

# hype

ISSUE 23  
AUG-OCT 2006  
FREE

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# EDITOR'S NOTE

It seems like it's been a long time since we had a public holiday. A long, long time – since as a nation, we last had a break in May over the long Vesak Day weekend – if our memories serve us correctly, that is.

No wonder we're beginning to feel restless and antsy. Having gone through more than half a year of grueling work and school, we're struggling to keep what's left of our sanity and eagerly anticipating the next public holiday.

That's why it was with great excitement that the **hype** team sat down to produce this issue. We're looking at another public holiday – National Day, when Singapore will celebrate her 41st birthday.

With that in mind, **hype** marks National Day by looking at all things uniquely Singaporean. We've decided not to give you the boring old commentary on food and our kiasu-ness. We believe we're more unique than that, and crazily so too. Read our National Day story to find out.

Together with National Day comes another national event the country has been looking forward to the past few months. We're finally in the run-up to the **Singapore Idol** finals. But it takes more than a great voice to share winner rights with Taufik Batisah, our first Idol. It takes the right song choice, personality, fans and... the right dress sense. We give our take, with the help of fashion experts, on what the Idols need to do to win in the fashion stakes.

But while we're all for fun and enjoyment, life is hard, and **hype** considers the serious side of life with stories about young people who go to the extreme of body modification by inserting objects into themselves and removing their skin in our Scarification story. We also look at pro-anorexia websites that do more harm than good to those suffering from eating disorders, and tell you how to cope with panic attacks.

If that's got you depressed, chin up. You can stand to win more than \$500 worth of spa packages from Pink Parlour, a face, body and nail spa, and \$500 worth of the latest Nike Air Max Rejuvenation shoes! Watch out for our Starlight Cinema giveaway too, with \$1,500 worth of tickets to be won!

So take a breather while you wait for our next public holiday and enjoy this 23rd issue of **hype**.

Yours truly,  
Syed Arafat





ISSUE 23  
aug-oct 2006



**hype**



**BODY MODIFICATION 34**

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**hype** is a biannual publication by final-year print journalism students in the Mass Communication course at Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

#### **hype** magazine

School of Film & Media Studies

Blk 52, #07-01

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77th Street

Far East Plaza, #01-31/35, #04-116/117

Parco Bugis Junction, #03-30A

Flash 'n' Splash

The Heeren Shops, #02-07/09

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Raffles City Shopping Centre, #01-32

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Craft Print International Ltd.

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Tampines Mall, #01-39

The Heeren Shops, #01-07

Nike B.I.R.D

Cathay Cineleisure Orchard, #03-08

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## EVENTS

PREVIEWS 4

WOMAD Singapore, MTV Movie Awards, Theatreworks Writers' Lab 2006, Singapore Theatre Festival

LISTINGS 6

PINK PARLOUR CONTEST 7

Win \$500 Worth of Spa Treatments at Pink Parlour!

STARLIGHT CINEMA CONTEST 64

Watch Movies Under the Stars Free

JAMES AND THE CITY 66

St James Power Station and VivoCity: the Latest Happenings

THE BANDS PLAY ON 67

Singapore's Hottest Band Competition is Here Again!

## MOVIES

MOVIE PREVIEWS 8

The Break-Up, Miami Vice, The Departed, World Trade Center, Ant Bully, American Dreamz

《美满人生》、《疯狂的石头》、《夜宴》 10

## MUSIC

MUSIC REVIEWS 11

《Scandal》、《My Life Will...》、《花言巧语》

Panic! At The Disco, Taking Back Sunday, Less Than Jake, 12

The Veronicas, Krystal Meyers, Shinedown

GIG GUIDE FOR GEEKS 14

How to Host a Successful Gig

## BOOKS

BOOK REVIEWS 16

The Devil's Feather, Rage, The Swarm, The Cold Moon, The Virgin Of Small Plains, Little Face

## LEISURE

TREE'S A CROWD 18

The World Looks Better From the Top of a Tree

A HAUNTING WE WILL GO 20

The Thrills and Spills of Ghost Hunting

## PEOPLE

乐坛新人王 - Tank 22

Tank敞开心扉：畅谈他在音乐上的领域以及他人生历程的转变

DJ MAKES ME LOSE CONTROL 24

Fort Minor Block Party Scratch

Champion DJ J-Stylez

AN EYE FOR SHAN 25

Shan Gets Honest With **hype**

DOUBLE TROUBLE 26

Twins May and Choy Talk About Life, Fame and MTV

## FASHION

NOT YOUR TYPICAL AIRHEAD 28

Nike Air's Latest Collection

## ISSUES

BODY MODIFICATION 34

I've Got You Under My Skin

PANIC ATTACKS 42

You Could Be Next

DYING TO BE THIN 46

Pro-anorexia Websites: Help or Hindrance?

## FEATURE

SINGAPORE IDOL SPECIAL! 38

How Can the Idols Win in the Fashion Stakes?

UNIQUELY SINGAPOREAN 40

Five Things That Make Us Singaporeans

Plus, Our Very Singaporean Quiz

## TECH

PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC 50

Has the Online Music Industry Changed Five Years on?

LOVE OF THE GAME 52

A Place for Local Gamers, at Last

NANOTECHNOLOGY 54

Wonders of Small Science

REVIEWS 55

LG Chocolate, Samsung SGH-D520,

Rush For Berlin, Rise Of Nations

## FOOD

KAYU'S FOOD FEST 58

Sumptuous Food Offerings from Jalan Kayu

ADORICA CAFE 61

Affordable Italian Fare Along Arab St

ART CAFES 62

Food for the Soul

## TRAVEL

BAY WATCH 68

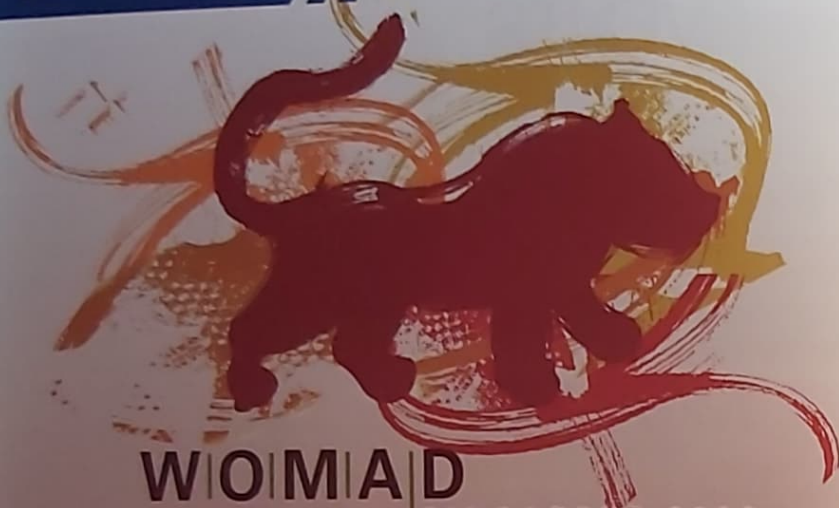
Paradise on Earth at Damai Beach

## LAST LOOK

CHILDREN'S DAY 72

Unleash Your Inner Child





WOMAD

SINGAPORE 2006

25 - 27 August 2006 Fort Canning Park

## WOMAD SINGAPORE

**WOMAD** or the World of Music, Arts and Dance is into its ninth year at Fort Canning Park and it's pulling new tricks out of the hat to wow audiences.

Each year WOMAD presents several acts from all over the globe so the audience can immerse themselves in a slew of vibrant cultures. This year, **WOMAD Singapore 2006** is introducing two new items to its huge, global family. First up, **Taste of the World**, where artistes from South Africa and China will literally cook up a storm for audiences at the festival kitchen. Second, is the **Asian Short Films Showcase**, which will be screen 11 short films from all over Asia including Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

In addition, this year's line-up includes the legendary Jamaican reggae artist Jimmy Cliff, who catapulted into the global limelight with his 1969 hit song "Wonderful World, Beautiful People". Still not interested? His latest album **Black Magic** features collaborations with today's top acts, like Sting, Annie Lennox and Wyckle Jean.

Also catch **WOMAD in the Heartlands** in Hougang on Aug 19, featuring Australian aboriginal artiste Stevie Goldsmith, and **WOMAD Fringe** at the NUS Centre For the Arts on Aug 24, which will showcase Indian artiste group Musafir Gypsies of Rajasthan and a workshop with South African percussionist Risenga Makondo.

Prices start at \$35 and \$26 for students. Packages for all three days, inclusive of **WOMAD** t-shirts and other exclusive goodies go at \$130. - KHAIRIN KHAMARULDIN

More information at  
[www.womadingsapore.com](http://www.womadingsapore.com)

Singapore  
Theatre  
Festival '06SINGAPORE  
YOUNG DRAMA  
AWARD

## MTV MOVIE AWARDS

First it was the **MTV Asia Fashionably Loud** fashion show in March. Then came Coldplay, along with **MTV Centrestage** in July, which celebrated 'live' music.

Continuing a great line-up is the first **MTV Asia Movie Awards** in October. According to David Flack, executive vice-president of Creative at MTV, "With so many Asian film-makers, stars and movies impacting global pop culture, there has never been a better time for MTV to celebrate and highlight the Asian movie industry with its unique sense of fun and humour."

While the **MTV Asia Movie Awards** will offer off-the-wall categories similar to the **MTV Movie Awards** in the US like 'Best Kiss' and 'Best Fight', this awards show will also celebrate flicks and stars from the East. We weren't able to pry the list out of MTV Asia but in **MTV Movie Awards** tradition, winners will go home with the trademark golden popcorn trophy.

MTV Asia also promises a spectacular array of A-listers, from celebrities from Taiwan, China and Malaysia to Hollywood tinseltowners and even Bollywood hotshots. All to be confirmed in time but even so, this looks like one event you'd have to pen in red ink in your organiser. - FAZILLAH GAFFA

Oct 7, Singapore Indoor Stadium. Stand a chance to win tickets at [www.mtvasia.com](http://www.mtvasia.com)

Organised by TheatreWorks, this year's **The Writers' Lab** will put together two popular national playwriting competitions - the usual 24-hour playwriting competition, and the Singapore Young Dramatists Award (SYDA).

The aim of **The Writers' Lab** - now into its 16th year - is to provide a platform for potential playwrights to hone their writing skills. It has produced well-known names like Robin Loon, Eleanor Wong and Desmond Sim.

While registration for the 24-hour playwriting competition has closed, there's still the SYDA, a nationwide competition for young playwrights from 13 to 23 years. This year's theme is "Local Delights", which asks participants to write about life and food in Singapore.

Robin Loon, playwright and assistant professor with the NUS Theatre Studies Programme, will be the main man this year. He will spearhead the Lab's programmes, conduct workshops, discussions, exchange sessions and even stage the "Greenhouse" which aims to discover and nurture a new generation of playwrights, and the "Hothouse" which explores new and experimental forms of writing. - REZA OMAR

Submission deadline: Aug 15  
Visit [www.theatreworks.org.sg](http://www.theatreworks.org.sg)  
to register for the SYDA competition.

THEATREWORKS  
WRITERS' LAB 2006

Film fanatics in Singapore can indulge in more than two weeks of Singapore-produced plays, thanks to the inaugural **Singapore Theatre Festival**, which launches on Aug 2.

Conceived by WILD RICE's artistic director Ivan Heng, the festival is slated to take place every two years in August to coincide with National Day. The inaugural festival will present eight original Singaporean productions (most of which are making their debuts) which explore issues of identity, politics and nationality. Fringe activities include interviews with various actors which will be aired over the radio and podcast, plus free lectures, workshops and audience talk-back sessions.

Eleanor Wong, the playwright behind the very successful production **Second Link** in 2005, is back with her latest play, **The Campaign to Confer the Public Service Star on JBJ**, a satire on freedom of speech in Singapore, starring Pam Oei and Rodney Oliveira. - FAZILLAH GAFFA

Aug 2 - 20. Tickets are being sold at \$28 - \$48 at all **SISTIC** outlets. More information at [www.wildrice.com.sg](http://www.wildrice.com.sg)

SINGAPORE THEATRE  
FESTIVAL



Singapore so sian one? No, lah! REZA OMAR zeroes in on what's hot, hip and happening on our sunny island.

### World Cyber Games 2006 Asian Championship

Watch the coolest gamers battle virtually in **Warcraft 3** and **Dead or Alive** as the best across Asia slug it out. Also get involved with a host of activities ranging from exhibitions, game conferences, cultural performances to extreme sports.

