here we are, 10 years later, doing the same thing."

It took P.O.D. that long before the industry decided to put them up for a Grammy. Prior to hit single "Alive" being nominated in the Best Hard Rock Performance category, the band had already produced four albums on an independent label.

"[The nomination's] a cool thing that our parents get to brag about back home," Wuv laughs. "We weren't even expecting to be nominated, so this is just a bonus." Just as performing in Singapore and *Satellite* going double platinum were unexpected events to them, P.O.D. doesn't take things for granted and "really don't expect anything" beyond making music and ensuring that there's quality time with their wives and children in between tours. All four are married and all, except Marcos have children.

Marcos believes the major factor that earned them the nomination was that *Satellite* had the dubious honour of a September 11 release date. "Our country is going through a lot of pain right now, and people realise that they don't want to listen to negative music – there's a lot of music out there that's pretty negative," he says. "I'd rather listen to something like 'Alive' because it's something that makes me feel good ... It's just one of those songs that means what it says."

Other tracks on *Satellite* talk about stomping out evil influences, and reverence for God. On the track "The Messenjah", Sonny declares, "This I

**"You can have fun with
P.O.D. but we're not
gonna say a
million cuss words or
tell you to put your
middle finger
in the air."**

pledge, and I'll take it to my death / I'll lay my life down for you and die over again / I and I, I'm not ashamed of the Most High / Even if I die tonight, if I die tonight".

On the other hand, the guys aren't too thrilled about three nominations (Song of the Year, Group of the Year and Artist of the Year) for this year's Dove awards – the Christian music industry's equivalent of the Grammys. In truth, they'd just be downright embarrassed if they won any.

"I don't mean to be blunt but 90 percent of the Christian bands out there are like the cheesiest things I've ever heard in my life!" exclaims Wuv. "And that's not the world P.O.D. grew up in. We didn't grow up in a sheltered Christian box where the only people we hung around with were Christian people..."

P.O.D. did a no-show at last year's Dove Awards. The implication of accepting such an award would be sending out the wrong message – "That says, P.O.D.'s Christian. If you're not Christian you can't listen to this band, because they're a Christian band," says Wuv. "We're not like that. We're not about segregating. We want everybody to hear about our music." It's not about getting accepted by any sector of the music industry – it's about playing for people. The recently completed leg of P.O.D.'s Asia-Pacific tour, which included packed venues in the Philippines, Japan, and Australia, prove that they're right smack in a region of new listeners who welcome their Limp-Bizkit-without-the-F-word style of music.

"The thing is, we've never really been recognised by the Christian industry 'til now," adds Wuv. He cites the reason as P.O.D. being the only Christian hard rock musicians achieving double platinum success in album sales. "We don't like doing the song and dance routine for organisations. Dude, you didn't care back then, don't care now ... That doesn't make us feel all warm and fuzzy inside that we get accepted by either kind of group. What makes us feel good is that we get to play our music and people are wanting to hear us..."

You may not see P.O.D. fans waving bibles in the air at the next concert, or the band performing alongside the local church choir, but you can be assured that everyone who rocks with P.O.D. gets positive vibes to head-bang about. And the guys are sure that Someone in heaven is rocking to their music too.

"The way I look at it, between the four of us writing music, [we're] writing it for God ... and it's coming from our heart and soul, and it is a thankfulness back to God – 'thank you for letting me play' – and it makes me feel good that I could play it for a God that lets us be so free. He thinks it's beautiful, even if it is loud and crazy," says Wuv with a grin.

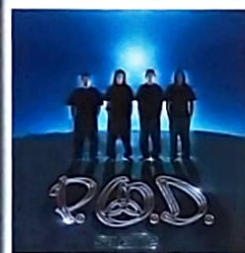
Amen to that.

A P.O.D. of Trivia

- Sonny, Marcos and Wuv grew up in the "ghettos" of San Diego – Wuv's father used to be the neighbourhood drug dealer.
- After Wuv's father came clean, he founded Rescue Records, the label that P.O.D. started with.
- P.O.D.'s musical influences include U2, Bob Marley, Carlos Santana, and the Police.
- Sonny's daughter's name is Nevaeh – "heaven" spell backwards. He also signs his autograph backwards.

- Traa's name is pronounced "Trey" and not Traaaaaaa.
- Before joining the band, Marcos held various part-time jobs, including construction work, washing dishes and serving at Taco Bell.
- Some of P.O.D.'s songs have appeared on the soundtracks of *Blair Witch 2*, *Little Nicky* and *Any Given Sunday*.
- A remixed version of "Set It Off", the first track on *Satellite*, is featured on the soundtrack of *The Scorpion King*.

Win A Satellite CD!



The first five readers who can name the four members of P.O.D. will win

one **Satellite CD** each! Send your answer, along with your name, IC number and contact number to

hypemagazine@mail.com

Rock Steady

Having a dad and granddad who were wrestling legends, Dwayne Douglas Johnson looked like the next in line to carry the torch into the squared circle. Adopting the moniker "The Rock", he went on to become the only six-time champion of the World Wrestling Federation.

Making minor appearances on TV shows such as *Star Trek: Voyager* and *That 70s Show*, The Rock's big screen cameo in *The Mummy Returns* impressed filmmakers enough to expand his role into a full-blown action-adventure flick premiering 19 April, *The Scorpion King*. **hype** catches up with this WWF sensation to hear his thoughts on movie-making, wrestling, and his personal life.

His thoughts on his first major big screen debut...

"I was very happy when I read the script. I was really excited ...I had fantastic actors. I had a chance to see the movie and it is a fantastic film. It is a fun movie. I'm very proud of it, my main intent was not to win any Oscars, but to make sure that audiences will be happy."

The hardest scene he had to do in *The Scorpion King*...

"It's also the most comedic scene when me and my sidekick were buried up to our necks in sand and were about to be eaten by ants the size of cola cans."

Whether he sees himself as the next action hero...

"Bruce Willis, Arnold [Schwarzenegger] ...have been great and those are big shoes to fill. I'd rather not box myself into the action genre, not that I'll be doing Shakespeare next. Those guys have been very welcoming to me into the Hollywood industry. I just wanna do my thing and see what happens."

Thoughts on whether he fears being typecast...

"No, I'm not concerned with that. *The Mummy Returns* was not a good gauge cos at the end you saw me in [computer graphics]. I just saw it the other day and went 'oh my god'. Eww."

The next role he hopes to play...

"I would love to do a romantic role sometime. The next role with Universal will most likely be an action comedy contemporary setting. No more long hair and Egyptian dialogue. But romantic [co-star]? Sure, someone call Julia Roberts."

The soft spot in *The Rock*...

"Being a parent is the most wonderful feeling you can ever have. I didn't think I would be a dad at 29 ...To see innocence at its purest form, it really takes me back. She has me wrapped around her finger, and everything pales in comparison. With the unbelievable responsibility to raise a child, I hope to be a good dad."

The possible future of his daughter in the entertainment industry...

"I wouldn't encourage or discourage, but I would make sure that she puts all her heart and soul into it. I could never ask for anything more. She will NOT be in the WWF, I guarantee you."

Whether he prefers wrestling or acting...

"I don't know how long I'll be able to balance both like I did this year - it is unbelievably arduous and hard. I filmed for five days and did WWF for two days ...But I'll say I'll always be part of the WWF, [because] as racy as the show can be, it always boils down to the fans and there's nothing greater than a live audience - 20 000 people - and they're giving you all that passion. So I never want to give that up, but acting is a long term goal of mine, so we'll see."

Face those fears or hunt down a haven – **hype** turns the tables with six showdowns, lock stock and barrel.

wildfire



pictures by janice chia

The best time to visit Wildfire is during the evening when you can enjoy Kallang River in the shimmering sunset, with the whole place bathed in an orange glow. If you're sitting inside, you'll notice the pinewood flooring, wooden furniture and chopped firewood that gives the restaurant a warm, home-like ambience.

For starters, we ordered prawns fried with breadcrumbs and chilli mango dip (\$9.90). The dip was so tantalising it stole the limelight from the prawns.

There are over 30 tongue-stinging chilli sauces available to complement your meal. Top of the list is the *Scorned Woman Hot Sauce* – it will bring tears to your eyes and set your tongue on fire. Another sauce on equal footing with Scorned Woman is *Dave's Insanity Sauce*, which will leave you with a burning sensation in your ears.

Blair's Sudden Death Sauce with Ginseng takes second place with a tangy and spicy flavour. Those who seek a Tabasco substitute should try *Busha Browne's Dukka Hot Pepper Sauce* from Jamaica.

We recommend the Frito Misto (\$21.90) – a platter of deep fried seafood served with salad and tartare sauce. Also try the popular wood-fired pizza, Oceana (\$19.90) – a mix of fresh prawns, mussels, octopus, fish, and grilled peppers.

Let the fire burn.

janice chia

hype readers: Buy any pizza and get a dessert free when you flash **hype** and your student pass. Valid till 30 Sept.



50 Stadium Boulevard, #01-02, Oasis. Tel: 6345 8432
Open every day from 11.30am to midnight.

fire in the belly on a magic carpet ride

Get swept away by the Arabian charm of this stylish eatery with its plush cushions and painted murals, never mind that you're burning with their hot spices.

Suspended bowls of faux-fire, beige leather seats and Arabian music take you on a magic carpet ride away from Holland Village to the Middle East, with Lebanese cooks whipping up exotic fare ranging from the mildly spicy to the flaming hot.

Al-Hamra, which is actually a food street in Beirut, something like our Boat Quay, has the traditional Lebanese touch with its murals and its cutlery.

Try the chef's special Cous Cous (\$22) with mutton stew, which is a wheat dish with a thick gravy sauce.

For something more substantial, try the Farrouj Meshwi (\$22), a half side of spring chicken grilled with Arabic spices.

Another recommendation is the Sheesh Taouk (\$22) – tender chicken cubes grilled with green pepper, whole mushroom, marinated with hot Lebanese spices. Concerns regarding the food being too spicy for you will be dismissed because you can actually ask the chef to go easy on the chilli. If that doesn't cool you down, try the traditional Ghajrai Bah (\$6.50), a traditional Lebanese pastry made with goat's milk.

You can also put out that fire with the famous Turkish coffee, which is the restaurant's most popular drink. Take a seat, try the food, be transported to the Arabian nights.

lim meng jin



pictures by lim meng jin

23 Lorong Mambong. Tel: 6464 8488
Open Monday to Sunday from 12pm to 2.30pm, 6pm to 10.30pm.

original sin



pictures courtesy of original sin

Start fearing for your soul – sinfully vegetarian **Original Sin** bucks the trend that vegetarian restaurants serve faux-this and faux-that kind of foods. With a spread of indulgent mezzes, pizzas and pastas, this restaurant will appeal to pure vegetarians and tempt even the non-vegetarians.

Step inside and you immediately get hit by the Mediterranean feel of the place, with unglazed pottery and tie-dye cloth hanging on the walls.

One of the chef's specialities is the Magic Mushroom (\$14) – a portobello mushroom stuffed with ricotta cheese that will melt the hearts of most diners. Other notable dishes are the *Principessa* salad (\$16), which is memorable with its serving of Portobello mushrooms, French beans and Spanish onions; the *Mediterraneo* pizza (\$20), a sinful combination of mozzarella cheese smothered in sun-dried tomatoes; and the chef's lasagna, which tantalises the tastebuds with its sweet and sour assortment of sautéed mushroom, red capsicum and tomato.

Original Sin takes the cake for being the only vegetarian Italian-Mediterranean restaurant in Singapore. Judging by the crowds there, they must have all forgotten to feel guilty about all that *sinful* food.

lim meng jin



Blk 43 Jalan Merah Saga #01-62 Chip Bee Gardens. Tel: 6475 5605 Open Monday to Friday from 11.30am to 2.30pm, 6pm to 10.30pm (no lunch on Monday); Saturday from 11.30am to 3pm, 6pm to 10.30pm; Sunday from 11am to 3pm, 6pm to 10.30pm.

forbidden fruit of the quiet mind

Finding this little organic café is like playing hide-and-seek. Tucked away at the far end of Novena Square's ground floor, **Living Thinks** is a perfect hideout for a meal in solitude.

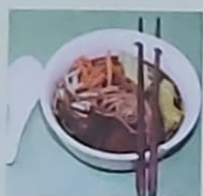
Half of this mini-grocer-cum-café is taken up by a seating area and the other half by shelves of fresh vegetables and organic pre-packed food, which gives the place a pleasant wheat-cereal aroma. Even though it seats only 11, **Living Thinks** is rather empty even during meal times.