Aug 10 - 13, 10 am - 10 pm, Suntec City Convention Hall 602  
Visit <http://sg.worldcybergames.com/> for more information about the competition.

### Broadway Beng

For a limited run only, catch Sebastian Tan (**KaraUok: Army Daze**) on **Broadway Beng!** The UK Miss Saigon star returns with his critically-acclaimed madcap stand-up comedy musical in true blue Ah Beng-style! Audiences will be treated to lots of side-splitting humour, big showtunes and heart wrenching Hokkien songs. Also starring Donna Daniels, Denise Tan and Jackie Pereira.

Aug 10 - 19  
DBS Arts Centre  
Admission: Standard - \$50, \$35

### INXS The Switched On Tour 2006

So JD Fortune beat thousands of rock star wannabes in the reality hit show **ROCK STAR: INXS**. He's now stepping into the very big shoes of the late, great Michael Hutchence who died in a tragic car accident in 1997. With a critically acclaimed new album **Switch** and hit songs such as "Pretty Vegas" and "Afterglow", **The Switched On Tour** is selling out everywhere. Making Manila their first stop in this Asian leg tour, they'll swing by Singapore before going to Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta.

Aug 17  
Fort Canning Park  
Admission: \$85

### 12th Ngee Ann City National Lion Dance Championships 2006

The annual Ngee Ann City National Lion Dance Championships is back. For the 12th year running, the Civic Plaza will be transformed into a battle ground, as Singapore's top lion dance troupes pit their skills against one another.

Witness their impressive display of acrobatic stunts and deft dance steps and be entertained by the fringe performances, such as stilt walking, *wushu*, dragon dances and more.

Sep 4 - 9  
Ngee Ann City Civic Plaza  
Time: 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm nightly. Free.

### Forbidden City: Portrait of an Empress

Singaporean songbird Kit Chan returns in this musical - Singapore's most successful so far - about China's Empress Dowager, told through the eyes of an American painter, Kate Carl, who has been commissioned to paint the Empress's portrait. The musical traces her journey from young imperial concubine to Empress,

delves into myths like her only son's controversial death and her rise to power, during her reign.

Sep 7 - 16  
Esplanade Theatre  
Preview Show: \$60, \$45, \$40, \$30, \$75 (VIP Box), \$15 (Restricted View)  
Mon - Thurs 8 pm, Wed & Sat 3 pm Shows:  
\$110, \$80, \$70, \$50, \$140 (VIP Box), \$30 (Restricted View)  
Fri - Sat 8 pm Shows:  
\$120, \$90, \$80, \$60, \$150 (VIP Box), \$30 (Restricted View)

### A Nation in Concert 2006

Familiar faces Chermaine Ang, Chua Enlai and Pierre Goh play three self-centered, spoilt, kiasu Singaporeans whose lives are transformed when disaster strikes. Written by Desmond Sim (**Beautiful Boxer**) and directed by Jonathan Lim (**Chestnuts**), the show features over 100 performers, music ranging from evergreen songs to pop favourites, and dance numbers ranging from the rumba and cha-cha to hip-hop and Bhangra.

Sep 9  
Esplanade Concert Hall  
Standard: \$50, \$45, \$40, \$30, \$25. Box Seat: \$8  
Matinee: \$45, \$40, \$35, \$25, \$20. Box Seats: \$80.

### ARTSINGAPORE 2006 - The Contemporary Asian Art Fair

This signature visual arts event has been a common launching pad for new Asian artists. Be inspired by art from Asian and international artists. Works from over 50 art galleries from around the globe, from new players to world-renowned art gurus, are expected to be showcased.

Sep 28 - Oct 2,  
Time: Gala Opening on Sep 28, 6 pm - 8 pm;  
Sep 29 - Oct 1, 11 am - 8 pm; Oct 2, 11 am - 5 pm,  
Suntec City Convention Hall 602  
Admission: \$10 (adults), free for students and children under 18.  
Visit <http://www.artsingapore.net/> for more information.

### Robbie Williams : Close Encounters

Ooh, it's Robbie. The man isn't just one of the sexiest superstars in recent history, he's also in the Guinness Book of Records for having sold the most tickets in the quickest time - 1.6 million in a day - for his World Tour last November.

While he may not break any records in Singapore, which is part of the Asian leg of his World Tour, he'll certainly be doing what he does best - making the crowd go wild. Williams's one-day Singapore concert marks the end of his Asian tour.

Nov 18  
National Stadium  
Admission: Standard - \$300, \$250, \$200, \$130. Free Seating - \$160, \$80, \$60, \$40. Free Standing - \$100



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\* Closing date: 31 October 2006. The winner will be notified by e-mail or phone. Incomplete entries will be disqualified.



Photo by UIP



## The Break-Up

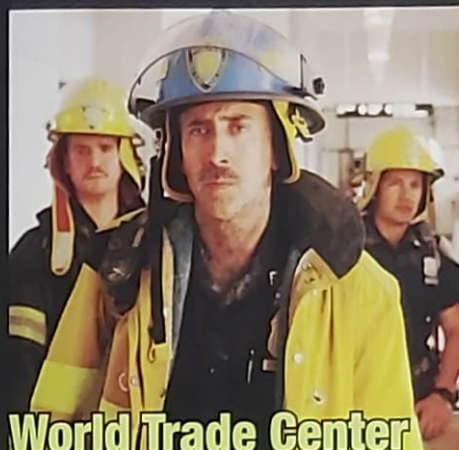
This romantic comedy starring Jennifer Aniston (*Rumor Has it; Derailed*) and Vince Vaughn (*Wedding Crashers; Mr & Mrs Smith*) starts when the relationship between a couple ends.

Brooke Meyers (Aniston) decides to call it quits with her boyfriend Gary Grobowski (Vaughn) as she feels keeping the relationship alive has become too tedious. The break-up however, isn't as smooth as she'd hoped. Arguments, mind-boggling verbal clashes and childish antics break out when the pair tussle over who gets to keep their condominium.

With neither party willing to relent, Brooke and Gary decide to continue living with each other until someone new comes along. While the endless squabbles continue, will love finally come full circle for the two?

**The Break-Up** works just as well as a chick flick as it does as a movie date. Be careful though, as some of the messages might be a reality check for your own relationship. — NURUL HUDA RASHED

Photo by UIP



## World Trade Center

In this big-screen dramatisation of the fateful Sep 11 2001 attack, famed Oscar-winning director Oliver Stone (*Alexander; Born on the Fourth of July*) shows what true courage, perseverance and love can achieve for humankind.

Based on a real life account, this movie stars Nicolas Cage (*Matchstick Men; National Treasure*) who plays Sgt. John McLoughlin and Michael Peña (*Million Dollar Baby; Crash*) who plays Officer Will Jimeno as the two Port Authority policemen who helped people escape from the rubble after the twin towers collapsed. Heroism nearly turns into tragedy as the two become the last three people, out of 20, rescued alive from Ground Zero.

This inspirational blockbuster pays tribute to those who lost their lives and shows how normal people become heroes, as they triumph over all adversities on the day American history changed forever. — MELVIN TAN

Michael Mann's (*Ali; The Last of the Mohicans*) adaptation of the critically-acclaimed television series, *Miami Vice*, which single-handedly shot actor Don Johnson into stardom and made wearing t-shirts under jackets cool in the '80s, is set to sizzle the silver screen.

Academy Award winner Jamie Foxx (*Ray*) plays Detective Ricardo Tubbs while Naomie Harris plays his cop wife Trudy. The undercover couple, and Sonny Crockett, played by Colin Farrell (*S.W.A.T.*), try to crack a triple manslaughter case by pretending to traffick drugs into South Florida.

Tubbs and Crockett find themselves in danger when their lies get discovered. Tubbs is challenged to wage an attack on Trudy while Crockett struggles between his job and his love life.

Although *Miami Vice* is peppered with sex, drugs and rock & roll, the movie would only appeal to fans of the TV series. — REZA OMAR



## Miami Vice

From Academy Award-nominated film-maker John A. Davis (*Jimmy Neutron; Boy Genius*) and producers Tom Hanks and Gary Goetzman (*The Polar Express*), the animated movie *Ant Bully* tells a touching story of a 10-year-old boy who goes through an arresting journey of self-discovery.

Having recently moved to a new town, Lucas Nickle has no friends and gets harassed by the neighbourhood bully. Lucas tries to deal with his unhappiness by picking on an ant hill in his yard. The ants strike back with the help of a magic potion. They transform Lucas into an ant-sized version of himself and make him live in their colony. Through his ordeal, Lucas learns about friendship, courage and most importantly, himself.

*Ant Bully* will mesmerise viewers and tug at heartstrings, as young Lucas's journey magically unfolds before their eyes. — NESSI ESTEFA



## Ant Bully

Photo by Warner Bros

Photo by Warner Bros



## The Departed

Directed by Martin Scorsese (*The Aviator; Gangs of New York*), *The Departed* is an adaptation of Lau Wai Keung and Alan Mak's famous 2002 Hong Kong film, *Infernal Affairs*. It not only boasts a star-studded cast but is also produced by former couple Jennifer Aniston and Brad Pitt.

Set in the South of Boston, the story unfolds between the state police force and the Irish Mafia. Billy Costigan (Leonardo DiCaprio), a young undercover cop, is assigned to break into an Irish Mafia gang run by Frank Costello (Jack Nicholson). On the flip side, Collin Sullivan (Matt Damon) is a young mobster sent to infiltrate the police department and get information for the syndicate.

However, when it becomes clear to both organisations that there is a mole within them, Billy and Collin are in danger of being exposed. They must now race to uncover the other's identity before they get discovered. — SARIMA JASMIN

Photo by UIP



## American Dreamz

*American Dreamz* is a parody based on two American icons of recent times — the *American Idol* and the *American President*.

The movie centres around another season of the popular singing contest, *American Dreamz*, and a wannabe star, Sally Kendoo (Mandy Moore), a reluctant soon-to-be terrorist Omer (Sam Golzar), a jaded show host Martin Tweed (Hugh Grant) and the naive President Staton (Dennis Quaid).

Contestant Sally will do anything it takes to win the competition — and to charm Martin. President Staton is made a judge, and this paves the way for an assassination plot against him by the awkward Omer (who really just wants to be a contestant on *American Dreamz*).

This movie is worth watching for its star-studded cast, humour and reflection on America's pop culture and fame. — KHAIRIN KHAMALRUDDIN





美满人生  
上映日期:9月7日

参与了第59届戛纳电影节(康城影展)以及第19届新加坡国际电影节(Singapore Dreaming)《美满人生》是由新加坡导演吴蒙平与妻子胡恩恩合拍的第二部电影。

故事通过笑声与泪水描述一个普通的新加坡家庭如何度过生活中种种的难关。一家之主的老爸(刘谦益饰)为了送儿子(苏才忠饰)到外国留学而欠下了一身债;身为家庭主妇的妈妈(林倩萍饰),因忙于打点家中的琐碎事物而被家人忽略了;女儿(杨雁雁饰)则怨恨父母的重男轻女;她与丈夫(林友明饰)正等待着他们第一个爱情的结晶。

在一次偶然的巧合中,老爸中了高达两百万的万字奖金,但家中的问题没有因而化解,甚至闹得更僵。

通过写实的故事来探讨新加坡人的生活,《美满人生》让你更了解生活的意义及家庭的重要性。-陈伟德

一部由年仅29岁的宁浩执导以及天王刘德华投资的电影,初次在上海电影节上映时,便受到全中国各家媒体不同凡响的回应,好评连连。

故事描述一家即将倒闭的工艺厂为了解决在资金上的问题,而决定通过展览以高价出售一个刚被发掘的价值连城翡翠。这举动却引起了国际大盗麦克(连晋饰)与本地盗窃集团首长,道哥(刘桦饰)的注意,竭尽全力夺取翡翠。除了互相拆台以外,他们也必须想尽办法对付正在看守翡翠展览的保卫科长包世宏(郭涛饰)。他们三人因此展开了一连串的明争暗斗,最后却出现了意想不到的惊喜...