With a menu of only six main dishes at \$4.50 each, the food lacks variety and comes in small portions, enough only for a filling snack. If you prefer spicy food, the Japanese buckwheat noodle in miso soup, at \$4.50, will taste bland, as the café does not serve chilli. The tofu burger, at \$4.50, with salad topped with salsa sauce on the side, is small enough to be finished within five bites but tastes good enough to want another one. If you prefer healthy food or are vegetarian, **Living Thinks** is a good place to try, as all its dishes are organic and are low in fat.

The beverages may daunt the less adventurous, so come with an open mind. After a long day, try the invigorating "Morning Call", a concoction of wheat grass, parsley and celery for \$5. The "Green Power" at \$5 promises to keep you full until your next meal, with a blend of wheat grass, granny smith apple and lemon.

eiktha murli khemlani

hype readers: Get 10% off your bill when you flash **hype** and your student pass. Valid till 30 June.



238 Thomson Road, #01-19 Novena Square. Tel: 6820 8223 / 6254 8223
Open daily from 11.00am to 9.30pm.



pictures courtesy of living thinks

Igor's – the main event



pictures courtesy of Igor's - the main event

Go gothic and join the living dead at Igor's – The Main Event, the only horror-themed theatre dining experience in Asia.

The frights begin way before this dinner rendezvous when you discover that it costs you a whopping \$75 or \$60 per person (Section A and B respectively). Before you cry out in horror, this is worth six hours of interactive entertainment, endless frights, and a hearty three-course meal.

At the entrance of the lavish "castle", zombies greet you, the "Victim". The Grim Reaper serves alcoholic concoctions in the *Devil's Distillery Bar*, the Devil's Kiss – a sweet, alcoholic house-specialty – which helps you brave the Demon's Dungeon upstairs where decapitated heads, chanting caged figurines and other awful surprises await.

On midweek nights (11pm onwards), \$15 will get you barrels of laughter and a free drink as the *Grand Haunted Hall* presents "Cabaret Wednesdays", a musical starring local drag queen Kumar. Come weekends, Lady Vampira and company draw you into their scandalous love lives in the castle *a la* interactive theatre. Feel free to bang and dance on their tables, and hoot your loudest.

Dinner comprises huge three-foot-long appetisers and dessert platters of strange Continental and Asian ensembles – like Japanese cold buckwheat noodles with Mexican meat wraps.

Grab a bunch of lily-livered friends and troop down to Igor's for some wicked fun!

faye shen

hype readers: Sect. A (\$60), Sect. B (\$50) when you flash **hype** and your student pass. Valid till 30 Sept.



#01-02A Oasis Building (Stadium Waterfront), 50 Stadium Boulevard. Tel: 6440 2725
Open Friday and Saturday from 7pm to 1am, and Thursday from 7pm to 12am.

horror awakes to still the beating heart

Imagine a place housing more than 50 statues of Buddha, situated at almost every bend. Walk into Bar Sa Vanh and you'll be greeted with statue after statue of Buddha, exotic Thai, Vietnamese and Laotian furniture and a koi pond right in the middle of the room, complete with a mini bridge.

Part of the IndoChine group of restaurants and bars, Bar Sa Vanh's decor draws its inspiration from Thai to Vietnamese to Chinese elements in one way or another, be it the Buddha paintings on the wall or the hand-crafted bronze cutlery. The entire bar is also littered with low-cushioned seats and tables for chilling out, as well as an authentic opium bed for customers to sit on. Get this, the bar even houses a three-storey-high waterfall. The IndoChine restaurant is located on the second storey, and on the top floor is a gallery where customers can view or even purchase precious artefacts.

With soft music playing in the background, kick back and unwind with friends here for a night of good conversation. The house red, IndoChine Red Dragon 1999 is a delectable light wine, and at a reasonable price too (\$56 per bottle, \$14 per glass). For the non-alcoholics, Bar Sa Vanh's soothing exotic Vietnamese tea will calm your nerves, especially after a hard day's work.

The biggest draw to Bar Sa Vanh is their delicious finger food platter – a fusion of Thai, Vietnamese and Laotian cuisine. From sun-dried beef to spring rolls, you can expect authentic flavours as the chefs themselves are Thai, Vietnamese and Laotian.

Serenity is the idea behind a night out at Bar Sa Vanh. Seeking solace in drinks doesn't get any more tranquil than this.

tay yi ling



pictures courtesy of bar sa vanh

49 Club Street. Tel: 6323 0503

Open Monday to Saturday from 5pm to 2am and Sunday from 5pm to 1am.

Of gods and dogs

After two plane rides, four nights in a hostel, 80 hours of travelling, mosquito bites, transsexuals, and countless dogs and gods, **Ivan Ke** discovers escapes are all the same.

I wanted to go for this trip. This was my escape from my life, my work and myself. I spent only a couple of days planning this. I just knew I needed to leave. And I took off, with my friend Louis, to Bangkok. I'd be coming back to face my own demons again, though; I wasn't convinced that I had really left.

Even on the plane, my heart was tied to the ground. Like the extra baggage that I thought I left behind. Demons, demi-gods or divinity weren't going to hold me back from this trip.

We take off. The plane seems to have trouble taking off.

Bangkok, 20 February

The grass is not greener on the other side. It's more like brown, even at night. In the middle of the night, you can make out the dry, scorched grass and the dying leaves in the swirl of exhaust trailing the bus.

You could say that escape was never so poisonous. This is Bangkok, city of the smog, masked men and smart swindlers — the feeling of freedom eludes me immediately as drivers ambush me, grabbing my arm and mouthing the words 'limousine'.

I can hardly see through the thick of cab drivers. On the outside, smoke obscures sight, and even street lamps are covered with the dust of urban desert.

I'm alone, save for Louis, my photographer and friend. Welcome to Bangkok.

The cab drivers actually push their cabs here, to either stop polluting the already smoke-ridden city, or just to save gas. While waiting in line to pick up passengers, they turn off their engines and push their taxis in pairs, moving along the queue. But it's no use, when it's our turn, we hop on and add to the clouds of exhaust in the air.

Rules of Engagement

Before we started, we initially planned to travel to Bangkok by coach, via Hat Yai (pronounced "Ha-at Cha-I"). Golden Mile Complex in Singapore has coaches. The coach tickets there range from S\$40 to S\$45. To get from Hat Yai to Bangkok costs another 120 baht (S\$5). Don't expect the trip to be short though — the trip from Singapore to Hat Yai takes 14 hours; the trip from Hat Yai to Bangkok takes another 14. If you can't take long rides, take a plane. Louis and I flew for about S\$240 each (inclusive of airport tax in Singapore only, no accommodation).

For student rates, call STA Travels at 6737 7188.

I think I'm in hell.

Bangkok, Ayutthaya 21 February

This is a trip on a student budget, so we're putting up at the International Youth Hostel, sharing a room with eight people at a time. Neither of us had any sleep. I was evicted from my bed in the middle of night by a fellow traveller, who claimed ownership over the bed I happened to be resting in. Having no energy to argue, I wordlessly moved to the floor. And Louis was kept awake by the hordes of mosquitoes.

We head for the train station that will lead us to the glory of Thailand's old capital: Ayutthaya.

I don't know why I'm here. I don't particularly have faith in God, and I'm not particularly religious. But the Thais are so devoted to their religion, that even on the crowded train, they offer a seat to a monk.

It's a two-hour ride, and I stare out; the train bends through the slums. And I'm looking around the corner for more. I'm looking for an answer. I'm looking for excuses. But I don't find any.

In the end, the excuses and the escapes are all the same. We're all on the same train, running into the same brick wall.

In the old city, the air is clearer. The

Rules of Engagement

On a budget trip in Bangkok, the best place to live is really in a student hostel. Although not as luxurious as hotels, hostels are safe and cheap, with native student volunteers helping you out in the city. You can get a bed (and only a bed) for about 125 baht (S\$5.20), and a non air-conditioned room for about 250 baht (S\$10.50). Air-conditioned rooms are available for rent at 350 baht (S\$15). Plus, you get to meet travellers around the world and have them regale you with tales.

Go to <http://www.iyhf.org> for more details.

proud spires of a forgotten age loom in the far south, catching our eye. We're convinced by a tuk-tuk driver to take a 200-baht-per-hour deal, and we're off to our first temple.

Dogs and temples are in equal abundance in Ayutthaya. Dogs dot the roads, and temples dot the map. Our first destination, the Great Chedi Chaya Mongkhon, teems with dogs. Only tourists match them in number.

You'd be surprised at how dogs add character to the stone Buddhas, sitting so peacefully in the temples of Ayutthaya. They look to find shelter in the shadows of idols, and they don't even accept food from strangers. Least of all, me.

Like the Buddhas, the old Thai architecture stands proudly, in defiance of Burmese victory centuries before. But any sanctity left is stolen by the multitudes of tourists that visit.

Snap. Snap. It's irritating, when Louis or I snap our camera shutter. Families come to visit, and flippantly strike the bells that were once used by monks for more



pictures by Louis Kwok

Rules of Engagement

In Ayutthaya, there are only fixed prices for tuk-tuks: 40 baht (S\$1.60) to one temple, 80 baht (S\$3.50) to two temples, 120 baht (S\$5) to three temples and so on and so forth. Or you could just rent one for 200 baht per hour. Our suggestion: just get a map of Ayutthaya (free from the any tourism outlet there), take a single-trip tuk-tuk to the most densely populated area with temples and walk. It'll cost you about 200 baht (S\$8.40) compared to the 400 baht (S\$16.80) we paid.

sanctimonious reasons. Devotees seem rudely shocked, but business-minded monks have turned the entrance of this temple into a marketplace — joss sticks and lotus flowers, talismans and idols. Even the portrait of some aged monk is up for grabs.

I suddenly envy the dogs. It's almost arrogant the way the strays roam the temple grounds and lounge lazily in the sun, oblivious to the touristy desecration.

The ever-present mongrel watches a monk puffing happily on a cigarette, like incense for some unknown god. In a moment, he's sprinkling holy water onto devotees from a bowl that he used as an ashtray.

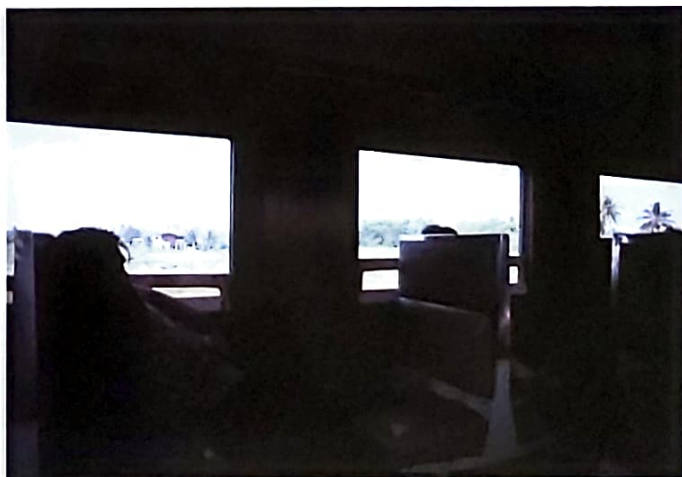
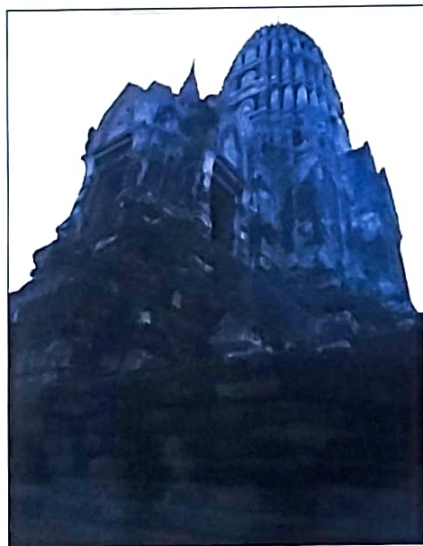
On our way back, Louis and I get booted out of the air-conditioned carriage. We've paid for a cheaper ticket. Now, I feel like a true Thai citizen, dispensed like chaff to the wind from the touristy carriage. We're forced to stand in the space between carriages, out in the open, where we can see the dusking sun. We may all be on the same

train, but we all have different rides. I paid for the cheapest.

Bangkok, 22 February

Mosquitoes in the hostel come in armies, methodically picking at your flesh. They circle, landing in coordinated flanks repeatedly, like so many assault choppers. The only thing they don't bother is the deity sitting peacefully and dustily before the counter, covered by faithful cobwebs and spiders.