没有任何的强大卡司,也没有任何熟悉的脸孔,只凭着诠释出的黑色幽默笑话以及演员精湛的演出,让你笑声不断。-谢智信



疯狂的石头  
上映日期:8月17日

耗资高达二百多万美元的制作费再加上强大的演员阵容,让充满欲望、明争暗斗的《夜宴》成为今年全球华人备受瞩目的电影之一,不容错过。

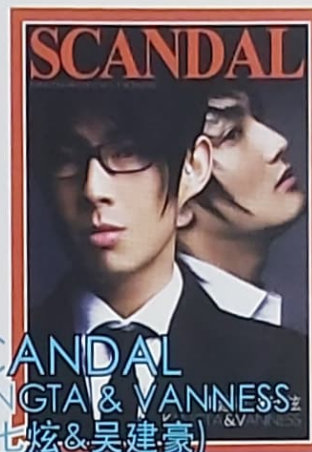
皇帝突然驾崩后,弟弟便顺理成章继承龙位,被立为厉帝(葛优饰演)。婉后(章子怡饰)为了保住地位及挽救倾慕已久的前皇太子无鸾(吴彦祖饰),而答应厉帝的求婚,但她却没想到厉帝已暗地里派遣刺客前去杀害无鸾。因得到宫里大臣之子(黄晓明饰)的相救,无鸾才得以逃离困境。

深信厉帝就是杀父仇人的无鸾,决定展开报复行动。回京城后,无鸾不禁陷入了三角恋,相继与大臣之女(周迅饰)与婉后发生感情。而在厉帝筹备夜宴之际,婉后与大臣之子心里各自策划了预谋行动。当晚,凄惨的尖叫声响彻全宫,而一张张笑逐颜开的脸蛋也逐渐沾上了一丝丝的血迹...-谢智信



夜宴  
上映日期:9月15日

hype 10



SCANDAL  
KANGTA & VANNESS  
(安七炫&吴建豪)

超越想象的亚洲跨国组合终于诞生了。结合了来自韩国超人气乐团H.O.T的Kangta安七炫以及台湾天团F4的Vanness吴建豪,为你带来今年最受瞩目的亚洲团体Kangta & Vanness。

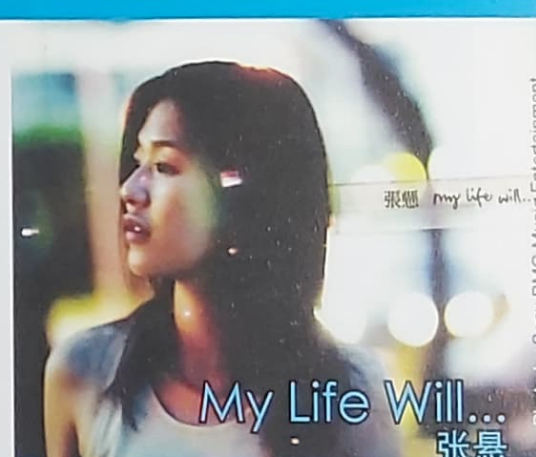
融入了新Crunk & B风格的《Scandal》,为专辑掀开了一个富有爆发力的开始;充满动感旋律的R&B歌曲《Good Vibration》为专辑增添了不少气氛。Kangta不忘展现他创作才华的一面,亲自为《Faint》填词。这首翻唱于情歌天后梁静茹《勇气》的歌曲,通过韩语给你带来全新的风味。

随专辑附送的DVD也收入了中文版本的《Scandal》MV以及Kangta & Vanness在汉城(Seoul)举办的首个showcase。虽然专辑里录制了十首歌曲,但只有五首是原创而其余的是由另一种语言来演唱。因此听了一次等于听了两次。Kangta & Vanness这个美男子的组合固然新鲜,但还没达到登峰造极的境界。-廖蔚玲

持有一份对音乐的执著以及对吉他的热忱,她的出现震动了全亚洲乐坛,并且被誉为“心灵派”歌手。她就是创作才女,张悬。

清脆的嗓音配上简单的旋律,让张悬的首张个人专辑《My Life Will...》弥漫着一种“安抚人心”的感觉。无论歌词抒发着怎样的情感,张悬都能够凭着她那极具感染力的唱腔平复一切烦恼,让你尽情享受首首动听的歌曲。她磁性、舒适的声音为主打歌《My Life Will...》诠释出另一种失恋的心情。专辑里较为独特的歌曲就是以“昼夜”方式演唱的《宝贝》。在“in the night”版里,张悬低沉的歌声带你渡过一个漫长平静的夜晚;而在“in the day”里,轻快的旋律为你掀开了美好的一天。

就让这位才华洋溢的歌手通过歌声与真诚来打动你。-谢智信



My Life Will...  
张悬

少女团体SWEETY为了行走成熟路线而改头换面,给歌迷们带来全新华语专辑《花言巧语》。

与名制作人周传雄、吕绍淳、黄卓颖等联手制作的《花言巧语》,在短短的8个月内就完成了。虽然SWEETY请来知名造型师陈孙华为她们精心改造,但她们的造型在现代流行乐坛上比比皆是,缺乏独特风格。

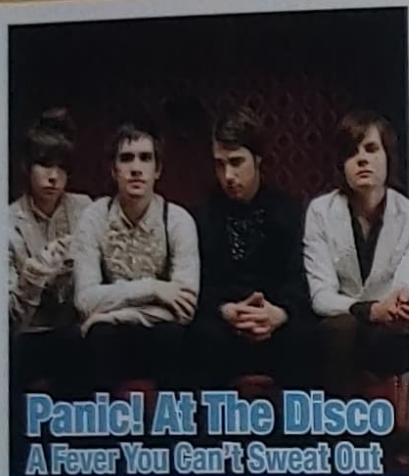
随着她们在造型上的转变,专辑里也融入了许多新的曲风,演唱出小女生对恋爱的幻想。跟专辑同名的主打歌《花言巧语》,除了使用电子音乐,也请来新人陈奕为此曲RAP一部分。抒情歌曲《幸福毛毛虫》以及充满日本风情的《樱花草》,让人不禁想跟着旋律哼唱起来。专辑里录制的10首歌曲多数大同小异,欠缺新鲜感。

虽然Sweety两人在《花言巧语》里下了一番苦功,但她们在唱功方面仍然有待突破,就让我们期待着那一天的到来吧!-廖蔚玲



花言巧语  
SWEETY



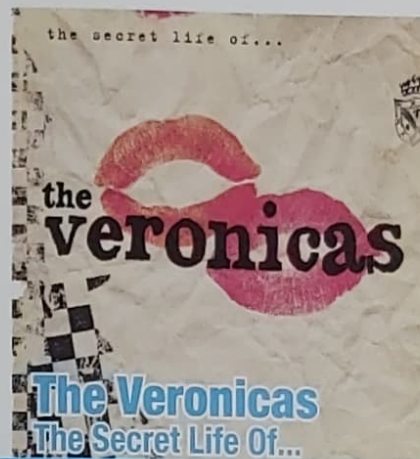


Panic! At The Disco, is the first band signed by Fall Out Boy's Pete Wentz under his new label Dacaydance. **A Fever You Can't Sweat Out** is in a league of its own with addictive punk, pop, dance, rock, and disco fusion keeping the heart pumping with excitement and the feet tapping to the changing beat.

Each track is cleverly named, such as "The Only Difference Between Martyrdom and Suicide Is Press Coverage" and "Lying Is the Most Fun A Girl Can Have Without Taking Her Clothes Off", and their lyrics are equally unique. Try figuring out, for example, what "the rooms have a hint of asbestos and maybe just a dash of formaldehyde" from the track "Build God, Then We'll Talk" actually means.

The portrayal of the state of life and society through poetic, cynicism-drenched and catchy lyrics sheds new light on the intelligence and wit of the four 19-year-olds with addictive tracks worth every cent. — DORCAS LING

Photo by Warner Music



The formula of bubblegum pop fused with punk-ish influences has been tried and tested with the likes of Ashlee Simpson and Good Charlotte, and clearly, it works as The Veronicas – identical 20-year-old Aussie twins Jess and Lisa Origliasso, prove.

Their first single, "4ever", from their 13-track debut album has been hogging the 98.7FM airwaves, and if you like it, you'll probably enjoy their album – **The Secret Life of the Veronicas**, as most of their songs sound similar yet cool.

Look out for their follow-up single "When It All Falls Apart", which steers towards emancipation from patriarchy (whether they realise it or not). This one goes: "And not to mention the tears I shed/ But I should have kicked your as" instead.

Rougher than Hilary Duff, sassier than Kelly Clarkson, The Veronicas have made the perfect album to sing into your hairbrush in front of your bathroom mirror. — FAZILLAH GAFFA

The five-man 'emo-core' rock band is back with their new album, **Louder Now**, which includes the hit songs "MakeDamnSure" and "Error: Operator" from the **Fantastic Four** movie soundtrack. Emo core is loud music accompanied by strong lyrics.

While Taking Back Sunday has seen some member changes since its 1999 debut, it hasn't stopped them from releasing three albums and appearing in the soundtracks of super-hero movies such as **Spider-Man 2** and **Elektra**.

In the new album, fans of their trademark sound will relish tracks such as "What Does It Feel Like To Be A Ghost" and "Divine Intervention". Vocals of front man Adam Lazzara meander over the instruments, drawing a parallel to fellow rock bands such as Funeral for a Friend and Hawthorne Heights.

While **Louder Now** isn't a perfect masterpiece, it's still a good listen. — JULIAN LOW



Why 17-year-old Krystal Meyers is often compared to Avril Lavigne doesn't come as a surprise. Her album sleeve screams Avril. It doesn't help either, that the Wizard of Oz Production team who worked on Krystal's eponymous debut album has worked with Lavigne before. But that's where the comparison with the Canadian blonde stops. Unlike Lavigne, Krystal peppers her music with religion.

Although her edgy, energy-driven pop rock music is paired with her mature sounding vocals, lyrically however, the album lacks depth and maturity. You only have to listen to "Reflections of You", "Sing for Me" and "Rescue", to hear common teenage concerns over the pressure to fit in, making it easy for her adolescent fans to connect with her.

This is worth a listen for those who enjoy bobbing and singing along to pleasant guitar-driven songs. — NURUL HUDA RASHEED

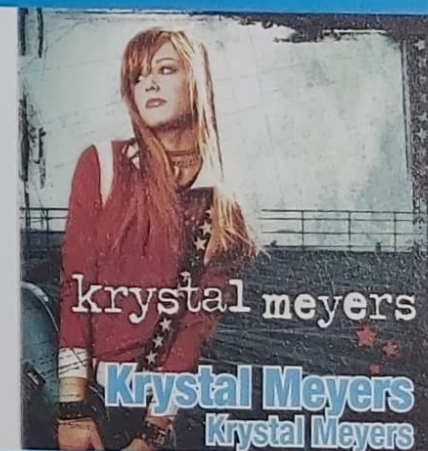


Photo by Sony BMG

The latest offering by Less Than Jake falls slightly short for a band noted for its ska-influenced fast-tempo music and the distinguishable sound of horns. **In With The Out Crowd** doesn't really shine with its generic pop-rock sounds.

In fact, songs like "Overrated (Everything Is)" and "Fall Apart" make it seem like these boys are trying too hard to go mainstream.

However, the entire album isn't necessarily a put-off. Songs like "Landslides & Landmines", "Let Her Go" and "Hopeless Case" inject some much-needed true 'ska' energy into the album – enough to make you want to jump right off your chair and boogie. The most deserving track to put on auto-replay is "The Rest of My Life" – a hauntingly catchy mellow rock song.

Still, Less Than Jake better pick up their act or they'll be in the 'out crowd' and the bargain bin pretty soon. — KHAIRIN KHAMARULDIN

Photo by Warner Music



Shinedown certainly is a breath of fresh air. **Us and Them**, their soulful sophomore album, opens with a poem (totally unrelated to the album), by a little girl, titled "The Dream".

It begins, "Whisper in the dark and turn the trees all into toys. Lay there on the ground, and turn the dirt into your joy."

They then proceed to drum up hard rock pieces like "Heroes" with killer guitar vibes.

These guys also manage to offer a radio-friendly track "Save Me", which made it to the number one spot on the Billboard Modern Rock Chart in December last year.

Experimental grooves in "I Dare You" and "Atmosphere" and fine instrument solos in "Beyond the Sun", backed by great vocals from front man Brent Smith prove that they've evolved since their 2003 debut **Leave a Whisper**. — REZA OMAR





# GIG GUIDE FOR GEEKS

You have to be seen to be 'scene' – or so they say and youths are beginning to show their appreciation for local bands by organising gigs for them. JOANNA JOHAN talks to some of the experts about how to do it right.



More youth are taking an active role in the music scene. Not only are they attending local band concerts, these scenesters (youth active in the music scene), are organising their own gigs, either to make extra cash, to be seen, or just for the pure enjoyment of it.

While gigs were once typically held at Substation Guinness Theatre, a hot spot for independent gigs and acoustic shows, the usual venues now include the Arts House, which is the Old Parliament House, Gas Haus, a café bar at Bugis, and The Third Place, a cosy café on Outram Road.

Before you jump on the bandwagon and start rounding up all the local bands you can get your hands on, here are a few tips aspiring scenesters need to know before setting up a great gig.

## 1. Pay Your Performers

Money may not be a key factor, but to portray professionalism, an organiser should pay at least a token amount of \$5 a person, says Jerome Thanabalan, 24, who is in hardcore band Sky In Euphoria.

Bear in mind equipment and venue. According to Razi Razak, 24, one of the organisers for **Baybeats 2006**, Beat Merchants provides stack amplifiers, microphones and a drumset for less than \$1,000. If you have a group of six to eight, each person forks out less than \$200. If tickets are sold at \$7, profits can be made – provided 200 people turn up.

If you're strapped for cash, it might be a good idea to organise a gig for a good cause, such as **Orchard Jam 06** which happened towards the end of June. "Around \$15,000 was raised for this busking event. We received funds from Creative Community of Singapore under Ministry of Information, Communication and the Arts (MICA)," says organiser Dion Teo Zi Xiang, 22.

You can also make some profit by selling

merchandise such as badges, stickers and t-shirts which can be from independent labels such as Friday Clothing ([www.myspace.com/fridaynightfever](http://www.myspace.com/fridaynightfever)) that are willing to give the organisers 20 percent of their sales.

## 2. Work on the Concept

A good concept is important to distinguish your gig from the many others. Just look at **Sticker Project**. The monthly event held at Home Club hopes to promote post-rock, a new music genre, through its creative concept. People who attend the gig are supposed to print their own stickers and paste them anywhere in the club – a great way for gig-goers to show off their musically-inspired designs. Another example was a gig called **Conference of the Birds**, organised by Shaiful Risan, 24, which involved an acoustic performance followed by poetry reading and a free silk screen printing workshop.

## 3. Self Advertising

"If you get your word out early and publicity is done to the right crowd, and you [have] the right bands playing, I'm sure people are willing to pay for a good show," confirms Jerome.

"The label, Wake Me Up Music, invested a lot on flyers, websites, forums, word-of-mouth," reveals Jerome, who organised the launch of a compilation CD, **Three Letter Sessions**, three years ago. It "saw a lot different kids come together for the show – there were metal, hardcore, punk, metalcore, indie [kids]," continued Jerome.

At the end of the day, a good gig boils down to effort and word-of-mouth. After you have collected enough money, think of imaginative ways to organise a gig and aim to reach every scene kid on the island. Enough talk, let's raise the curtains and get started!

# The Search for Nike's **BIGGEST** Fan

## PROUD OF YOUR EXTENSIVE NIKE COLLECTION?

Win one of three pairs of shoes worth more than \$500 in total, from Nike's latest Air Max Rejuvenation range!

Simply take a snapshot of yourself with your own Nike collection, and show us your creativity. Also, include a short paragraph on what Nike Air means to you.



## STAND A CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

Men's Air Max 90 Premium Rejuvenation **\$159** (top)

Women's Air Max 95 Zen **\$149** (left)

Men's Air Max 97 Premium Rejuvenation **\$199** (bottom)



All entries are to be e-mailed to [hype@trimedlabuzz.com](mailto:hype@trimedlabuzz.com), with the following contact details:

Full name, NRIC number, contact number, address, e-mail address.

Closing date: 15 September 2006. Winners will be notified by e-mail or phone. Incomplete entries will be disqualified.







Too preoccupied by a vicious civil war in Sierra Leone, West Africa, officials are ignoring a sexual psychopath who is mistreating prisoners, raping and murdering women and claiming to be someone he is not.

The book's protagonist is Connie Burns, a news correspondent who has written stories of women being raped and killed, and soon, she becomes a victim herself but survives.

She finds out that the only way for her to overcome her prolonged phobia of being assaulted is to reveal a secret – one she has kept at bay from even her closest kin.

This thriller also portrays the ugliness of human beings when they are put under extreme pressure and shows how unstable an adult's mind can be after suffering continuous emotional abuse in childhood. If you think that only the victim suffers in abuse cases such as rape and murder, think again – the culprit may have suffered as well. – JOANNA JOHAN

\$15.95 before GST

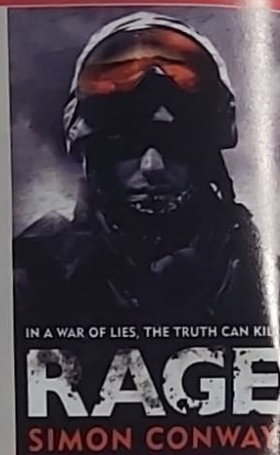
Ex-army officer Simon Conway is back with another military thriller, **Rage**, after the success of **Damaged**, his first work.

Readers are taken back to the 2003 coalition invasion of Iraq, where lead character Jonah Said is sent by the British Army on a United Nations mission.

Jonah, who's serving in a highland regiment, has to battle "the Zone" – a strip of land between Iraq and Kuwait that houses an illegal trade operation. Within hours of landing there, Jonah finds himself knee-deep in trouble, having found a corpse, been robbed and then linked to a murder and lost cargo.

Conway could not resist injecting Uday and Saddam Hussein into his novel as he writes about their illegal possession of weapons of mass destruction. His knack for making his writing come alive and avoiding military jargon should be applauded as he makes **Rage** his personal military fantasy. – NOOR EZAIDA ABDUL RAHMAN

\$32.50 before GST



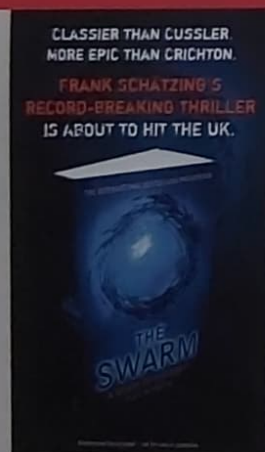
Off the coast of Peru, a fisherman is dragged to his watery death by a mysterious force. In Trondheim, Norway, a marine worm with unusually huge jaws is found by biologist Sigur Johansen. On Vancouver Island, whales go missing in a whale-watching locale, puzzling whale expert, Leon Anawak.

It doesn't take long for Johansen and Anawak to find each other. They start to work together in order to unravel the mystery of these strange incidents.

They soon discover the truth, that in the murky beds of the ocean, a community of mutated single-cell organisms is trying to demolish the ecosystem. Soon, it becomes a fight between Nature and Man where the survival of the human race is at stake.

The book has been on the German bestseller list for two years since its debut. Recently translated into English, **The Swarm** is a compelling read. Filled with vivid characters, descriptive writing, and twists and turns, it will keep you in suspense until the unpredictable ending. – NUR FARHANAH YUSOFF

\$34.50 before GST



CLASSIER THAN CUSSLER  
MORE EPIC THAN CRICHTON.

FRANK SCHATZING'S  
RECORD-BREAKING THRILLER  
IS ABOUT TO HIT THE UK.



Jeffrey Deaver, whose Lincoln Rhyme novels have made it to bestseller lists around the world, delivers with this seventh instalment. Don't fret if you've yet to read the previous six. **The Cold Moon** stands and shines on its own.

The story continues with Rhyme, a quadriplegic forensic analyst, and Amella Sachs, his trusted partner and love, embarking on an adventure to stop a serial killer called the Watchmaker. It starts when the duo discover two bodies murdered under the full moon on a cold winter's night. At the time, Sachs has just clinched her first homicide case as a lead detective and balancing those two tasks proves to be overwhelming for her.

**The Cold Moon** starts out quite slowly but the story builds up quickly. The multi-dimensional plot is so amazingly detailed you feel as though you are experiencing the murder case with Rhyme and Sachs. **The Cold Moon** will fascinate you so much, you won't be able to put it down. – NURUL HUDA RASHEED

\$28.95 before GST

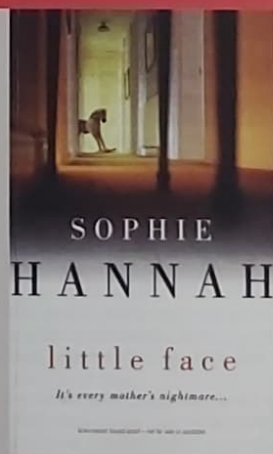
Kansas: the state where celebrated American writer Truman Capote penned the murder thriller **In Cold Blood**, where Dorothy was whizzed off in **The Wizard of Oz**, is now the setting for award-winning writer Nancy Pickard's latest novel, **The Virgin of Small Plains**.

An 18-year-old, Rex Shellenberger, spots the dead body of an unidentified, beautiful girl. No one can identify her, so he buries her in a simple grave. Miracles soon begin to happen to those who pay their respects to her. Some 17 years later, Mitch Newquist, who disappeared after the Virgin's body was found, returns to Small Plains.

What really happened and why did he pack his bags and leave? Why do the neighbourhood's top men want the death to be kept hush-hush? **The Virgin of Small Plains** is an edge-of-your-seat suspense thriller that demands your attention from cover to cover, with details that are immaculately strung together. – REZA OMAR

\$42.95 before GST

She lay on her side, impossibly  
naked in the blizzard.  
Her skin was as white as the snow around it,  
her hair as brown as the earth under her.  
Even cold and dead, she was the most  
beautiful girl he'd ever seen.



Married into the influential Fancourt family, Alice wants to be the perfect mother, wife and daughter-in-law. Her mother-in-law, Vivien dotes on her and her husband, David, is loving and warm. Everything seems perfect until she leaves home for the first time two weeks after giving birth.

When she returns home two hours later, she is shocked to find her child Florence gone, replaced with another baby. Nobody believes her and David and Vivien are furious at her behaviour. Alice has to fight against the people she once called family to find her baby.

**Little Face** is Sophie Hannah's first psychological thriller, after having written numerous children's books like **Little My**, and poetry. The suspense will keep you turning the pages as the plot unfolds, complete with intricate details and hints pointing to the truth.

You'll be satisfied with what's dished out but not before your breath is taken away by the very unexpected twist, just when you think you have figured it all out. – STEPHANIE HO

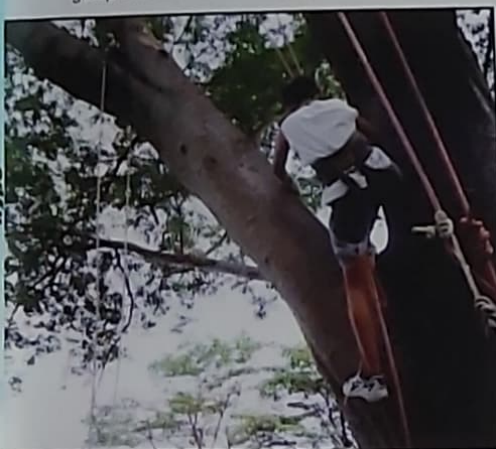
\$16.50 before GST



# tree's a Crowd

Get a view of the world from the top while enjoying nature through tree climbing. Join NUR FARHANAH YUSOFF as she finds out all about the activity that's left people hanging on for more.

Visting the parks, you might just come across a large congregation of people underneath a tree, shading their eyes with their hands and craning their necks, seemingly gazing at the sky for an inordinate amount of time. No, they're not looking for Superman. Or Spider-Man, for that matter. They're just observing a group of tree climbers swinging leisurely up the trees.



## Tree climbing 101

You might think that tree climbing went out of style a long way back together with cassette recorders, typewriters and record players. The Sunny Island Tree Climbers Society (SITC), possibly Singapore's first and only tree climbing club, is here to tell you that the lost and somewhat forgotten skill of scaling trees is still very much alive.

Valerie Law, 27, president of the SITC and a part-time nature and landscape photographer, loved nature so much that she decided to take on the gargantuan task of convincing the authorities that tree climbing was indeed a legitimate sport.

A ton of hard work, a multitude of hassles and a lot of tenacity later, the SITC was born in September 2000 and tree climbing in Singapore became an official hobby sport.

Now, she's allowed to conduct tree climbing

sessions in all the parks. Although the sport is still relatively unknown in Singapore, the SITC has been holding exhibitions and recruitment exercises in an bid to garner some publicity. They are also working with Echo, an environmental awareness group, to hold public talks to inform people about the sport.

All this has led to an increase in the number of tree climbers here in recent months, pointing the way up for this under-rated sport. The SITC currently has six qualified instructors and 20 members paying between \$35 to \$380 depending on the course difficulty, although there are other enthusiasts who attend for climbing sessions. The sport is divided into the different levels of difficulty, and the sessions are held several times a month.