Despite the mosquitoes, it's a good night. I meet a blind and hearing-impaired person named Tony, and he's travelling the world alone. This is a personal challenge for him and he's been on the road for five



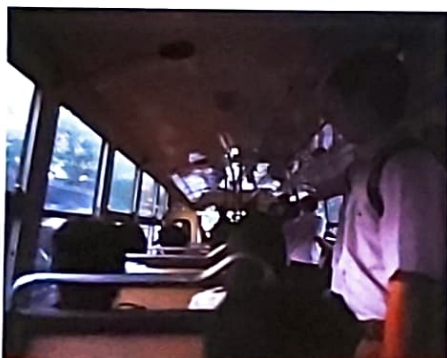
months now, staying at hostels and encountering other travellers and friends, who guide him through the wide world. He seems to have found his place in the world, and he'll be travelling back to England in a month.

I feel lucky and grateful for my senses, and suddenly, the escape isn't so bad after all. I start talking to more travellers, about what's around the bend.

Wanderlust kicks in again. For the first time, I seriously consider moving on, working my way up the continents, and not returning home. The hunger to see more, hear more and know more becomes more acute.

I don't really see the merit of looking at more temples again, but Louis and I decide to get lost in the bustling streets, snapping shots of life in Bangkok.

After Ayutthaya, the peace that was supposed to come with antiquity has faded



Rules of Engagement

If you really want to travel cheap, travel by bus. It's 3.5 baht (S\$0.14) per trip. The air-conditioned ones are 10 baht (S\$0.40). If you want to travel out of Bangkok, take the railway. The trip to Ayutthaya cost each of us 15 baht (S\$0.60) there and 20 baht (S\$0.85) back. To avoid traffic jams, take their version of the MRT — the BTM (it's in Thai, sorry). The price varies with the distance. Tuk-tuks are for the slightly richer. If you have little choice but to take one, don't fall for the "export shop" trick. They'll coerce you into letting them bring you to a jewellery shop, where they'll collect gasoline redemption tickets. If anything, use this to your advantage to save cash: agree on a low price (the ride should cost no more than 20 to 40 baht, depending on the distance), browse a couple of "export shops", and be on your way.

into annoyance. Walking in the vast temple grounds doesn't help either.

Our day is dominated with temple visits. After being brought to the "Lucky Buddha" (we find out later that every temple has a "Lucky Buddha"), we're left at the Golden Mount, where part of the Great Buddhist Relic is housed.

Apparently, King Rama I had built this to house the greatest of Buddhist Relics. But one by one, other Buddhist nations started to request their portion of the Relic. It was finally divided, and now the relic forms the Pagoda.

By the time we come down, our tuk-



tuk driver has abandoned us. So we walk back to see another huge reclining Buddha at Wat Pho.

I must admit, at Wat Pho, I saw a fraction of Ayutthaya's ancient glory restored. It's the glitter of all the gold you see — golden Buddhas, golden Pagodas, golden walls — and the size of the reclining Buddha resting beside the 108 monk bowls that resound with the continuous clink of coins.

Bangkok, 23 February

I'm doggedly living day-to-day. And I'm running out of cash, despite Thailand being such a cheap place. I feel trapped by people and budget, even as we make our way down to Chatuchak, the famous weekend market in Bangkok that spans six football fields.

I realise I can't wait to go home. It's interesting to watch people bargain. It's



Rules of Engagement

Don't believe what guide books tell you about the food. Street food is the best you can find, and it's safe to eat. A bowl of noodles costs a mere 15 baht (S\$0.60), and rice with dishes cost 25 baht (S\$0.90). Breakfast is especially delightful — for 20 baht (S\$0.80) you can get five chicken drumlets, toast and coffee, or a Thai version of nasi lemak.

like us, bargaining for more time for the urgent, and leaving too little time for the important. In the end, we're running on the same gas tank, and the corners that we've cut come back to haunt us. Like the little bargaining game that we play with all the gods of this world. Like the game we're playing now, trying to bring down the price for our bags.

We spend our last night in Bangkok passing by the infamous Phat Pong. Here, everything is illusory — you're never sure whether she's a man — when these ladies of the night grab your arm, so gentle, yet insistent, telling you all the naughty things they'll do. And it's all very sad.

It's amazing how loneliness eats at so many men, as they give in, one by one, to the raucous coaxing.

I leave, knowing that everything here will vanish with the day, just as my strength vanishes with each passing moment. I can't help but feel somewhat attached to the urban desert that's Bangkok, knowing that I'll be facing a cold evening in Singapore tomorrow, grappling with my demons and angels.

Maybe there's escape in that, too.

Of secret isles and silver seas

Forget about trudging down to Sentosa's man-made lagoons and the Maldives' luxurious opulence. **hype** picks out three sanctuaries from the 32 islands surrounding Phuket – some very touristy, while others claim to be a haven from the buzz. **Faye Shen** finds out the cost of a few hours' worth of regression.

Ko Phi Phi



You haven't experienced Phi Phi (pee pee) Island till you've fed the gibbons on Monkey Beach, or frolicked with the colourful fishes off the coral reefs off Lo Sama Bay. Made up of Phi Phi Don and Phi Phi Ley, it's not difficult to see why this duo of islands is affectionately coined "The Beauty and the Beast" by some seasoned Phuketters (Phuket travellers). Phi Phi Don – the large crescent shaped "Beauty" – boasts idyllic beaches enshrouding her northern and eastern coastline, while Phi Phi Ley – a "Beast" in the form of a gargantuan rock stump hugged by lush green foliage – beckons with its large cavern teeming with swallows.

These treacherous-looking overhanging cliffs and seductive isle combined, are home to some of the dreamiest coves and secluded beaches in the whole of Thailand.

Director Alex Garland immortalised this tropical fantasy on the big screen when he filmed *The Beach*, starring Leonardo Di Caprio and Virginie Ledoyen, on Maya Bay – one of the bayous found nestled in the bosom of the island couplet. Many day-trippers brave possible lacerations from the

many oyster shells lining the surrounding cliffs, nips from insects latched onto jellyfish stings, and pricks from the shallow-water-dwelling sea urchins just to plunge into the water for an eye-opening experience. "It was like swimming in a huge aquarium," mused Timothy Chia, 18, a second-year JC student who snorkelled in the waters off Monkey Beach last December.



Eager smiles and praise galore are all you'll get from spellbound day trippers like Lynette Poh, 20, a final-year polytechnic student who snorkelled in this fascinating

Phi Phi Island

How to get there cheaply: Book a package tour after you've bargain-hunted at the numerous tour booths off the Patong front beach (on Phuket itself). Don't buy into the "Hurry and book with us. The seats get snapped up very very fast!" nonsense that the tour agents make you believe – you'll get ripped off real badly. People naively pay the stated price of 2800 baht (S\$112) to get to Phi Phi island, but bargaining can knock down the tour price as much as 40 percent (to 1500 baht or S\$60). Half day tours on bigger boats are available for 500 baht (S\$20), but be ready to rough it out as creature comforts (food, drink, and a comfortable ride) of the "luxury" speedboat tours are non-existent.

What to expect:

The island tour packages are standard as tour companies duplicate each others' itineraries. The full day (7am – 5 pm) "luxury" tours (at 1500 baht) bring you to 11 different destinations around Phi Phi. You'll only snorkel at four places (Loh Sama Bay, Phi Phi's own Great Coral Reef – Hin Klang, Monkey Beach and Dragon King Bay), but you'll get to swim at islets like Khai Nai, work up a tan Leonardo Di Caprio-style on beaches like Maya Bay, and feed bananas to the gibbons on Monkey beach. The tour includes fresh mineral water, soft drinks, fresh fruits aboard the speedboat, a three-course lunch, masks and snorkels, life insurance, and lifejackets.

fishbowl, "The first time I dipped my mask into the water – that was it. That first glimpse was worth every cent of that 1500 baht (S\$60) we spent getting there."

A fellow British sojourner, Peter Margetts, pondered at how lucky Asians were while dining on a sumptuous lunch on a beach at Phi Phi Don, "Beauty is just at your doorstep. You don't realise how lucky you guys are – this experience could be a weekend getaway for you!" As if to affirm his statement, a rarely-seen school of grey dolphins swam by our speedboat as we departed from the Chao Le (sea gypsy) village off Phi Phi Don's beach.

Rang Yai

Thais are naturally friendly people and it's amazing where a smile and a jovial chat will get you. Make friends with just one of the handful of honest local tour agents, and he'll probably give you the best tip-offs for unheard-of sanctuaries that tourist-exploited Phuket has to offer. The best islands in Phuket often don't make it onto the local tourism route – Rang Yai is just one of those.

Located on the east coast of Phuket, Rang Yai is not totally unheard of, but people hardly come here due to the popularity of other places like Coral Island. Unlike the other blatantly commercialised islands in Phuket, there's only one shop on Rang Yai and it sells natively cultured pearls. Reminiscent of the days when Phuket was a relatively virgin sunspot, Rang Yai is enveloped in a blanket of time-forgotten peace.

The snorkelling is excellent as the

waters teem with over-friendly fish that can't wait to swirl around your ankle. This island won't remain a well-kept secret for long as tourist development is slowly threatening this sanctuary's relatively untouched natural resources. But for now, a few bungalows with a restaurant attached are the only traces of habitation to be found on this little piece of heaven away from the commercial clutter of civilisation.



Rang Yai

How to get there cheaply: Pay 30 baht (\$\$0.60) for a tuk-tuk to bring you to Sapam Bay at the east of Phuket. Catch a long-tailed boat from there. It takes you only half an hour and about 500 baht (\$\$20) to get you past the bay and around Coconut Island to this retrospective retreat.

What to expect:

Lots of peace and quiet. But if you're feeling a little fidgety, remember that tourism is on this island's agenda in the near future, so there are sporting facilities – like snorkelling, mountain biking, canoeing and mini golf – to keep you entertained for less than 300 baht (\$\$12) per person.

Ko Yao

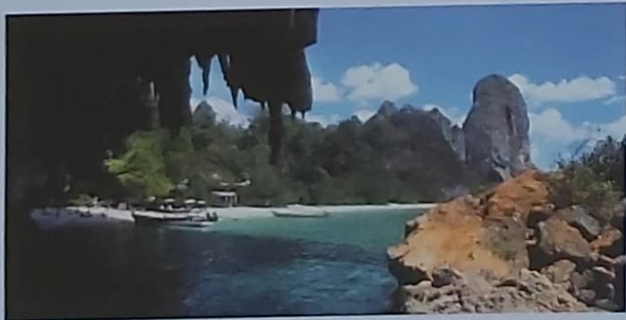
The overcrowded tour boats usually bypass the relatively plain-looking sister islands of Ko Yao Yai (Big Long Island) and Ko Yao Noi (Little Long Island) in favour of the enticing images of Phang Nga Bay's James Bond Island and the sea gypsy village of Ko Panyai that the travel brochures feature. But the nature-lover had better make a U-turn and head towards this island's sandy shores – the quaint ecosystem has enough picturesque beaches, corals, and wild orchids to make this experience memorable.

The lack of extensive tourism has left the white sandy beaches in pristine condition. Treasured finds like Ao Klong Son – one of the many beaches harbouring multi-coloured corals and small boulders, shaded by a row of evergreens – offer exclusive riches to keep because not

many people bother stopping by to explore its cliffs and coves.

It's rare that an adventurous soul will chance upon Ko Be – a gem of an islet located east of Ko Yao Yai. The reward comes in the form of a big white sandy lagoon, three other picturesque beaches, some of Phang Nga Bay's untouched limestone caves, and coral reefs that fringe this little paradise getaway.

But once the peace and quiet of the islands gets too deafening for a city dweller like yourself, catch the only long-tailed boat off the island at 6am and take a slow ride back to Patong beach where the pulse of civilisation bids your return.



Ko Yao

How to get there cheaply: The early bird really gets the worm where catching a boat to Ko Yao is concerned. Boats leave every morning from Bang Rong Pier on Phuket's north-east shore as early as 7am. It takes about one hour to get to Ko Yao after you catch a passenger boat for 40 baht (\$\$0.85). You have to pay about 20 baht (\$\$0.45) to charter between Ko Yao Yai and Ko Yao Noi. Strike up a deal with one of the long-tail boat owners who'll bring you to Ko Be for about 20 baht.