Unlike the *kampung* style of climbing, which relies solely on your physical strength and limbs to reach the top, much like a monkey, tree climbing today is a lot more sophisticated.

Want to climb a tree? Equip yourself with harnesses, carabiners and ropes which will cost you about \$45, inclusive of the basic course. Why all the fuss? All this equipment is used to assemble a secure pulley system that will help you ascend and descend the trees more easily and safely. Depending on the tree's height, and on your level of experience and skill, you could take between three to 20 minutes to reach the top branch.

Besides, while climbing up trees the old-fashioned way is not a problem, getting down might just be.

"I had a student who was quite old and he told me that he used to climb long ago. But he couldn't get down. In the end, he had to call an ambulance to get him down," Valerie related with a laugh. Fortunately, with the new and improved method, climbers can prevent themselves from getting into these sticky situations - there's always the pulley to get you down!

## Safety first

Before you can even start climbing, you need to inspect the tree to determine whether it's safe to scale.

A healthy tree will have abundant green leaves and must be free of termites, dead branches or rotting roots. Remember to also look out for beehives and ant nests.

"African mahogany trees, rain trees, [and] tembusu are some of the trees [that we climb]," said Gerald Boh, 35, a freelance tree climbing instructor and avid tree

climber. "You can't climb coconut trees," he added, explaining that they have no branches. Hardwood trees are usually favoured over softwoods as they bear weight better. Also, climbers should avoid fruiting trees as their branches are more fragile compared to other trees.

A load test is also a must. Climbers suspend themselves in the air to ensure that the branch is sturdy and that the ropes and carabiner are secure. Always climb with a buddy so you can look out for each other.

Once you manage to get yourself up the tree, there's no need to come back down in a hurry. In fact, tree climbers have been known to string up a hammock to a broad, sturdy branch and, well, take a nap.

Don't worry about falling down because the hammock will be securely anchored between the branches. The hammock will also take the shape of your body and cradle you securely.



## What does it do for me?

"It exercises your hands, legs and back. It's not like the other forms of exercise where you'll just exercise and exercise. Here, you'll be inspired to get to the top!" grinned Valerie.

It's also suitable for people of all ages. Whether you're a senior citizen or a young child, anyone can take pleasure in tree climbing activities, which means it's a great family sport as well.

"(Tree climbing) is like a gentle form of climbing," Jerry Chua, 19, a polytechnic student who has tree-climbed a few times, said. "It's good if you're afraid of heights and you want to take the first step to conquering it."

So for those of you who are bored stiff by today's modern hi-tech and sedentary life of the Internet, TV and video games, it's time to throw away those headphones, smash the tube and get rid of that game pad, grab your equipment and just climb on. Or up, we should say.

To find out more about tree climbing, log on to [www.treeclimbingasia.org](http://www.treeclimbingasia.org) for course information.

## Ready, set, climb

You've got your equipment, here's how to start:

1) Once your tree is deemed safe, set up the ropes. First, loop a rope over a fairly high branch to give yourself a good start to reaching the top. If the branch is really high, use a throw bag, a palm-sized cloth bag containing iron filings, attached to a throw line. Be warned, you need a certain level of expertise to do this with finesse. Once done, tie the end of the throw line to a special abrasion-resistant rope called the arborist rope.

2) Next, put on your harness, also called a tree saddle, and hook it to a carabiner, which is a metal ring. The carabiner links your arborist rope and harness together. The ropes then form a pulley system with the pivot around a branch.

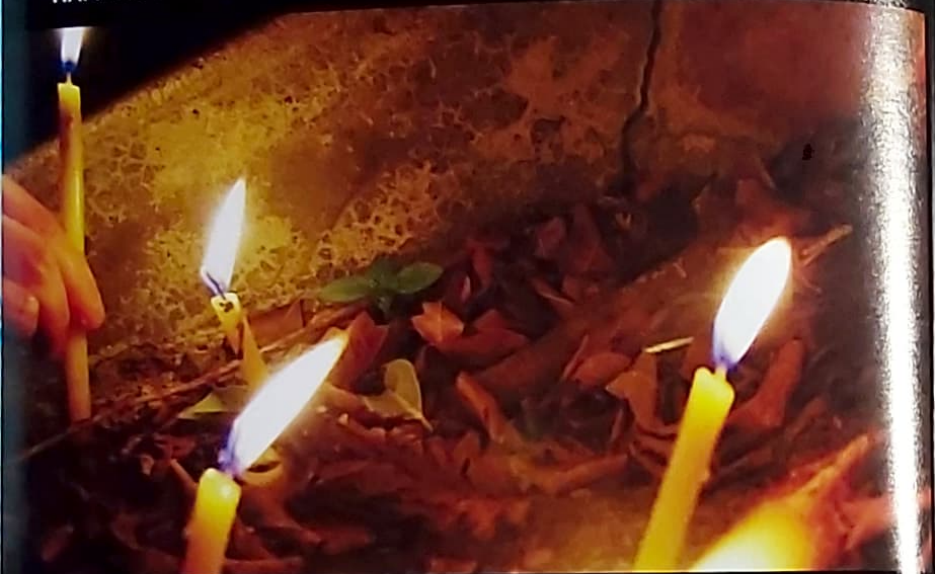
3) Place your foot into a loop of rope tied to the arborist rope, grasp the rope firmly, and step down and then pull the excess rope up. You can then climb at your own speed. Best of all, if you're tired, you can just lean back and rest on your tree saddle and take in the view.

4) If you're a beginner, your instructor will make sure everything is set up. You just need to strap on the harness, put on some padded gloves to avoid rope burn, and climb away.



# A HAUNTING WE WILL GO

You get to stay up, stay out late and hang out in dark and lonely places. Some youths are embracing the spine-chilling – and somewhat bizarre – leisure activity of ghost hunting. By **HAFAZAH OSMAN.**



There's something about the paranormal that fascinates us. Whether it's haunted houses, little boys with second sight (altogether now, whisper, "I see dead people") or random chills down the spine when we 'sense' the supernatural, people are naturally curious about ghosts, ghouls and spirits.

We've become so curious about it that people are even making a hobby out of it. Kenny Fong, 37, one of the two founders of the Singapore Paranormal Investigators (SPI), says that over the past two years, he's seen an increase in the number of youths between 18 to 25 years becoming interested in ghost-hunting activities.

Kenny added that youth want to get involved in ghost hunting expeditions as they are skeptical when they hear of people 'seeing' ghosts. Young people are curious about the 'other side' and TV programmes like **Ghost Whisperer** and **Incredible Tales** fuel that curiosity further. The SPI currently has more than 50 youth members.

The ghostbusters have caused such a stir that some youth have even taken to going ghost hunting on their own. Mohamed Fayyaz, 21, a National Serviceman, has over the past two years, gone on occasional ghost hunts to Pulau Ubin with his friends.

"There are abandoned houses and myths of girls

drowning there. When you go there, the smallest noise or movement makes your hair stand," he said. "Once, we heard the Muslim call for prayers at 2 am [but] the latest happens before 9 pm. It couldn't have been any human; there was no one else but us there."

Another avid ghost hunter, Anusuya Haridas, 19, a final-year biomedical science student at Temasek Polytechnic (TP), says, "I was very inquisitive about mystic happenings and decided to spend my time on something new, the other recreational activities were getting too boring for me."

The SPI conducts workshops for the curious, where speakers share their real-life paranormal experiences. Responses to these meetings are so good that most classes are fully booked.

Kenny added, "We have been invited [to] a lot [of] polytechnics since paranormal investigations are moving towards a more intellectual direction." Not only are youth interested in hunting down a supernatural being, they are also keen on learning the reasons behind hauntings. In fact, in a ghost hunt at a polytechnic last January, participants spotted a female ghost in a toilet.

If you're interested in the supernatural, Kenny reveals that some of the best places to launch a paranormal investigation includes cemeteries, deserted houses, churches, schools and old buildings. The ghostbusters normally visit places such as Pulau Ubin, cemeteries, Changi, Fort Canning and other historical sites. They've also ventured outside of Singapore to Malaysia and Indonesia.

And while it may all mean the same thing to a layman, Kenny says there's actually a difference between hunting for ghosts and investigating them. When you go on a ghost hunt, you are at a site that has no proven record of any sighted ghost and want to prove that it's haunted. Ghost investigations, on the other hand, are about going to an already identified ghostly area and recording further proof.

*If you have what it takes to be a ghost hunter, visit the SPI website at [www.spi.com.sg](http://www.spi.com.sg)*

Here are some tips from the Asian Paranormal Investigators (API) if you decide to ghost hunt.

## DO'S

- Prevent obstruction and risk by visiting unfamiliar sites in the day first
- In case of an emergency, inform someone of your whereabouts
- Go between the late night and early morning, as these times have proven to be the most fruitful in encountering ghosts
- Respect the place and the dead
- Have a positive mindset, as negative thoughts send spirits off
- Look out for 'no trespassing' signs and ensure you do not intrude on private property

## DONT'S

- Wander off or go alone
- Whisper during recordings, as it will ruin results
- Carry on with investigations or hunts in bad weather
- Use any scents, as scents are linked to paranormal happenings
- Take drugs, consume alcohol or smoke
- Use vulgarities

## THINGS TO BRING

- Digital camera, or a camera that has a good flash strength
- Preferably a red lens flashlight
- Spare batteries
- Stationery to jot down notes for research. Alternatively, you can use a tape recorder
- Handphone for emergencies
- For identification purposes, bring your I/C along
- First aid kits help, since you might get hurt in the dark
- Suitable clothing for the weather





## 乐坛新人王

Tank

“7年级音乐小霸王”Tank受邀前来义安理工学院担任NP Idol复赛的表演嘉宾，同时也与hype记者陈伟德分享他在音乐上的领域以及他人生历程的转变。

身穿轻便黑色T恤以及一件军帽长筒的Tank抵达采访现场后，便向大家问好，让人感受到他的热情与亲切感。但当Tank一坐下来后，他散发出的这股“热情”立即消失了，并且向唱片公司工作人员直截了当，原来Tank之前乘坐的轿车空调温度太低了。任何人看到这一幕，都会对Tank萌起“怜悯之心”。

“Tank”这个名字不禁让人匪夷所思，为何会有人采用如此奇特的艺名。Tank解释说：“出道前，公司看到我的这张专辑，听了我的demo后，觉得有很多类似游戏的感受和一些game的画面，所以就给我的名字叫做Tank。不过身边的朋友仍然会叫我建中。”

## 在音乐上的领域

才华横溢的Tank除了擅长乐器，如吉他、钢琴、鼓和bass等，也创作了自己的首张个人专辑《Fighting! 生存之道》。由于Tank的曲风属于多元化，因而让你无法猜到他的个人风格。

他滔滔不绝地说道：“也许大家会认为这张专辑太多风格了，会觉得很杂乱。为什么会这样子，因为一张专辑如果全部都是R&B会觉得很无聊...(而且)R&B本身还是有风格的。虽然在这张专辑里我有很多风格，但听起来会有不一样的感觉，不一样的情绪。那我为什么会有这么多风格，是因为我要尝试不一样的风格，那以后当制作人，每一样的风格都比较好掌握。”

那么尝试过编曲与填词，Tank会比较喜欢哪一种过程呢？他毫不犹豫地答道：“当然是写曲，因为小时候不爱读书啊，所以写词的部分就会比较吃力。我对文字的画面是有限啦！”

因此，Tank在写歌时所花费的时间介于十分钟到三个月不等。曾写过无数歌曲创作歌曲的他，如今最想做阿妹张惠妹写歌，而对与她生俱来的独特唱腔更是赞不绝口：“因为我记得她唱歌唱得很棒，不管是谁写的歌，从她喉咙唱出来的一些歌我都觉得很棒。”

## Tank的感情世界

因为与台湾当红女生组合S.H.E中的Selina一起拍摄《独唱情歌》的MV，而传出绯闻的Tank笑说：“拍MV的时候会有一点尴尬，因为还

不熟，然后还要有身体接触的一些画面，我会觉得有一点尴尬。”同时，他也坦承自己不愿长拍MV，因此往往感到十分紧张。

目前感情世界空虚的Tank，并不抗拒与圈内人交往。同时，他希望往后交往的对象除了有内涵与气质以外，也能够接受他繁忙的行程表。Tank解释说：“她最好能配合我的工作，因为我经常出国，很难有时间陪她，希望女朋友会容忍。”

## Tank的迷你档案

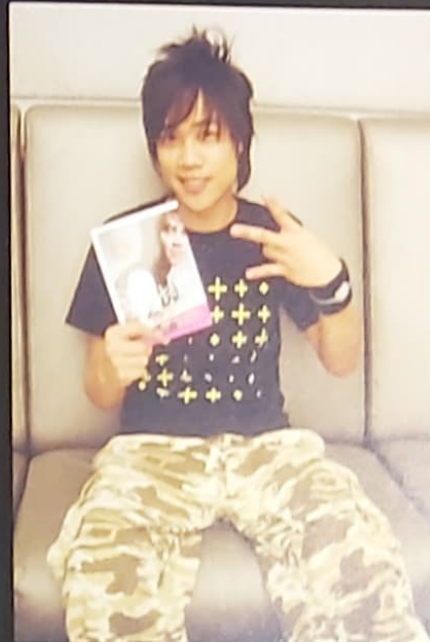
姓名：吕建中  
艺名：Tank  
年龄：26岁  
生日：2月16日  
出生地点：台湾，台北  
对新加坡的初次印象：环境很好，很干净  
“我到了老巴刹吃了好多东西，都顺着吃没有留意名字，不过有吃螃蟹和虾子。”

## 生活上的变化

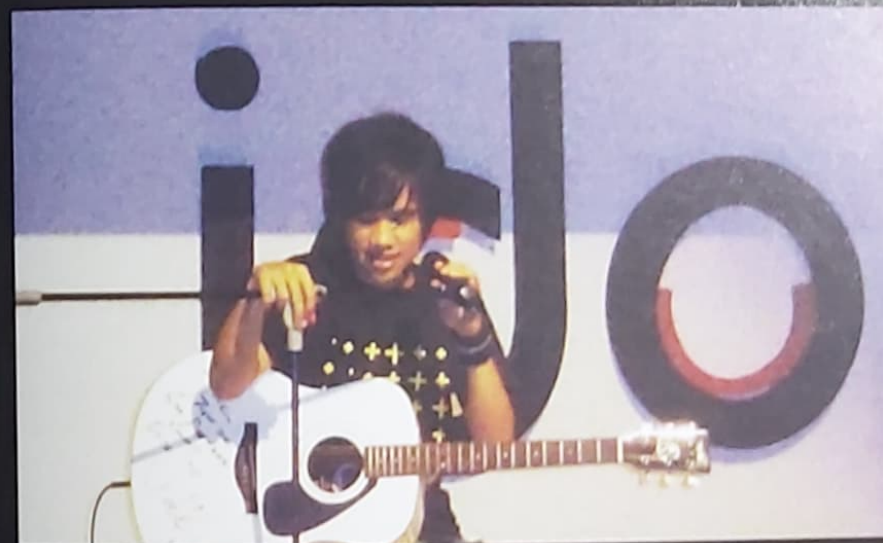
随着名气不断地提升，Tank的日常生活习惯难免会受到影响。他说：“跟以前的生活不一样，会比较麻烦。我所谓的麻烦就是，走几步路就有人要签名之类的，会(感到)有一些困扰。”但即使如此，Tank回到台湾后仍然会保持一贯的生活习惯，如打电动、打篮球、游泳和逛街购买他最爱的电脑游戏光碟等。

名气固然为Tank增添了不少烦恼，但同时也为他赢得了不少的忠实歌迷。他们的热情让他心存感激，但Tank认为他们无须花费在一些不必要的事物上，如“包车...(因为)赶通告，赶时间的时候，包车的司机又要死缠着，(会)很危险。”

这位多才多艺、性格直爽的音乐才子 - Tank吕建中的第二张专辑预计在十一月发行。他会继续带给你怎么样的惊喜，我们就拭目以待吧！



在参与“NP偶像”(NP Idol)复赛时，Tank唱了许多专辑里的新歌。他甚至向观众要求现场点歌，还用他熟练的吉他以Unplugged方式唱了首英文歌曲Avril Lavigne的“My Happy Ending”和Sixpence None The Richer的“Kiss Me”。



在拍照的当儿，建中不忘为自己的首张个人专辑做宣传。



# DJ MAKES ME LOSE CONTROL

JOANNA JOHAN talks to 29-year-old DJ J-STYLEZ about winning the Fort Minor Block Party disc jockey competition, his ironic past, and the harsh reality that not any dork can be a jock.

Decked in an all-black ensemble, disc jockey (DJ) J-Stylez looks a bit too morbid for a hip-hopper. Take an even closer look, and you'll quickly realise that he's not in a very cheery mood.

Slumped in the chair across the table at a fast food restaurant, he seems a tad diminished compared to the mega-appearance he made at the Fort Minor Block Party Scratch DJ battle, which he won, making off with some really cool prizes, including merchandise autographed by Fort Minor, the Hip Hop band fronted by Mike Shinoda, who is an eminent member of nu-metal band Linkin Park.

In contrast, there's nary a smile on his face today, even though he was beaming at the competition.

J-Stylez, whose real name is Faizal Abdul Samad, isn't your typical hip-hop DJ. You know, the type who listens to strictly hip-hop. On the contrary, he is a gentleman with a shy and quiet exterior who, believe it or not, was once a hardcore punk in a crustie (a genre of punk music) band back in the early 90s.

You'd expect any winner of any competition to display some sort of jubilation at beating his rivals but the soft-spoken veteran DJ seems hardly interested in conversation. That is, until we came to the one thing he is proud of – his representing Singapore in the internationally-acclaimed **Techniques World DJ Championship** in 2000. "It's like a World Cup for turntablists," grinned J-Stylez, a glimmer in the eye.

The Singapore champion got a chance to go to London for the world finals and even though he didn't win, he enjoyed his all-expenses paid trip to London very much.

J-Stylez is an insomniac-workaholic who works his magic at all hours of the night. "You know sometimes you get bored and all of a sudden, you feel like 'Hey, I want to [make] some music', so I'll switch on my casing and turntable and try to create some music. From there, once you get [hooked] on it, you won't want to sleep," he explains.

For all the aspiring DJs out there, J-Stylez has more than a few words of advice – based on his own experiences, of course.

"I've seen a lot of kids nowadays who want to be scratch DJs. They try hard but they still can't make it, so they just give up. So my advice is, don't stop trying, keep on practising and believe in whatever you do. And if you know you're good, please come out of your room and join a battle [because] that is where you can improve."



# AN EYE FOR SHAN

He's confessed on TV to cheating on two ex-loves and admits to really wanting a girlfriend. REZA OMAR chats with Shan Wee and finds out more about the English chap.

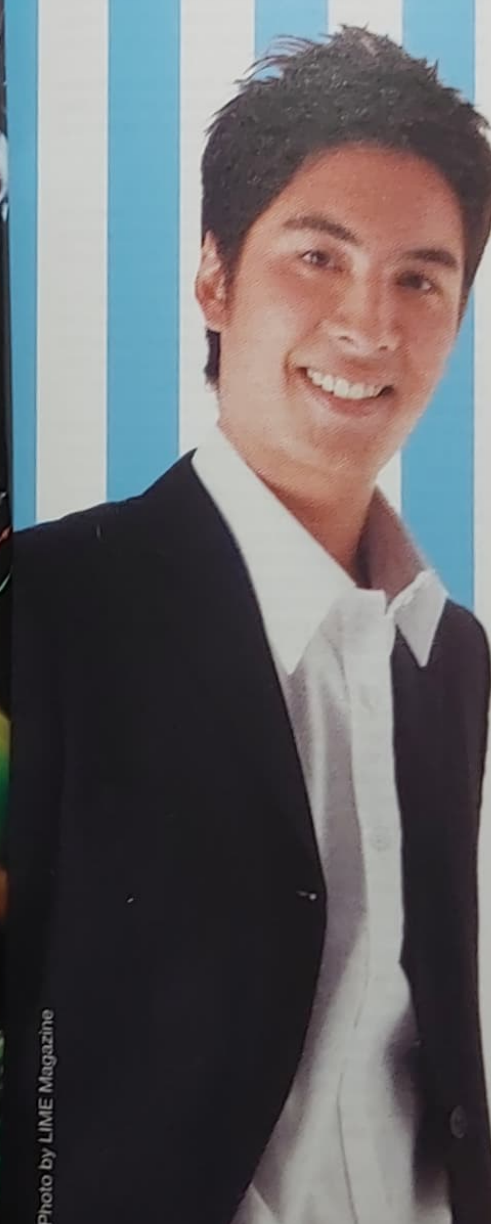


Photo by LIME Magazine

No woman will stand for infidelity. That's perhaps why Shan Wee was booted off the sixth episode of **Eye for a Guy 2** after confessing to cheating twice on his ex-girlfriends. Not even a song, strumming a guitar or a kiss on MTV VJ Denise Keller's lips could get him off the hook. Hell hath no fury like a woman about to be scorned.

Little did viewers know, but while Shan was campaigning for Denise's heart on our TV screen, he was also busy doing a little courting of his own elsewhere. Did we say a woman? Shan was actually vying for a radio DJ stint on Perfect 10 98.7 FM.

Denise may have spurned him but the radio station gave him a chance. The 24-year-old is now a familiar voice on-air where he does a four-hour shift every week night, taking listener calls and dedications.

Shan's good looks, charming personality and his Pan-Asian appeal have scored him a few modelling assignments but being tall has its downsides. The 1.90m lad was told that he didn't look right next to anyone as he was too tall.

He might not have had a career as a model, but the Irish-Chinese hunk has made good use of his looks by debuting as Michelle Chong's co-host in July on **Rated-E**, Channel 5's new entertainment programme.

Shan told **hype** that he was excited about being the programme's entertainment news anchor.

"It's my first real TV hosting stint and [as] I am totally obsessed by my favourite movie of the moment, **Ron Burgundy** which is a comedy about San Diego's most popular newsreader back in the '70s, so it's like a dream come true!"

Shan still calls Northern Ireland home, having lived his whole life in the United Kingdom (UK). Given his English background – you know, gentlemanly, discreet and well-mannered – the rumours about his infidelity don't quite measure up. "I haven't had a girlfriend since autumn 2004! Recently 98.7FM organised an event to find me a date!"

"Actually it's a misconception some people have of me, that I'm just out to play the field. There has never been a time when I didn't want to find a steady girlfriend. It just hasn't happened, I guess."

While he hasn't had time for a girlfriend, Shan confessed to **hype** that as a 12-year-old, he had a major crush on Madonna during her Vogue period. He vividly remembers the poster of her in fishnet stockings. "It was a wonderful memory," he sheepishly says. We think we'll let your imagination take it from there.

**Shan Wee 11-2** airs every week night from 11 pm – 2 am, while **UK Top 20** airs every Sunday at 4 pm, both on 98.7FM. **Rated-E** airs every Thursday, 9 pm, on Channel 5.



# DOUBLE THE FUN

They're twins, new additions to the MTV VJ family and they've been on the cover of a men's magazine in bikinis. MELVIN TAN braves the nose-bleeding to talk to twins May and Choy.



At first glance, you might think you're seeing double. The hair's the same, the smiles are similar, even the figures look alike. Unless you know the tiny distinguishing features that separate twins May and Choy, that is.

Choy has a mole on her left cheek; May doesn't. May herself agrees that she is "grumpy when she's not smiling" while Choy is the "sweeter-looking" sister, says May. May is older than Choy by a mere minute, but shorter by 1cm at 1.71m.

The Malaysian-born twins of Norwegian-Chinese parentage are certainly head-turners. Born Teh May Wan and Teh Choy Wan, the identical pair celebrated their 25th birthday in early July.

## Shared interests

Sharing a birthday isn't the only thing that binds the twins together. They're both multilingual – they speak English, Cantonese, Malay, Hokkien and Spanish. They also share the same aims and tastes.

"We're similar when it comes to our goals and aspirations, career-wise, and we also share a lot of the same values in life when it comes to friends, relationships and family," says the younger twin, Choy. "We also have similar taste in men, as in, we appreciate the same qualities."

Their dream dates? For May, it involves, "some fur, a fireplace and Orlando Bloom". Choy though, "wouldn't mind having (Korean singer) Rain dance with (her) under the actual rain in the middle of an abandoned road".

They describe themselves as homely people who like to cook and enjoy redecorating their apartment. Choy says of May: "She makes the best fruit tarts in the world! She'll even make the pastry and cream from scratch, no frozen or ready-made stuff. But strangely enough, she doesn't like to eat them. [They're] only for special guests!"

## Two peas in a pod... not

While it's easy for observers to see them as one and the same, they're certainly not carbon copies. They quickly clear the air by stating that they don't dress alike in real life.