What to expect:

Expect spectacular scenery and lots of privacy, but most importantly, expect to stay overnight as the ONLY boat that leaves for Phuket comes between 6 to 7am the next morning. Thatched wooden bungalows are available for 300 to 700 baht (\$\$12 – \$\$28) a night at *Sabai Corner*. Hot water and an array of creature comforts can be found at *Long Beach Village* for about 500 – 1500 baht (\$20 – \$60) per night.

Vertical Limit

After conquering Mount Everest, there was no stopping Edwin Siew. **Eiktha Murli Khemlani** caught up with the dauntless mountaineer just before he left to confront the Death Zone in his most dangerous ascent yet.

NP graduate Edwin Siew Cheok Wai, is on his way to conquer yet another of the world's highest peaks. A month ago on 17 March, this 31-year-old left for a mountaineering expedition to Mount Xixabangma, the highest mountain in Tibet. At 8027m, it is also the 14th highest peak in the world. This will be Edwin's most perilous trip so far as he and his team members will be climbing the mountain using the "Alpine Ascent" method, which requires the mountaineers to ascend the peak without pre-built camps, extra oxygen or cooking equipment. If they succeed in reaching the summit, they will be the first team in Southeast Asia to successfully climb a mountain above 8000m in this style.

Besides battling the elements of nature and terrain barriers, they will also be staring death in its face. Edwin and his team are climbing the last leg of the mountain, also known as the "Death Zone", without oxygen – another first for Southeast Asia. With a death rate of one out of every eight climbers on Xixabangma, Edwin's fears are of the unknown and of dying. "How do I know I'm not going to be the next to die on the mountain? You never know what's going to happen up there."

He believes that good preparation is the key to overcoming his fears. "Preparation comes in two stages. Firstly, you have to prepare things that are within your control, like the equipment. Next is preparing yourself for the things that are not in your control, such as the weather or climbing conditions. For that, we've been trained to be focused on what we're doing and not panic when we face the danger up there." To practise for the climb, Edwin went trekking in Nepal and New Zealand. Back in Singapore, he climbed Bukit Timah Hill regularly and did some power training and strength building exercises.

Facing his fears and limitations helped Edwin discover his strengths and weaknesses and adapt to them. He described his unsuccessful attempt to climb Cho Oyu in 1997 where the expedition team was already on the last leg of the trek. A strong

wind wrecked the tent poles and blew their tents away. "Most of us had frostbite so we had to go back down the mountain again and take two doses of morphine. We didn't go up the mountain after that. We just went all the way back down and didn't force ourselves to go up again because we knew we couldn't do it."

But the endurance, courage and determination he gained from these experiences spurred him on to overcome greater difficulties. It was on the second attempt when he became one of the first from Singapore to successfully plant the flag on the peak of the "Goddess Mother of the World" – Mount Everest. Achieving the greatest height of his life was "exhilarating". A peacefulness and sense of freedom overwhelmed Edwin – "I felt that after fighting so long...nothing could defeat me now."

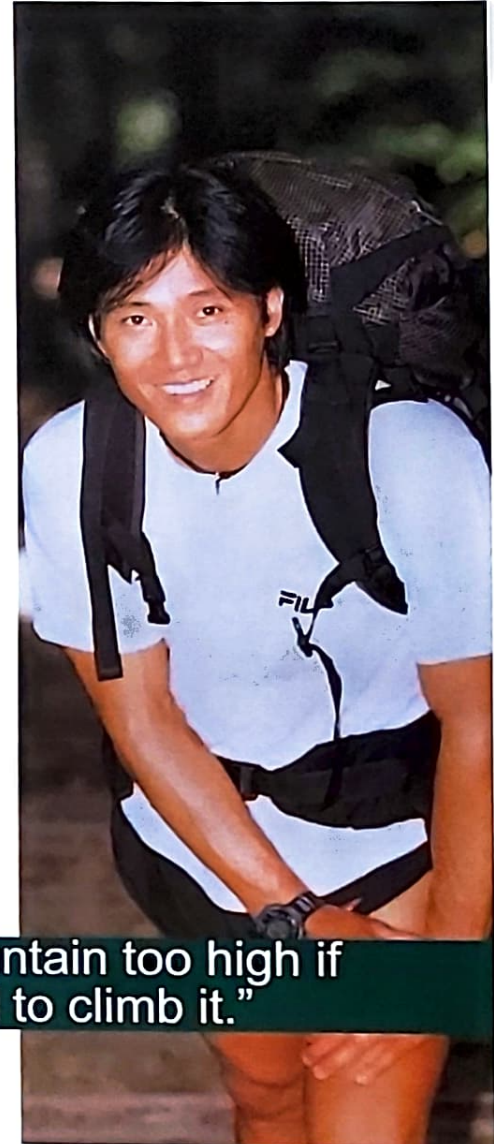
With the indomitable spirit that he possesses, it's no wonder that the sky's the limit for Edwin "There isn't a mountain too high if you're determined to climb it."

Reflecting on how his mountaineering experiences could relate to everyday life, the NP alumnus revealed that he wasn't the best student in school and had to study for a particular subject he disliked. "All I did was memorise without understanding it, which was why I didn't do well in it. This can be

"There isn't a mountain too high if you're determined to climb it."

applied to mountaineering. There are various techniques that you have to understand to overcome obstacles when you climb a mountain. You can't just memorise it without understanding what it is about and knowing how to use it. There are no fixed solutions."

Difficulties and sometimes seemingly insurmountable odds will often stand in the way of our goals. Edwin believes that to conquer our fears, we must take the first step and proceed from there.



pictures courtesy of np corporate communications department

"Fear of the unknown is in everybody," he says. "Depending on how you see it, that fear can be your closest friend or your greatest enemy."

The man behind the oxygen mask

- Currently works as an Outward Bound School instructor.
- Married to an air-stewardess wife.
- Nicknamed "Ultraman" because of his strength in carrying heavy loads.
- Graduated from NP in 1992 with a Diploma in Building Services Engineering.
- Was President of NP's Dragon Boat Club for two years.
- Likes drawing and collecting Japanese toy figurines, including Ultraman.
- Listens to modern jazz.



Conquering Mountains

Edwin's attempts in scaling some of the world's highest peaks

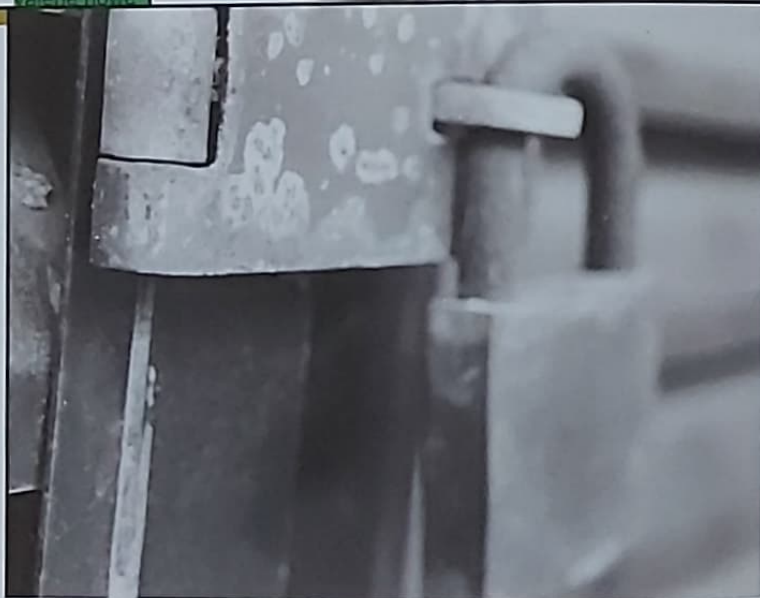
2002 Mount Xixabangma	8027m
2000 Mount Vinson Massif	4897m
1998 Mount Everest	8848m
1997 Mount Cho Oyu	8201m



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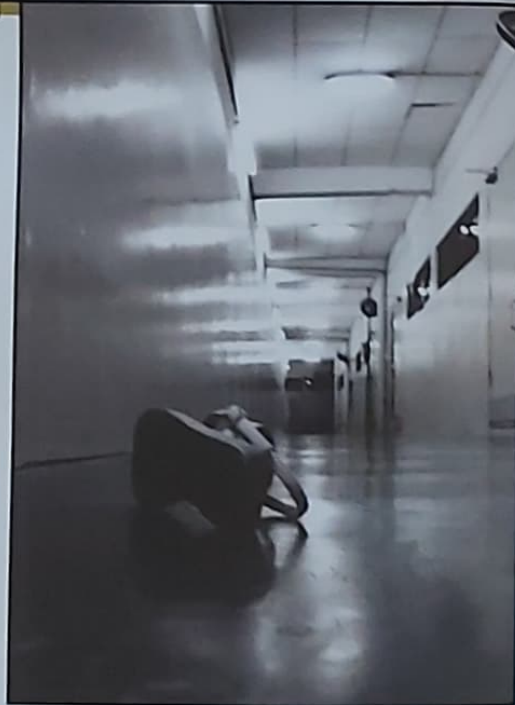




hiana tan

alice cheng

e-von yeung



tug of worlds



Singaporean youths are cultural chameleons —

we are Asians who effortlessly assimilate foreign culture. And we do it darn well too!

Faye Shen delves into this tug-of-worlds and finds out where our identity, as Asian youth in a melting pot of global and ethnic cultures, really lies.

Call 'em what you want – bananas (yellow on the outside, white on the inside), *pa-ching*, chee-nas, Hello Kitty wannabes – but that won't stop them from embracing everything that doesn't reek of traditional ethnic culture.

Let's all face it: a diluted Asian culture is an almost inevitable price to pay when you've grown up in a cosmopolitan "global city" like Singapore. National University of Singapore (NUS) Associate Professor of Sociology, Rose Liang explains, "The role of the media...and [the] penetration of multinational fast food [and] fashion conglomerates shape the taste and lifestyles of Singaporean teenagers."

Of course youths can always attribute our un-Asian guises and attitudes to what authors Sue Widdicombe and Robin Woolfitt say in *The Language of Youth Subcultures* – "contemporary social ills such as boredom inherent in an affluent society, the breakdown of the family and traditional authority patterns, materialism, too much sex and so on".

It's understandable why our clothes and our attitudes cause such discomfort among adults and fellow youths alike – most of our garb and gaits are loud, in your face, and extreme. Our visible attempts at fusion lifestyles have got the older generation

"The role of the media...and [the] penetration of multinational fast food [and] fashion conglomerates shape the taste and lifestyles of Singaporean teenagers."

- Rose Liang, Associate Professor of Sociology, NUS

worried that we might be singing a little too loudly to the tune of Bon Jovi's "It's My Life" as early as the 1980's. In fact the reason it was compulsory for us to learn our mother tongue in school was the government's effort to "combat 'negative' foreign influences". In a paper exploring Singapore's cultural and national identity, sociologist Dr. Chua Beng Huat says, "Mother tongue learning was meant both to help secure the racial identity of students and impart to them moral 'ballast' against foreign influence."

It's almost like saying that "if Chinese Singaporean children were pushed less hard to learn Chinese, they, and then the whole community, will become less Chinese", as Cherian George argued in his Straits Times article on the mother tongue and the search for identity.

Youth of the Nation

Watching the flamboyantly garbed Singaporean youth out on Orchard Road evokes a mixture of suspicion and anxiety in many parents and policy makers alike. Authors of *The Language of Youth Subcul-*

tures explain that youths have always been perceived as problems, and the image of our generation being a "progressive" class, and...an asset to the nation", has been lost over time.

Perhaps it's this perception of youth in general that keeps the adults wringing their hands when they see teens like Cedric Chew. Perpetually dressed in black, and donning the occasional "spikes and sh**" that characterise the black metal music couture, this 19-year-old audio engineering student's mantra in life is, "I do what I like, and I do what I want to."

You can sense that hard, anti-establishment



"I think you should at least give yourself a chance to learn new stuff."
- Mohamed Endra

edge in his voice as he professes listening to heavy metal band Metallica since he was eight and confesses that living the subversive lifestyle has made him a little less Asian.

"I'm just 180 degrees from the Asian conservative mindset. Asian culture and traditional values...is just a lifestyle that doesn't allow you to grow as a person." He reinforces his indifference toward ethnic tradition by adding, "Chinese New Year is just money for me."

However society is always quick to jump to conclusions and take portrayals – and people – at face value. The stereotype that teens who embrace other cultures have become less Asian has made it easy for onlookers to mistake 20-year-old Mohamed Endra for an Asian culture sell-out. This Temasek Polytechnic Electronics Engineering student dresses like a skater, plays some mean punk rock, but surprisingly, encourages



"I'm just 180 degrees from the Asian conservative mindset."
- Cedric Chew



"It's just a hobby where you dare to try different things... I will never do the tea ceremony! You can select what you like from (Japanese) culture and indulge in it." - Stephanie Loh

"Today's youths are looking for an identity that society can't give them. In fact society labels them and tells them they must conform to a certain image."

- Christopher Yip, PE Head of Department, Yishun Junior College

started to Cos Play, I began to learn more things... Heritage is rooted deep inside of you... when people start taking another culture and changing their thinking and traditions - I call that addiction."

Clive's description of "addiction" to a western culture is apparent in youths like ITE student Brennan De Souza, 20, who aren't comfortable with their stereotypical Asian images.

Brennan describes how he used to do "the typical Eurasian boy thing" - play football at the Eurasian Association, and then he found that "there's so much more to life than being just plain Eurasian."

Brennan now lives what he calls an "alternative lifestyle and culture" - one that allows him to "screw all the rules and don't subscribe to mainstream stuff..." and escape from being associated with the image of the "stereotypical Eurasian boy who is a Casanova, ladies' man and always partying".

"Today's youths are looking for an identity that society can't give them. In fact society labels them and tells them they must conform to a certain image," said Yishun Junior College's PE Head of Department, Christopher Yip.

Yip refers to the unflattering way that Singaporeans stereotype their own ethnic background and culture - The Chinese "Chee Nas", the Malay "Mats", the Indian "Mama Shop Man" and the Eurasian "Casanova" are all that youths don't want to be.

"They don't like what they're told to be, and so they go out and search for an identity and end up doing what they can do - imitating what they like."

Hotchpotch Heritage

Even whilst modelling ourselves after our western and eastern counterparts, most of us don't realise how difficult it is for Singapore youths to totally lose their heritage unless they've never been exposed to it at all. Temasek Polytechnic IT student Ashley Charles admits that he doesn't know much about his Indian heritage. But with the little knowledge that he has of it - thanks to history lessons in secondary school - this 19-year-old hip-hop head thinks it's cool that his ancestors invented mathematics.

"I think to most of us, heritage and culture is an in-bred kinda thing - fact is [that] you're born Asian and you can't run away from that... I don't see myself losing anything important so long as I hold on to the simple things - family, respect and all that kinda sh**" says Ashley who has been listening to hip-hop and living its lifestyle since he was a kid.



"Learning something that is close to my culture has helped me draw it closer to my heart." - Annaliza Bakri

others to rediscover their ethnic cultures too. "I do attend some Dikir Barat (Malay drum and song ensemble) shows... and I still like watching Bahas (Malay debates)... I think you should at least give yourself a chance to learn new stuff. Go and attend... even if you don't know anything about your culture, you'll learn!"

Singaporean youths have also taken on foreign culture traits a little closer to home. Japanese Costume Play (Cos Play) sees youths dressing up as their favourite Japanese Anime (animation) characters - complete with wings and other elaborate accessories - and assuming the character's role while walking around Orchard Road. It's easy to write these youths off as "crazy" or "Japanese wannabe", but Cos Play pioneer, Stephanie Loh will tell you otherwise. "It's just a hobby where you dare to try different things. Cos Play, J-pop, and Anime are only small parts of Japanese culture. I will never do the tea ceremony! You can select what you like from their culture and indulge in it."

The learning experiences gleaned from "indulging" in this subculture are apparent to 23-year-old NUS Arts and Social Sciences student, Clive Lee, who had to pore over engineering books, bargain hunt for materials, and even learn how to sew to make his Gundam (a Japanese Anime robot) costume. "When I



"Even in cultural dance, sometimes we're more prone to wanting to dance to hip-hop tunes, but at the same time there is a yearning to learn more about your own culture – that pulls us back"
Kanchana Varatharajalu

Annaliza grew up watching the graceful moves of the Malay martial art called Silat, but she knew that she'd be hooked to the sport for life after enrolling in a Grasio Silat school last September.

"Learning something that is close to my culture has helped me draw it closer to my heart. I think it's just a matter of trying out your own culture and getting involved."

She sees that youths who embrace other cultures have the comparative advantage of being "more streetwise and liberal" and even debunks the notion of their apparent cultural indifference, "Although they look like they are very individualistic and 'heck care' at times – but it's a façade... underneath all that, they're the same as us..."

"We listen to Linkin Park and stuff but that doesn't mean that we hate our traditions or something."

Youths who are plugged into their ethnic cultures also experience this temptation to imitate the western appeal that extensive exposure has brought about.

Local Culture "Creolised"

Annaliza echoes Kanchana's stance that ethnic culture is something to be proud of, and is no way inferior to another culture. "Don't start condemning your own culture," says Annaliza, "In fact it's best to start with your own culture before experimenting with other cultures. If you don't know about it...and you don't understand it, how will you build character – like values and being honest?"

While Singaporeans mourn the dilution of our ethnic cultural identities, Chinese national Ling Fan, is surprised that we should be worried at all – the situation is apparently a lot worse in China. "In fact Chinese Singaporeans keep more customs than us [in] China!" exclaims the 21-year-old NP Marine Offshore Technology student from the Chao Zhou province.

"Traditions like the exchanging of oranges at Chinese New Year haven't been practiced in China since my mum was a little girl! We've simplified a lot of traditions in China, and I think Singaporeans are more superstitious than the people in Northern China."

What the Singapore youth is, and will be, experiencing is an integration of both internal and external cultures as long as we remain a global city and an information hub. We may dress like "Ang Mohs" and listen to Ayumi Hamasaki – even if we don't comprehend the lyrics most of the time – but deep down inside, we're Asian to the core.

"I don't think youths purposely reject their culture, it's just that they are not exposed to it enough."

- Dr. Heather Ong, Coordinator of the Peranakan Association's Youth Group (perANAKan)

Like Ashley, many Singaporean youths are totally comfortable fusing both eastern and western cultures. However, not many adults share the thoughts of Dr. Heather Ong. The Coordinator of the Peranakan Association's Youth Group (perANAKan) seems to understand the Singaporean teen's choice of cultural equilibrium – "Most [youths] grew up following the mainstream trends of America and whatever campaign the Government is promoting... The Peranakan culture is only apparent at home, if at all. I don't think youths purposely reject their culture, it's just that they are not exposed to it enough."

"When kebaya tops and vintage fashion became hip, a lot more youth dug out grandma's baju to wear, with tank tops or jeans."

This exposure that Dr. Ong speaks of is one of the ways that has led youths like Annaliza Bakri, 19, to rekindle anew her interest in her ethnic culture.

"Even in cultural dance, sometimes we're more prone to wanting to dance to hip-hop tunes," shares Indian Cultural dancer Kanchana Varatharajalu, "but at the same time there is a yearning to learn more about your own culture – that pulls us back."

This second-year Early Childhood Education student picked up Indian classical dance when she joined Ngee Ann Polytechnic's (NP) Indian Cultural Society.

19-year-old Kanchana feels that her counterparts who subscribe solely to foreign cultures are losing out in a big way. "It's a misfortune that they're not in touch with their culture..."

"They should at least widen themselves to their own culture...now that they know about another culture...and get a more original perspective."

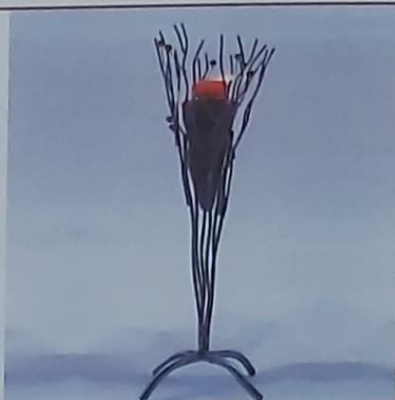


Whether you're a closet cult devotee or a prankster, **Faye Shen** finds mysticism and madness while transforming your quarters into a little shop of horrors.

Gothic Tea Light Holder

Reminiscent of the dark ages, this medieval-inspired ornament looks like it came from a sacred shrine in Transylvania. The candleholder's tentacle-like branches shimmer wickedly in the dark, as the blood-red crystal droplets reflect the light from a candle. Use this occult-looking piece to add that gothic touch to your drab abode. Definitely a collector's item for the hard core fright fanatic.

\$33.90. Additional seal wax candles at \$3.90 each. Available at Wax Lyrical, #03-07, Centrepoint.



Spit Scream Halloween Motion Sensor

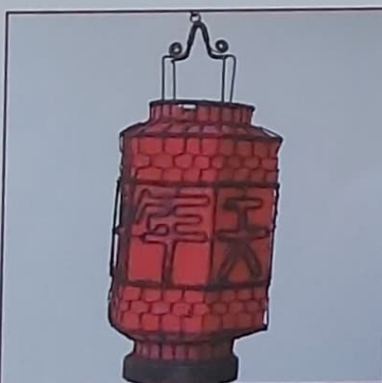
For those of us who dig cheap thrills, these cheeky ornamental wall masks will elicit a scream or two from family and friends. Whether it's the face of Frankenstein, a witch or a skull hanging on your wall, these motion-sensitive masks cackle and spit water at unsuspecting passers-by. Plastic-clad frights have never been so multi-sensorial!

\$29.90. Available at The Magic Wand, #02-20, Orchard Point.

Spiky Army Slippers

You've got a bone to pick with the world – and you want the world to know it! If overt guerrilla warfare is on your agenda, then these rubber-spiked flip-flops will prove a trusty addition to your military garb. Watch it though, these spiky slippers scream "NO TRESPASSING!" mercilessly – you might actually get a self-inflicted abrasion on your ankle while walking. Ouch.

\$29.90. Available at Craft V, #04-09, Tampines Mall.



Traditional Chinese Lanterns

A small candle flame flickers within the scarlet rice paper encased in black wicker, casting a bloody hue on that little corner of your room. Ethnically haunting, this traditional lantern could have been plucked straight off the set of A Chinese Ghost Story. The lantern is as tall as a small soft-drink bottle, so you can add that fashionable Oriental twist to your room's décor without mum thinking that you've turned temple thief.

\$38.50. Available at Lim's Arts & Living Pre Ltd, #02-01, Holland Village Shopping Centre.

hype explores the fear of the supernatural, fear of the mundane, and the fear of life itself in our literary picks.



Evil Whispers
by Owl Goingback

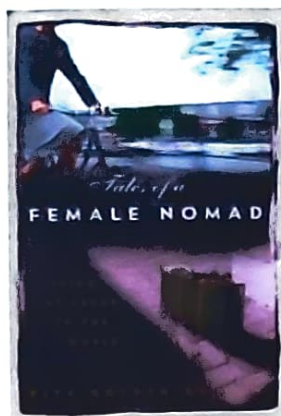
Nature-loving Robert and Janet took their little daughter, Krissy to what they thought was a peaceful and quiet Florida town for a week-long vacation. It was a small laid-back community – until the accidental intrusion of innocent Krissy upon forbidden ground. She incurred the wrath of the powerful spirit of ancient sorcerer Mansa Du Paul when she accidentally stepped near the black lagoon where his bones had lain for more than a century. What followed was a series of evil whispers pervading young Krissy's mind to lure her on a path of no return in exchange for his resurrection.

Evil Whispers scores points for engaging its readers, who find themselves sharing the chilling desperation of Janet and Robert, as the couple go to all extremes to bring back Krissy from Mansa's control.

Amidst the dramatic yet heart-rending plot, readers will also like the calm medicine man, a Seminole, Jimmy Cypress, who helps the couple battle against Mansa.

Author Owl Goingback has illustrated the setting, the main characters, and their emotions with precise and well-timed descriptions. However, the entire plot is not that unusual and unless you are a hard core horror fiction fan, it is unlikely that you will find yourself getting hooked on the book, especially if you do not fancy far-fetched characters with exaggerated beliefs and actions. *Available at Kinokuniya.*

janet chin



Tales of a Female Nomad
by Rita Golden Gelman

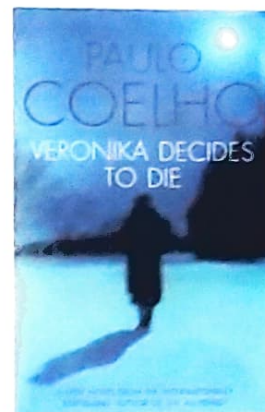
"1985. I am living someone else's life," she begins. Rita Golden Gelman's sense of uncertainty and acute self-awareness is what first strikes you in her book *Tales of a Female Nomad*. "It's a good life, filled with elegant restaurants, interesting people, and events like the Academy Awards and the Grammys," she continues, emphasising the life well-lived, and going on to tell us that the rich life is not necessarily a good one. Gelman focuses our attention to the details, taking us from the beginning of her travels – first with her separation with her husband, when she starts travelling to Mexico, to living among the natives, re-learning Spanish and re-discovering herself. Her divorce further punctuates her need to discover, and soon she travels to Guatemala, Israel and parts of Asia. All this at age 48, after 24 years of marriage.