Only on television, under the instruction of stylists do they become clones of each other. "We stopped dressing alike at the age of 10," said May.

Like most identical twins, May and Choy want to be seen as different people. "She's probably more blunt and forthright whereas I'm softer," says Choy of May, while May proudly adds that her sister "writes amazing poetry", so much so that "her words can make you cry".

It was the more blunt and forthright twin who made the foray into fame first. The twins moved to Brisbane, Australia, to study when they were 12. When they were 17, May entered a local modelling competition and made it to the grand finals, although she didn't win. She later started modelling professionally when she turned 21.

"Mummy was too strict and insisted that I completed my studies first before making money," says May disappointedly.

The pair studied at Griffith University and both graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree, majoring in

Asian Studies. Choy went on to get a second degree – a Bachelor of Communications with majors in Public Relations and Marketing.

## Road to fame

In 2000, the duo took part in Ford's *Search for A Supermodel* competition in Brisbane, and both made it to the finals for their state. "I think that's when we started thinking about it more seriously, but it was only a hobby we indulged in on summer breaks in Malaysia, with some commercials and shoots here and there," added Choy, who only began her professional modelling career in mid-2004, after obtaining her degrees.

But even before that, the vivacious pair of sisters had already experienced their first modelling assignment – at the ripe old age of six, for Maggi Tomato Sauce. Choy recalls being really enthusiastic about being cast, but May "started crying because she didn't like the camera", says Choy, laughing.

These days, it's not sauces they're selling anymore – though they certainly are saucy. Their bikini cover shoot in October 2005 for a men's magazine is the stuff of male fantasies.

The twins candidly add that they wouldn't mind shooting another bikini cover, but preferably on "an exotic island somewhere in the Caribbean", says Choy, with a laugh.

## The MTV connection

May and Choy joined MTV Asia last October, but only started with hosting shows this year. With all the attention that comes along with being celebrities, both girls lamented that the lack of privacy and anonymity was definitely the biggest sacrifice they have had to make as part of becoming such high-profile MTV VJs.

However, they're quick to add that the fame is not all bad. In fact, "the job itself is a perk", says Choy.

May subsequently agrees with her sister, as she admits, "There is the material side of it – the invites to the coolest parties in town, free clothes, discounts, VIP treatment at clubs [but] travel and getting to meet new people every day is the best part."

They reckon their first interview as VJs with jazz sensation Michael Buble, has been the best and most memorable moment of their job so far.

Regarding the criticisms they've heard about being overly flirtatious onscreen, Choy says, "I just don't let it bother me. You can't always please everyone, and no one is perfect all the time, even celebrities! Of course, there is pressure to maintain a certain façade."

"But at end of the day, always have a smile and as long as you're being a good person, that's all there is to it."

Catch MTV VJs May and Choy on *Pop Inc* (MTV Asia Channel 20) every weekday at 11 am and 6 pm. *Double Trouble* airs as a segment in-between shows. They are also star bloggers of *Stamp*, a website by *The Straits Times*.



Photos by MTV



"It's not just a shoe culture.  
It's an Air-volution!"  
— Clement



Clement  
Nike Air Generation T-shirt \$35  
Nike Air 360 Basketball Shoes \$200  
Nike White Team Shoulder Bag \$79

Evelyn  
Nike Air Generation T-shirt \$35  
Nike Women's Air Max 95 Zen Shoes \$140  
Nike Brown Combo Bag \$89



## A Celebration of Air

The year is 1977. NASA engineer Frank Rudy is pitching his idea for using air in athletic shoes to several footwear companies. Nobody listens – except Nike. Together, they create the first air-sole units: durable urethane bags filled with pressurised gas that compress under impact, then spring back to cushion the next blow.

"Celebration of Air", Nike Air's latest campaign, features an updated version of the trusted products you know and love. It combines vintage Air graphics and ad copy with new designs and re-interpretations to rejuvenate Nike Air and give it a new breath of life.

All featured apparel are available at Nike Sports Culture stores (Marina Square, Plaza Singapura, Suntec City Mall and The Heeren Shops). Nike Air footwear can also be found at Nike B.I.R.D stores (Marina Square, Cathay Cineleisure Orchard, Shaw Centre and Suntec City Mall) and Alternative Sports (Queensway Shopping Centre).



# WHEN ART IS SKIN DEEP



**TUFELON.COM**  
CUSTOM BODY JEWELRY  
FOR CUSTOMER PEOPLE.

Whether it's out or in, or through your skin, the gruesome art of body modification is an ancient practice that isn't about to go away. **STEPHANIE HO** gets close to the bone and finds some people who take the adage "beauty is skin deep" too literally.

Long before Thai women stacked heavy metal rings to elongate their necks or Chinese women smashed bones in their feet to fit into baby slippers, millennia-old civilisations used body modification to enhance their beauty. From the Nuba and Dinka tribes in Sudan, to the people of the South Pacific Islands to even, the tribes in New Guinea, they often used some sort of bodmod to mark rites of passage.

Though body modifications aren't done for traditional purposes anymore, it seems that tattooing and piercing is still widely practiced. Statistics from [beautymatters.blogspot.com](http://beautymatters.blogspot.com), a blog about body art, shows that 10 to 25 percent of teenagers in America have some kind of piercing or tattoo.

Most people usually start off with something mild like tattoos and piercings, before moving on to more "hardcore" things like scarification, which is creating and shaping scar tissue to produce art on the body. Although there aren't any official statistics for scarification, from virtually no one in Singapore getting it done to six people getting one in May to at least 20 individuals planning on getting one when Oscar Navarro, a Spain-based body modification artist, flies down to Singapore in September or October this year, it seems to be slowly growing in popularity among those interested in tattooing and piercing.

While the ancients mainly cut skin and rubbed elements like charcoal into the area to produce a prominent scar, the modern primitives (people in developed nations who engage in bodmod practices) in Singapore generally practise two techniques of scarification – cutting and skin removal.

## Can you spare some skin?

Cutting technically involves creating a design with a surgical blade or a scalpel that goes no deeper than 3mm. Skin removal is a bit more intricate and a lot more painful. In addition to being sliced, the skin is also removed and the tissue is pulled back by a dissection clamp while a scalpel is used to free the bottom layer of the skin from the top layer of raw flesh.

After cutting it will take three weeks tops for scabbing and full healing to take place. On the other hand, it'll take as many as 50 days to recover from skin peeling and you'll need to clean the wound frequently with iodine or other sterile washes to prevent infection, says Daphne Ang, 20, who had one done in May.

Besides permanent procedures like deep cutting and skin removal, having objects implanted under the skin is a reversible way of beautifying the body

in rather drastic ways. According to [bmezine.com](http://bmezine.com), the most popular ezine catering to body modification enthusiasts all around the world, subdermal implants are when three-dimensional objects are inserted under the skin to sculpt its surface.

Most implants are carried out through pseudo surgery, using a scalpel to make a single incision along the skin and creating an empty "pocket" for the implants using a dermal separator. Implant materials are usually made of silicone (as breast implants are) or a less reactive plastic material called Teflon that is resistant to body chemicals. After the implants have been placed in the "tunnel" beneath the skin, the incision is sutured with suturing tape or thread.

Subdermal implants can leave you with things like horns on your forehead, rows of balls along the arms and even genital beading! Yes, you can have them almost anywhere on your body.

These implants are generally trouble-free during the healing process because they're sealed inside the body. However, great care has to be taken during the healing stage so you don't accidentally shift the implant by sleeping on it or knocking it. A pressure bandage may be used to hold the implants in place for the first couple of days of healing.

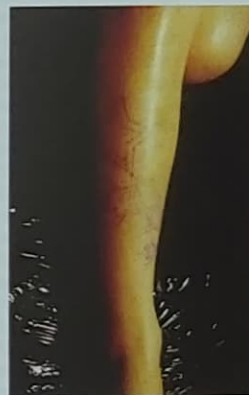


Photo by Daphne Ang

## Getting under their skin

In an email interview, Mr Nicholas Teo, a Lecturer in Occupational Therapy in Mental Health at Canterbury Christ Church University in the UK told **hype**, "In my experience, people do things that stand out to say something. Perhaps they might not even realise it, but they might be rebelling against the traditional norms of society. Perhaps they are trying to say that they don't need to conform to what others do, and that they are an individual."

He adds that, while wanting to stand out, ironically, they succumb to peer pressure too. He said, "People who are in certain circles involved in this kind of body





sub-dermal imp

piercing when socialising would be talking about their piercing, feel a sense of belonging by having the same kind of identifying traits. Being part of a sub-culture can be very important to people as it fulfills the need to belong and be accepted by others."

Refuting the theory that those who have body modifications do it for the attention or are depressed and suicidal teens is Daphne, part of the only body modification crew in Singapore, which has about 10 members. They have friends wanting to do various modifications too. She says, "The media is too obsessed with flawless, virgin skin, so this becomes a form of counter-culture to mainstream culture."

She also explains that slicing your skin for aesthetic reasons is entirely different from self-hurt, which is commonly referred to as "cutting".

It may be hard for those who don't understand the extreme practices of modern primitives, but it's not about deeply emotionally and mentally distressed and disturbed people wanting to feel pain, she says. Daphne firmly believes that she and the rest of her crew have the "right and bravery to modify (themselves) from what (they) used to be" to beautify their bodies.

#### More than skin deep

According to the ones who do it here, the choice to modify your body is not done on a whim, it's a lifestyle choice with permanent consequences. It usually starts with curiosity before it builds up into a passion.

That was the case of Baldwin Chew, 20, who helps out Shane Tan, 22, a fellow tattoo and piercing artist at Acid Crue, Singapore's only bodmod studio, located

at Peninsula Shopping Centre.

Baldwin first liked the look of piercings before he moved on to more extreme body modifications. He also put himself through "21 days of pain" a few years ago. During that time, he bound his tongue with a fishing line, tightening it every day, so that it cut into his tongue, resulting in a self-made split tongue.

Shane also believes it's essential for someone who's interested in body modifications to experience all those different sensations, from peelings to the healing process, to piercings and scalpings (using a scalpel to remove, for example, part of the earlobe or lip) first-hand.

Disagreeing that he had done this to fit in or because he craved attention, Baldwin echoes the rest of the group when he says, "We do what we like, not to gain publicity or anything else, we're just doing what we like."

Body modification allows Shane to assert his own uniqueness and identity, forcing others to look at him in a different skin.

Although there seems to be some stress placed on being different, that's not even close to their primary motivation. Baldwin explains, "You do something that you know other people won't have the courage to do, and then you'll get this satisfaction out of it."

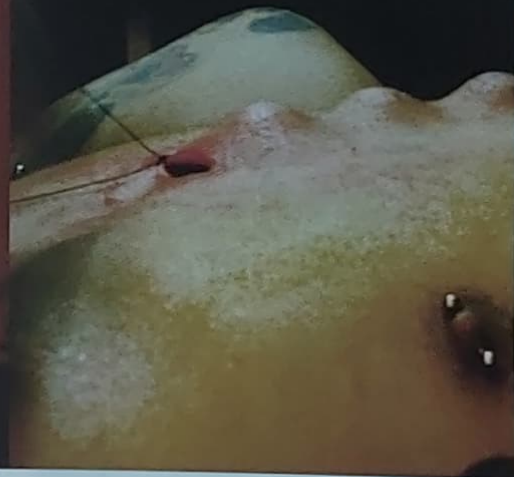
Yet, as much as he says this is not a matter of not conforming, just by looking at the group, you can see that each member is distinctively different in their choice of piercing or tattoo, or the different parts of their bodies used.

Not all young persons are impressed though. Tiffany Cheong, 19, who is waiting to go to the National



scarification through skin peeling

insertion of teflon chest implants



University of Singapore, represents the majority opinion when she says, "It's bad how people would want to do these things to their body. Our bodies are a temple and we shouldn't destroy them that way."

However, Mrs Jenny Bong, Executive Director of Lakeside Family Centre, which provides counselling to individuals and families, does not find anything about body modifications to be overly-concerned with. She said, "I don't think it's a problem and as long as it is not done for the wrong reasons, it's fine."

#### Caution

Whether you were impressed or disgusted by body modification, one thing undisputed is the level of risk. Dr Si Hoe Sing Yin, who is a General Practitioner at SG Clinic, warns that there are a lot of risks in these "unnecessary" procedures.