Written like a travelogue, enhanced by her simple language, her story-telling techniques weave a marvellous tale.

It's a story that drives home her fears, her re-invented lifestyle and her courage. She discovers herself, encourages others to live, go places, and abandon all fears, as she had, when she left her life of riches and high society without a backward glance.

She aptly sums it up in her preface: "There has to be more than one way to do life. There is." *Available at Borders.*

ivan ke



Veronika decides to die
by Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho writes a haunting tale about an intelligent, attractive woman who has everything going her way in life – a loving family, a stable job, an exciting nightlife, and a stream of attractive suitors. All very satisfactory, and hardly a mundane existence. But a feeling of emptiness looms in her life – which eventually engulfs her will to live.

One November morning, Veronika gulps down four packets of sleeping pills and anticipates the sweet reprieve of death. It's easy to be drawn to her quirky mannerisms – like the way she gets bored while waiting for death and picks up a magazine to pass time.

Such ironic, even comical, thoughts resurface in Veronika's mind after she wakes up in Slovenia's asylum, only to be told that her heart is irreversibly damaged by the drug overdose – so it's only a matter of days before she dies after all. You find yourself hankering to read on as Veronika experiences fear, longing, anger, rebellion and even sexual awakening, while living out her last days in the asylum.

A chilling understanding overwhelms us as Veronika draws us into her existence, for her problems, fears and thoughts are not unfamiliar. Like us, she questions life itself – its worth, its meaning and its experiences – and finds that as time speeds towards her death, she begins to hope against hope for a second chance at life.

This heartwarming novel is a poignant reminder that "every second of existence is a choice that we all make between living and dying" as we are drawn into Veronika's fears, and learn to embrace the enigma of life itself.

Available at MPH.

faye shen

Star Wars Episode 2: Attack of the Clones

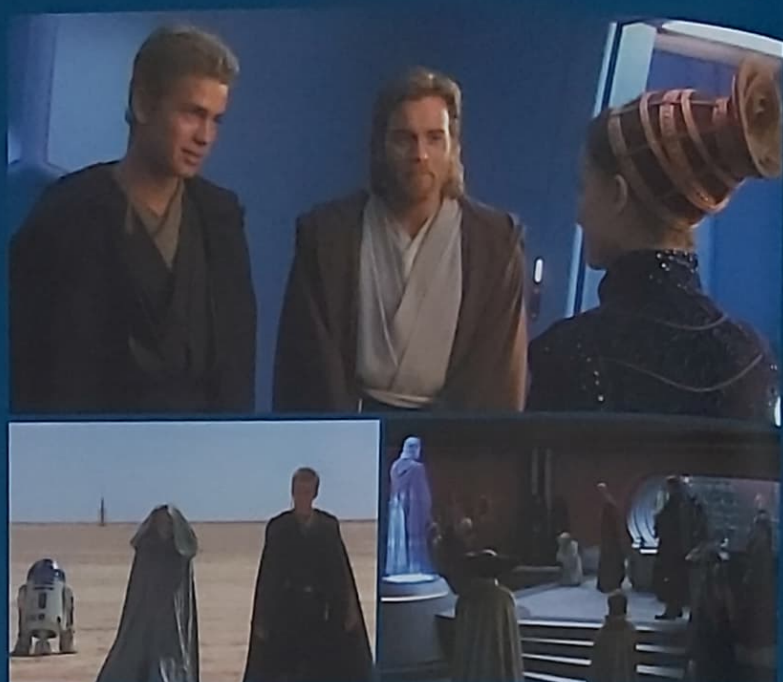
ivan ke

What Anakin the "Mannequin" Jake Lloyd did with his little cutesy, expressionless face in Episode One, Hayden Christensen will undo with his brooding wit, sharp looks and blazing blue eyes in Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones. Christensen, with his brooding boyish looks is set to breathe some much needed life to Anakin's dark character, giving the pre-Darth Vader some of his winsome smile.

Episode II will also celebrate Anakin's character as a hero of the Clone Wars and explore his descent to the dark side. George Lucas promises a much darker tone to the movie, after much criticism from critics and fans alike, on the somewhat more gimmicky *Episode I: The Phantom Menace*.

Natalie Portman and Ewan McGregor will reprise their roles as Padmé Amidala and Obi-Wan Kenobi. Portman will don a less elaborate dress than Queen Amidala's forbidding wardrobe as Senator Padmé Amidala, while Ewan McGregor, more in the semblance of Sir Alec Guinness, will take on the robes of revered Jedi Master Obi-Wan Kenobi. The most impressive addition to the cast will be Christopher Lee, definitive villain and acting veteran, who will be playing the bad guy, Count Dooku. Look out for a romantic script with equally powerful political nuances. Yoda fights as well.

Opens 16 May 2002.



Screen shots © Lucasfilm Ltd. & TM. All Rights Reserved. Digital work by ILM.

The Scorpion King

leau yhin lynn

After his brief appearance in *The Mummy Returns*, which impressed the bigwigs enough to give him a starring role in a spin-off based on his character, Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson is back again to rule the world as *The Scorpion King*.

Set in the ancient Egyptian city of Gomorrah, the desert villages are plundered and almost wiped out. For revenge, one of the peasant survivors, an assassin by the name of Mathayus (The Rock), takes on the heavy responsibility of eliminating the sorceress (Kelly Hu), who is helping the tyrannical ruler (Peter Facinelli) annihilate the inhabitants of the desert.

Inspired by a real Egyptian pharaoh who was a legendary warrior, the movie shows how the heroic peasant conquers obstacles and enemies to become the first pharaoh of Egypt, the Scorpion King.

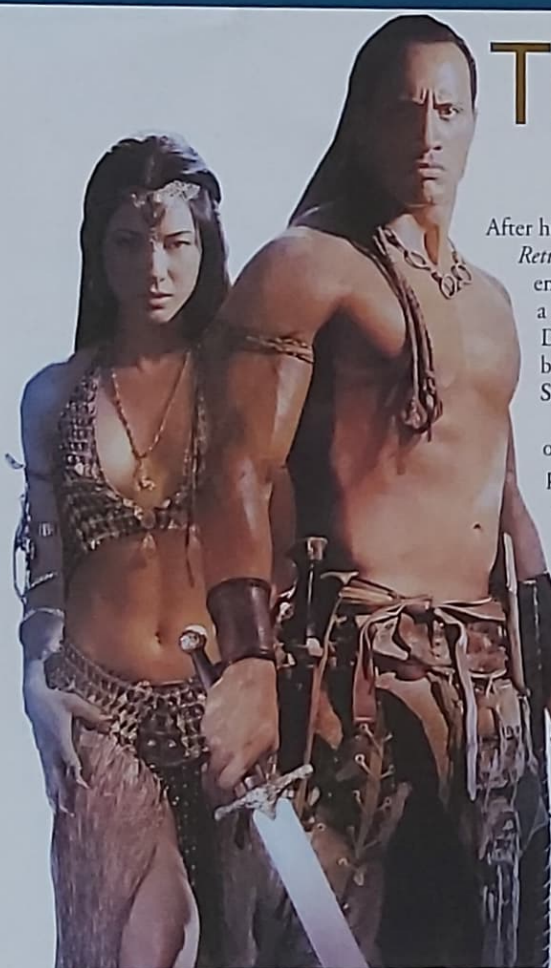
Directed by Charles Russell (*The Faculty*, *Erase*), the effects are not too blatant, but expect to see a lot of sand, armies, battles, battles and more battles.

"*The Scorpion King* has all the elements of a classic story. It's *Indiana Jones* and *The Magnificent Seven*, it's a story about discovery, vengeance, love," The Rock said in an interview with Entertainment Tonight. "The fighting scenes in this movie are going to be the most kick-ass fighting scenes you've ever seen. No question."

Apart from grimacing, knitting his eyebrows (as opposed to eyebrow-raising), looking strong and muscular to portray the role of a brave conqueror, not much acting seems to be required of The Rock. Raising the eye-candy quotient on the other hand, is the temptress of a sorceress Kelly Hu, who is scantily-dressed in barely-there outfits throughout the movie.

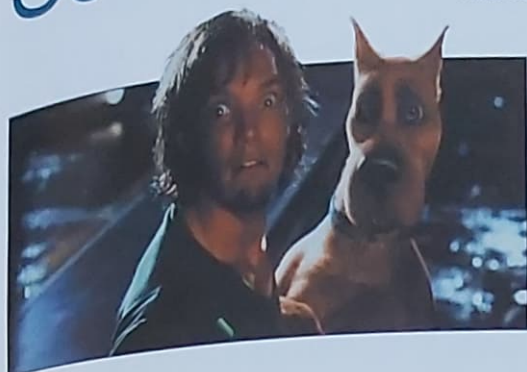
The show is worth a peek, especially for those who want to witness The Rock's glory on the big screen again.

Opens 19 April 2002.



Scooby-Doo

ivan ke



Warner Brothers must have been crazy when they called him the greatest superhero of all time. No, not Superman. It's *Scooby-Doo*, from the popular 1969 television series. It's directed by Raja Gosnell, whose work includes *Big Mama's House* and *Never Been Kissed*, so watch for laughable efforts at direction. Although Gosnell is known more for his work as an editor on popular movies like *Mrs. Doubtfire* and *Pretty Woman*, his attempt to break into directing seems a brave transition if not an illogical one.

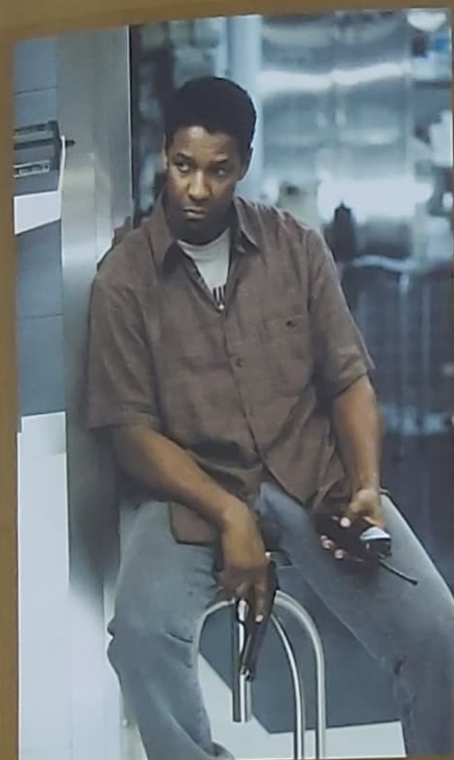
Somewhat a resurrection for Scooby from the small screen to the big, this lovable dog will be joined by venerable vampire slayer Sarah Michelle Gellar (*Cruel Intentions*), Freddie Prinze Jr. of teenage Hollywood horror flicks; and Rowan Atkinson of *Mr. Bean* and *Black Adder* fame. Scooby will lead this admirable cast to solve paranormal crimes, all the while riding in a van called the "Mystery Machine".

But with a weak script and stereotypical character roles, one wonders if the movie will retain the adult wit and subversive content of the original cartoon, as well as its popularity (it was voted Cartoon Network's favourite cartoon in 2000).

Opens 14 June 2002.

John Q.

alyssa tan



"Give a father no options and you leave him no choice".

Oscar winner Denzel Washington plays John Q. Archibald, an American blue-collar worker forced to take part-time jobs. Fate takes a turn for the worse when his son Michael (Daniel Smith) collapses on the Little League field due to an undetected heart problem.

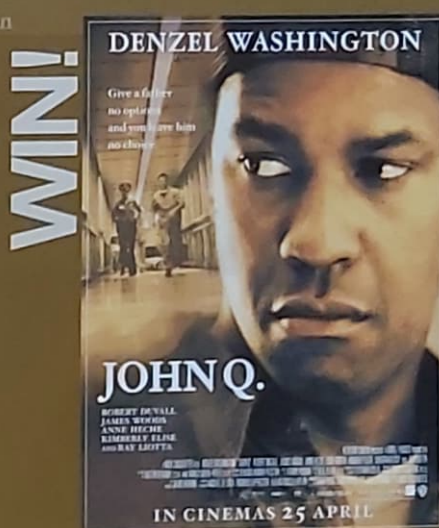
Financially strained, John and his wife (Kimberly Elise) cannot pay for their son's heart transplant when the callous hospital demands a down payment for the quarter-million dollar operation.

Anne Heche and James Woods star as the officious hospital administrator and arrogant surgeon who would rather discharge than treat the boy, as he is not covered by insurance. Things take on greater urgency – John is provoked into taking the hospital's emergency room hostage to force them to operate on his son.

John Q. seems to echo movies where honest have-nots resort to extreme measures in desperation, and are supported by the sympathetic crowd. Not unlike *Mad City*, which starred John Travolta as a man who lost his job and held a museum hostage to demand his job back.

A melodramatic movie showing how a callous society disregards compassion because of money, John Q. will have you cheering alongside the mob rooting for him outside the emergency room.

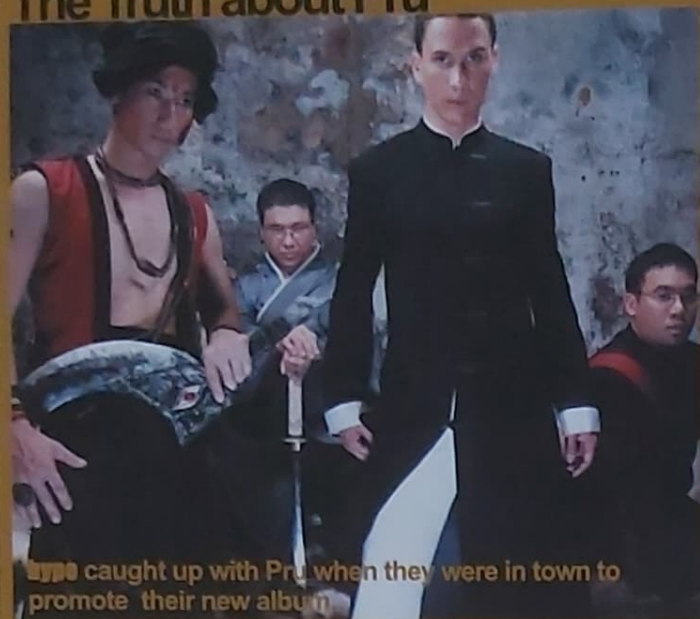
Opens 25 April 2002.



Be the first 10 to answer a question correctly and you stand to win a a pair of tickets to watch John Q! Just tell us the cost of Michael's heart transplant operation. Email your answer, full name, student number and contact number to hypemagazine@mail.com

all release dates correct at time of printing

The Truth about Pru



Although a Top 10 darling on Thai charts since their debut last March, Pru felt "really lucky and honoured" simply to be nominated for the MTV Asia Awards among the veterans and never expected to win. "None of us has picked up an instrument in 15 years," smiled lead singer and songwriter Noi S. Clapp. His brother Sukie, Pru's guitarist and producer, added, "He just composes these melodies in his head and sings them to us."

The band found their name in a young boy Pru – short for Prewitt – whom Noi encountered at a Bangkok intersection. "I never got to know him, but I could feel his deep sorrow, serenity, strength and anger," explained Noi on how Pru's direction was influenced.

Sukie remarked that the blend of Noi's "sappy romantic songs" and their individual styles gave Pru its distinctive "raw" melodious sound that's "different from most Thai bands".

Pru shines brightest during their live concerts, where Noi's charismatic performance is punctuated with kung-fu-ballet moves inspired by "whomever I believe is beauty on ground or in the air – Michael Jordan, David Beckham when he drives a free kick, Bruce Lee, a matador".

To truly experience Pru, you'd have to see them for yourself when they decide to return to Singapore.



Pru
BMG

WIN this single! Send your name, contact, student number and the name of this CD to hypemagazine@mail.com

China Dolls, move aside! The new Thai band hitting the headlines is Pru. "Still Waiting" stormed to the top on Thailand's biggest AC Chart and "If Only" held the number one spot for five consecutive weeks on Fat Radio, Bangkok's hit alternative station.

Pru's melodic style is greatly influenced by lead singer Noi, who draws his orchestral and melodious inspiration from listening to instrumental movie soundtracks.

Their sound is comparable to bands like Wet Wet Wet and Bread. "Romeo and Juliet" is our best bet – this song sounds like a Thai version of Bic Runga's hit "Sway" from the soundtrack of *American Pie*.

Pru's passion for music clearly comes through as intense and emotional, where Noi sincerely sounds like he's crooning to you and you alone. Their soothing, indie-rock style makes this album suitable for drive-time tunes.

Look, you listen to Japanese pop even though you probably don't understand the language. Give Thai a try!

tay yi ling



Too Phat: Plan B
Universal

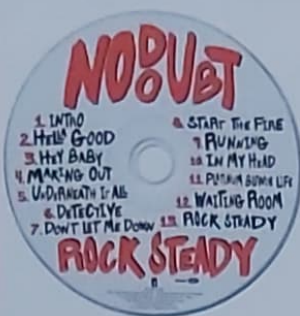
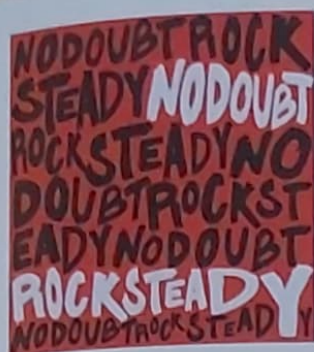
WIN this CD! Send your name, contact, student number and the name of this CD to hypemagazine@mail.com

Plan B, the sophomore album of Too Phat looks to propel the Malaysian rap duo to the top of regional music charts in no time. Although **Plan B** took less than a year to produce, the style and sound supersedes their debut album, *Whuttadilly*, which churned out three number one hits. In **Plan B**, Too Phat creates a more ethnic Malaysian flavour by digging into old local songs instead of trying to pass off as another Afro-American rap group. The first single "Anak Ayam (Freak to the Beat)" loops an old Asli tune under Too Phat's funky motor-mouthed rapping.

However, the roots of western hip-hop are still evident in tracks like "Wanna Battle" and "Pink Lady" – not unlike the sounds of Eminem, Dr. Dre and Snoop Dogg. Too Phat displays some groove in tracks like "You", "Just A Friend" and "What You Want".

Too Phat tops the thoroughly enjoyable album with a parody of the TV game show "Who Wants To Be An Millionaire?". The spoof interlude leads into "Illion", which discusses society's obsession with money. The social messages behind **Plan B** make it more than just another loud, angsty, hip-hop album.

lester lee



No Doubt: Rock Steady

Universal

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"Hey baby, hey baby, hey!"

This is undoubtedly the catchiest chorus on people's lips – the lyrics to the first single of No Doubt's latest effort, *Rock Steady*. "Hey Baby" has shown audiences that No Doubt is back with a whole new sound. Taking leave from heavy rock like their previous album's hit, "Ex-Girlfriend", "Hey Baby" sounds more like something from the likes of Britney Spears-meets-Aqua.

That disturbing thought aside, the saving grace is of course Gwen Stefani, who still dazzles with her teasing girlish vocals and pouty style.

Their fifth album to date, No Doubt ventures into a more exploratory sound in this album with a mix of hip-hop, reggae and pop sounds fused with their signature modern alternative rock. The diversity varies widely – "Underneath It All" and "Start The Fire" are done in a tasteful reggae and pop-rock mix. "Running" kicks off in electronic-Erasure-style, easing into a considerably slow number for a band like No Doubt.

"Making Out" is one of their best, performed in true No Doubt ska fashion, with Gwen Stefani's signature drawl. Lose the unnecessary Nazi protest against rock bands sounding "commercialised", and keep an open mind.

tay yi ling



Kosheen: Resist

BMG

Born in the UK, this new electronica group became a more cohesive unit once singer/songwriter Sian Evans joined Bristol dance natives Darren Decoder and Markee Substance. Making their Kinetic Records debut with *Resist*, Kosheen presents the newest sounds of this genre with hip-hop/soul-driven grooves that even caught the attention of trance guru John Digweed.

Defying classification, this drum n' bass group has produced a remarkable debut album. With a good mix of Evans' emotional vocals, and Darren's stirring mixes, the enigmatic hit, "Hide U", comes across, at worst, a little raw. And this texture adds to the whole feel of the album, which can be described as more personal than traditional drum n' bass.

With outstanding tracks like "(Slip & Slide) Suicide", beautiful melancholia fills the rest of the album. "Let Go", an aching downbeat number, calls for lost love, exhibiting Evans' frank, stark interpretation of the lyrics. "Resist", in all its glory, leaves a strong impression on our senses.

A remix of "Hide U" adds an unexpected touch to end off.

lim meng jin



Eastern Sunrise 1+2

Universal

WIN this CD! Send your name, contact, student number and the name of this CD to hypemagazine@mail.com

Plush velveteen couches, whiskey on the rocks, lava lamps, and a hint of karma sutra sums up the mood of *Eastern Sunrise*. Boasting music "from asia to the world", this double CD compilation is the first in a series of albums featuring Asian musicians who've mastered the art of fusion.

Those who are into non-mainstream ear candy will be mesmerised by the addictive flow of the album. Both CDs cover an assortment of musical lilt and textures, featuring underground favourites like trip-hop guru Talvin Singh's exotic blend of Indian Banghra and electronica in "Dubla", three-time Downbeat magazine "best percussionist" winner Trilok Gurtu's hindi-jazz concoction "Peace of the five elements", and Digital Cutup Lounge's unmistakably oriental "Dream of Po Wah Yuen".

Ice-queen Faye Wong's alternative eastern-pop "Erratic" eases familiarity back into the underground beats of the album. But don't expect clean-sounding mainstream beats from house choices like Nelly Furtado's "I'm like a bird" – Bollywood meets Hollywood in this "Nelly vs Asha" remix of the hit single. Nelly croons intermittently to the strains of the sitar and the soprano sounds of long-time Hindi film diva Asha Bhonsle.

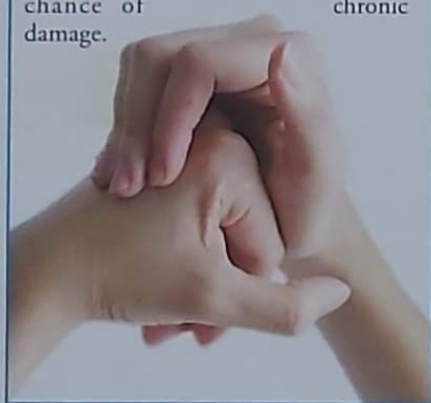
faye shen

things that make you go

You go through your daily routine of brushing your teeth and applying deodorant every morning. You think of hanging out at a juice bar after school. Guess what **Alyssa Tan** found out about some everyday things you ought to fear.

Cracking knuckles

Stop that bad habit of yours which arises whenever you are bored. Cracking knuckles not only makes your fingers look knobbly but also "stretches the soft rubbery ligaments that support the joints", said Dr. Alison Gee in the March issue of *CLEO* magazine. Writing about knuckle cracking, Dr. Karl Kruszelnicki said studies have shown that cracking your knuckles often during youth could leave you with swollen ligaments later in life. A study that looked at 300 people who had been "cracking knuckle joints for 35 years" found that their sample group had "slightly swollen joints" and weaker hands – the 300 people had a quarter of the grip strength than what should have been. As Ian York stated in "Knuckle Cracking: The Untold Story" at urbanlegends.com, you are stretching your ligaments repeatedly as you crack your knuckles – leading to a higher chance of chronic damage.



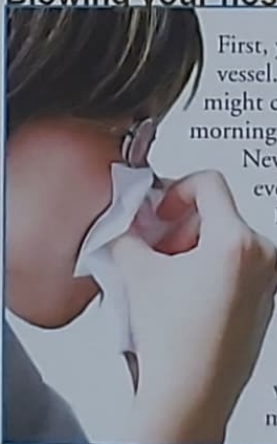
Deodorants

If you are dependent on deodorants or anti-perspirants, you might want to start looking for an alternative to fighting body odour. Recent alarms have been raised on the Internet about the claim that anti-perspirants cause breast cancer. Thankfully, the American Cancer Society and other medical authorities debunked these claims. However, although anti-perspirants may not be carcinogenic, deodorant is definitely lethal when used in excess. 16-year-old English boy, Jonathon Capewell, who was "obsessed with smelling nice", suffocated to death after "months of repeatedly spraying his entire body with deodorant". The teenager's obsession led him to use an overdose of deodorant, which he applied in his poorly ventilated room. "Jonathan Capewell had 10 times the lethal dosage of propane and butane in his blood when he suffered a heart attack and died July 29," said coroner Barrie Williams, ruling Capewell's death as accidental. Now you have to decide between smelling nice and staying alive.



Blowing your nose

First, you heard that holding a sneeze could rupture a blood vessel. Then your mother warned you that sneezing too hard might cause a rib to crack. Having to blow your nose every morning is bad enough if you have sinus problems. Now *Milbrook News*, a weekly paper in Alabama has reported that you could even get a stroke if you blow your nose too vigorously. However, Dr. Tan Ee Poh of Medilife Clinic reaffirmed that a blood vessel in the eye could burst as blowing one's nose elevates the blood pressure of the arteries and veins in the head. At the same time, he said that he has seen more patients who have cracked their ribs by coughing too much. Ultimately, you should settle for wiping your nose gently – that would save you from sinus maladies and also from embarrassing yourself in public.



Red food

Red dye is used in many Chinese snacks, like *ang ku kuay*, red eggs and *char siew pao*. You may well have been eating remnants of bugs while laughing at the contestants on *Fear Factor* who had to eat slimy insects. The colour of the dye, carmine, a natural red colouring agent for foods, drugs and cosmetics, is achieved through crushing "the dried bodies of female scale insects (cochineal beetles)". If you aren't already squirming about this revelation, you should know that carmine has negative effects on some. It can "induce mild hives and itchy skin" and in some cases, even "life threatening anaphylactic (allergic) shock", said Dr. James L. Baldwin, an allergy expert from the University of Michigan.



Toothbrushes

Every morning you introduce bacteria and germs to your mouth when brushing your teeth. Your toothbrush could be a breeding ground for bacteria and germs, especially when it is kept in the most unclean room in the house – the bathroom. "Every time the toilet is flushed, millions of germs are propelled into the air, many of which settle on your toothbrushes," writes Dr. Richard T. Glass, professor emeritus of oral pathology at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Centre. These tiny organisms are often the main culprits behind recurring infections, colds and gingivitis. Those advertisements advising you to change your toothbrush once every three months were not a commercial gimmick – Dr. Glass advises changing your toothbrush every two weeks! A cheaper alternative you could take is to buy a toothbrush that comes with a cap, but the only problem is that an enclosed space keeps the toothbrush warm and moist – and that makes a pleasant abode for bacteria.



Fizzy Drinks

Bubble tea just might be a life-saver because fizzy drinks cause dizziness and fainting spells for some. "A rare disorder (deglutition syncope) can cause people to faint when they swallow," reported the BBC's online health news. Dr. Brian Olshansky of the Loyola University Medical Centre in Illinois tested a 72-year-old man who reported feeling faint whenever he drank cold fizzy drinks. Dr. Olshansky "plugged the man into a heart monitor and gave him a cola" and observed that the chilly carbonation caused the man's heart rate and blood pressure to plummet, thus resulting in the dizziness. Dr. Tan Ee Poh said that a case like this is "idiosyncratic to individuals", so there should be no cause for worry. Still, the possibility of such an occurrence exists, so advise your Coca-Cola addicted friends to cut down on their daily intake of carbonated drinks anyway.



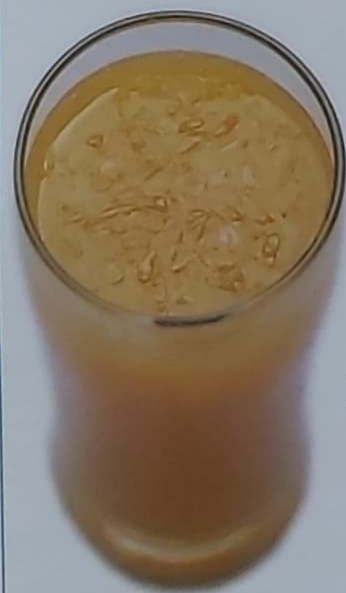
Hot showers

A relaxing bath could leave a million organisms on you. Bacteria thrive in warm and moist areas, so your attempt at killing germs and getting clean could just have the reverse effect. Hot water is also one of the causes of hives, a rash provoked by heat. In humid Singapore, a refreshing cold shower might be a better way to keep clean, especially when there is a type of bacteria, legionella pneumophila, that could be lurking in your showerhead. You could contract the Legionnaires' disease just by inhaling the steam containing this deadly bacteria. The disease, an A-class pneumonia that cannot be cured by medication, said Dr. Tan Ee Poh, had

caused an outbreak in 1976 at a convention held for ex-service personnel in Philadelphia. The disease was named after the majority of the 34 men, mostly Legionnaires, who died.



Juice Bars

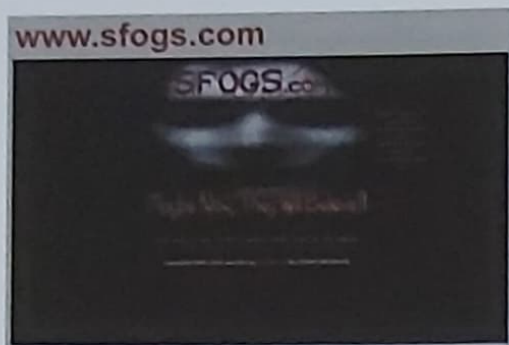


Perhaps coffee joints might give juice bars a run for their money. Healthy drinks that have taken over the reign of caffeine-filled drinks are not necessarily improving your body's health. Juice bars load up on the vitamins in their juices and may be going way over the recommended daily vitamin intake. Too much of a good thing may mean more than the fibre in the juice to help digestion. An overdose of vitamin C could also cause nausea, diarrhoea and kidney stones in the long run.

To be a Paranoiac

If you are already deciding on which plan to take for your insurance policy, just remember that all these cases of fainting from drinking carbonated drinks and dying from inhaling deodorant fumes have one in a million chances of happening. Still, you will benefit from being a paranoiac, as long as you don't go overboard – Melinda Muse also stated that a long-term study by Stanford University has proven that "conscientious worry warts" have longer lives than the carefree. Rest assured that you should stay contentedly paranoid until some study proves otherwise.

During our little jaunt on the net, we met some local **ghost busters**, a self-help guru, clown phobics and a fig-hating god.



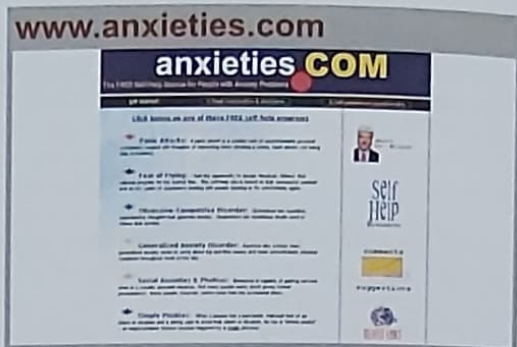
With the tagline, "Maybe now, they will believe", **sfogs.com** aims to jolt the most serious sceptic. This site chills the spine of many a Singaporean because of its local context. With stories from the old Changi Hospital, Pulau Tekong and even schools like Loyang Primary, we soon feel that these tales are a bit too close to home for comfort. Instances of a running tap in an army camp that won't stop, and a light that keeps switching on and off again will cause your hairs to stand.

The cluttered layout betrays the wealth of content hidden in the site. With scary stories, pictures, movie trailers and even a comprehensive section entitled "History of Ghosts", **sfogs.com** aims to flood your senses with weird ghost experiences.

Most of the accounts found in the "Stories" section vary from ridiculous to spine-tingling. Yet, you can't help wonder if there really is some truth in them.

sfogs.com's webmasters have created a site that scares based on the proximity of these occurrences; if you're not careful, you might encounter them too. And maybe, just maybe, you will believe.

lim meng jin



Even the bravest have their moments of susceptibility. Anxiety can be likened to a time bomb that resets itself after each explosion.

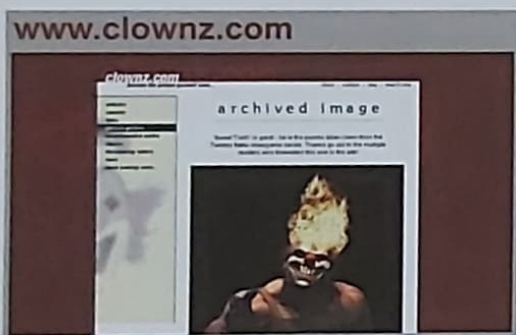
Most anxieties are perceived as bad habits. Sufferers fail to understand why anxieties such as Obsessive Compulsive Disorders (OCD) occur and what can be done to overcome them.

Apart from the OCD section, there are six other categories of anxieties in **anxieties.com**. These include panic attacks, generalised anxiety disorders, simple phobias and post-traumatic stress disorders.

Anxiety sufferers often display telltale signs of their conditions. The highlight of the site is a self-assessment questionnaire where you can find out which of the seven categories of anxieties you suffer from. Take the diagnosis with a pinch of salt, as the test does not require detailed information about your symptoms and classifies you into a category based on just two to three questions.

From controlling the fear of flying to overcoming claustrophobia, this self-help guide could save you a costly trip to the shrink. Don't let your fears take you over when you can overcome them at **www.anxieties.com**

janice chia



You either love them or hate them – put a kid in front of a clown and he'll laugh with glee or scream for help, fast. More often than not, it's the latter. Admittedly, clowns do look fun and approachable at times; heck, a yellow-and-red-striped-suited white-faced clown even fronts the largest multi-million-dollar fast food chain. For most others, however, those big red noses, painted mouths and gaudy clothes just don't go down too well.

clownz.com is a must-go for every clown hater and clown-phobic.

The site is dedicated to clown slamming in its entirety, right down to merchandising T-shirts with anti-clown slogans. It is also a forum for sharing stories of how fellow phobics started their fear or hatred for clowns, with in-depth, descriptive scenarios. And if that's not enough, there's always the gallery of deathly white-faced and sinister-sneering clowns to make you squirm.

While some pro-clown supporters might find this site offensive, it is still worth a read, even if you love clowns. **clownz.com** is laced with drizzles of sarcastic and defiant humour, and is definitely not something you'd find every day on the web.

tay yi ling



If you fear the wrath of God, stay away from **godhatesfigs.com**. Anybody else who is up for a good laugh will find this site bizarrely entertaining. It is dedicated to the belief that, well, God hates figs.

You will find everything from the informative to the wacky about God and his dislike for the fruit and its tree. This includes a stern letter from a Reverend Phred to biscuit company Nabisco that expresses his outrage at them for selling products like Fig Newtons and Fig Cobbles.

Created by fiction writer and journalist Charles Anders, **godhatesfigs.com** borrows its inspiration from Bible verses that are responsible for it all.

The Propaganda section seeks to change your mind with articles proving that figs are evil and has stories of plagues that God has released on fig trees. The FAQ section defeats its intention by bewildering you with questions like "Who are you people, and why don't you get a life?" and equally obnoxious answers.

The site's amateurish design, with its big button navigation links and ugly purple colour scheme, suits the nature of the site perfectly.

gerald teo

Will your deepest darkest fears ruin your weekend? hype looks at what the stars reveal.



The Rock: Wrestler

Fear Factor: His significant other

"Fearing my wife every time I screw up. Which is often."

Vernetta Lopez: Actress-DJ

Fear Factor: Being alone

"When I was studying at Ngee Ann Polytechnic, I had missed out on the first week of orientation because I had broken my leg. So when I finally made it to class, not only did I look weird with my leg in a cast, but everyone had pretty much gotten to know one another while I was completely new to the whole situation...I felt so alone, so left out of conversations..."



Jeremy Ratnam: Senior Producer-Presenter, Power 98

Fear Factor: Swimming

"I didn't have enough confidence to get into the water. My fear came through two years ago when I almost drowned. From then on whenever I swim in the deeper area, I need someone to watch me or I'll swim close to the pool's edge."

Denise Tan: Power 98 DJ

Fear Factor: House lizards

"Maybe I have a strange magnetic lizard force that's irresistible to lizards, but any lizard I come close to feels compelled to launch itself at me. I've had a lizard leap onto my head from a wall while I was carrying a tray laden with glasses. I almost died of fright! I've had lizards fall into my glass of water...I clap my hands and make lots of noise before entering the kitchen at night."



Wuv: Drummer, P.O.D.

Fear Factor: God

"I fear God, but at the same time, I love God with all my heart, and he's the one that's given [me] life."



hype April 2002 No. 14