"Firstly, in any invasive procedures you do resulting in a break in the skin, from the point of view of a doctor, it's infective. Secondly, allergies to these sort of things range from mild skin rashes to anaphylactic shock, which can be fatal because of quick constriction of the airway, within minutes of onset, which results in brain damage and death," she explains.

Dr Si also says that strict hygiene should be observed, but there's no such thing as things being totally clean, as even proper disinfectants like iodine and potassium permanganate don't absolutely kill the germs present.

The bodmod crew acknowledged that body modification can be fatal if its dangers are not taken seriously. They warned **hype** and interested individuals that it's always best to go to an experienced artist

who has at least three years of experience to do these things, as the modifications can be quite delicate and complex. And for heavier, more extreme modifications, such as subdermal implants, individuals might even have to go overseas or invite foreign artists in.

The bodmod crew in Singapore got their scarifications and subdermal implants done by Oscar Navarro, a popular body modification artist from Spain, who flew to Singapore in mid-May. The going rate for most scarification pieces is 100 to 300 Euros (about S\$200 to S\$600). Hardly the most affordable,

compared with tattoos, which usually cost anything between \$30 and \$400. The costs of any body modification, be it tattooing or scarification, depends on the size and intricacy of the design.

But when Shane thought about how the body is "an empty canvas for artists to work on and beautify", he felt it was well worth it. Navarro wasn't available for comment, but he will be back in Singapore in September or October for more modifications. More information about his work can

be found at [www.oscarvoid.com](http://www.oscarvoid.com)

Aside from the physical danger, Daphne also warns, "They cannot just go about cutting themselves for whatever reasons and expect to get the same result, especially when insufficient research has been done on it."

"I mean, it takes three to five years practicing it full-time for professionals to learn how to do it. The most important thing they have to take note of is, this isn't another trend or fashion thing, you can't just take it out whenever you want to. It's permanent; it stays with you for the rest of your life."







Nurul Maideen, 19

**Rating out of 10**

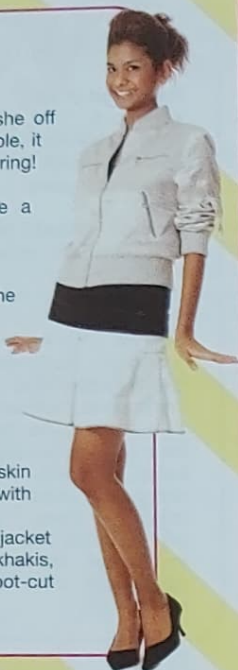
**Vernon:** 5. "Not only is she off the mark with this ensemble, it looks unimpressive and boring! She looks like a waitress!"

**Luke:** 5. "She looks like a nurse. Too white all over."

**Style Tips**

**Vernon:** "What's with the nondescript zipper front top and those black office-looking court shoes? She should have worn a silk satin top in a bright colour like red or turquoise that will show off her beautiful skin colour. She can also do with some bling-bling!"

**Luke:** "White bomber jacket is fine. Change skirt to khakis, camou-print capris or boot-cut jeans."



Jonathan Leong, 23

**Rating out of 10**

**Vernon:** 8. "Yes, a Style Idol. This guy has an understated style that adds to his charm and charisma. I think I hear the girls screaming!"

**Luke:** 9. "Definitely! I'd say he's a top three, I wouldn't be surprised if he wins the entire competition."

**Style Tip**

**Vernon:** "Keep the long layered hair. His bad boy look with his 'I'm-really-a-nice-guy' persona, keeps his fans wanting more. Throw on a vintage leather jacket over his t-shirt and jeans and he's good to go. Oh, don't forget the boots!"

**Luke:** "He should continue dressing like that and shouldn't try too hard because he already has the formula right. Just keep that confident cool."



Hady Mirza, 26

**Rating out of 10**

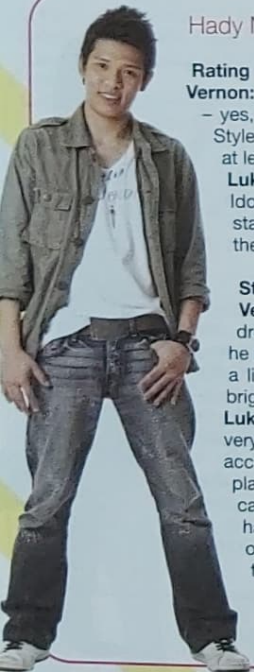
**Vernon:** 7. "If he works at it – yes, he can be a possible Style Idol! But a 'no' for me, at least for now."

**Luke:** 4. "Not a Style Idol because he doesn't stand out from the rest of them."

**Style Tips**

**Vernon:** "I like his relaxed dress sense. Not much he needs to work on really, a little more colour might brighten up his image."

**Luke:** "His outfit is very normal. He should accessorise more and play with colours. He can open up his shirt; have a printed t-shirt or stripes inside, and then change the school boy hairstyle because it's boring."



Mathilda D'Silva, 23

**Rating out of 10**

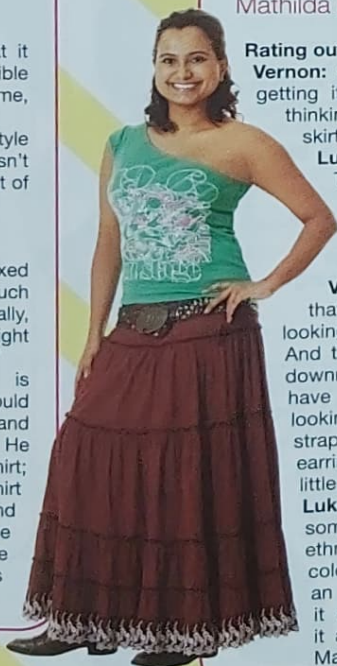
**Vernon:** 4. "I'm afraid she's not getting it right... What was she thinking with that peasant skirt?"

**Luke:** 4. "Colours don't go. The skirt colour and style is fine for her. But the top isn't."

**Style Tips**

**Vernon:** It's such a shame that she put a gorgeous looking toga top with that skirt! And the closed up shoes are downright dowdy. She should have paired that striking looking top with slim jeans and strappy heels! Some nice drop earrings would have added a little glitz to the look."

**Luke:** "Trash the top for something more exotic and ethnic in a somber autumn colour. Her hair is actually an asset; she should curl it some more, accentuate it and make it bigger, like Macy Gray."



# Panic Room

The months of August to October are dreaded by many youths because they tend to herald final projects and examinations and all the stress that these entail. SARIMA JASMIN finds out what happens when stress escalates so much it causes panic attacks and, unlike Jodie Foster, you don't have a safe room to retreat to.

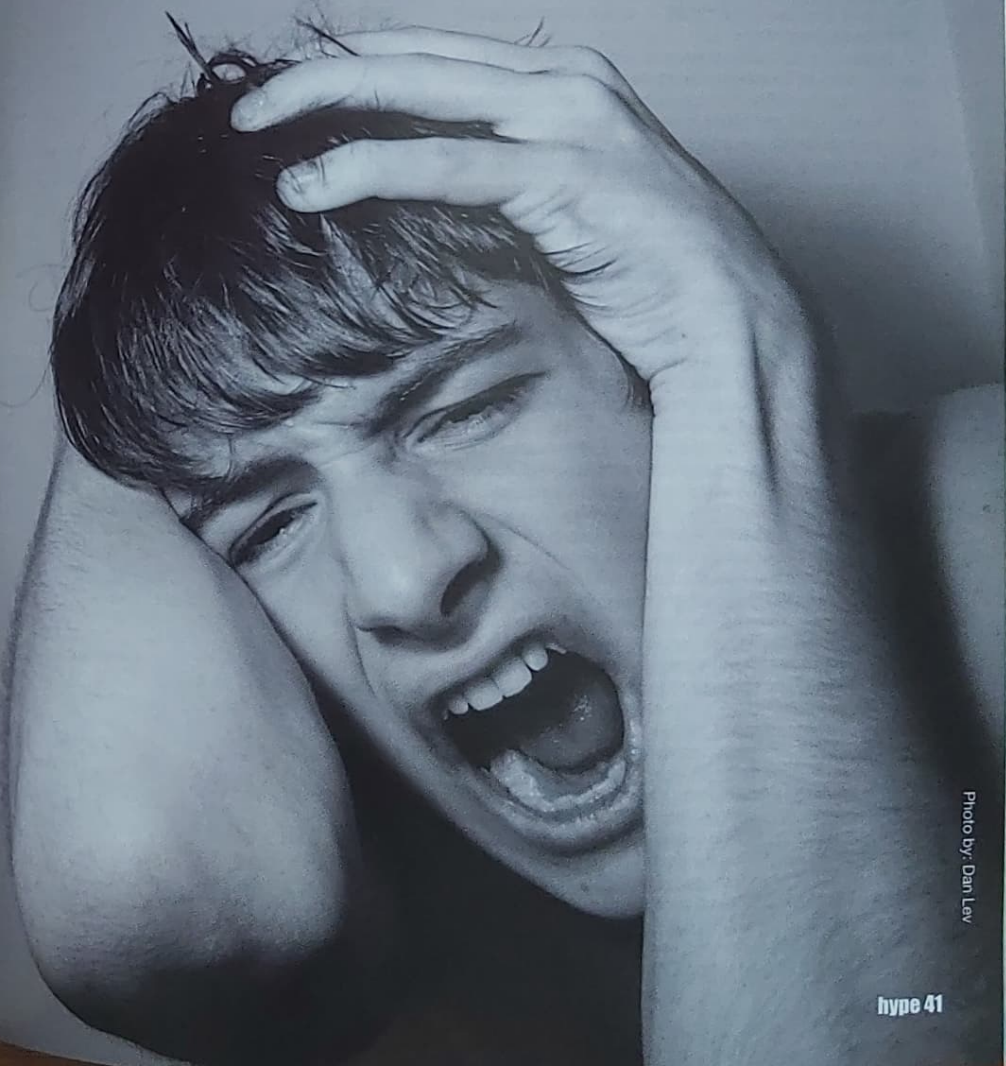


Photo by: Dan Lev



## About 20 percent of adults will experience at least one panic attack at some time in their lives.

You're perspiring, trembling and having fainting spells. Could this be some bug you caught? It could, or you might be having a panic attack.

Put simply, panic attacks are episodes of sudden intense fear, accompanied by physical distress symptoms that seem to come out of nowhere, explains Dr Ken Ung Eng Khean, a Senior Consultant Psychiatrist from Adam Road Hospital and MD Specialist Health Care.

These attacks can last anywhere from a few minutes to 10 minutes and even hit you with some frequency. According to an article written by Dr Brian Scott, a doctor and psychologist from Scott Psychological Services, for The New Straits Times in Malaysia, someone with a panic disorder can experience recurring panic attacks and face an overwhelming feeling of anxiety, a few times in a day, causing much distress to the person.

According to Dr Scott people under a great deal of stress, who lack stress management skills, are at risk for developing panic disorder, which, he adds, is about two times more prevalent in women than in men.

But anyone can get panic attacks. In fact, according to the Institute of Mental Health (IMH) website, about 20 percent of adults will experience at least one panic attack at some time in their lives. In addition, local studies in 1998 conducted by the Singapore Medical Journal (SMJ) found that 1 to 2 percent of those surveyed suffered from panic disorder the very same year, suggesting similar frequency with other countries, said Dr Ung.

Dr Ung also shared that those who are from their teens to their 20s, are the most likely group of people to suffer from panic attacks. He estimated seeing about 100 to 200 young people with panic disorder over the last two to three years. This is similar to the number of patients from the next most prevalent age group suffering from panic disorder – those in their late 20s and early 30s – according to the IMH website.

According to Daniel Koh, a psychologist from Insights-Tse Pte Ltd, this is mainly because youths nowadays live more protected lives than before. He explained that these youths have not been exposed much to stress when they were younger, and therefore may be more affected. He also said, "Youths tend to live a much more comfortable life. Changes may bring anxiety or stress to them because they may lack coping skills or problem-solving skills."

### How do I know I've got it?

The symptoms of panic attacks are similar to stress only more intense or frightening. But knowing them specifically may just help you receive treatment faster.

If left untreated, panic attacks, in the long term, may cause the patient to suffer from a heart problem, says Mr Koh. According to the IMH website, someone who suffers from panic attacks could experience shortness of breath, heart palpitations, dizziness and unsteadiness, faintness, choking, sweating and feeling nauseous or abdominal distress.

Also, they could experience chest pains or

discomfort, hot and cold flashes, numbness in their hands or feet, the fear of going crazy and losing control, as well as feeling detached from reality.

Often, those who experience panic attacks for the first time don't realise what's happening. "At first thought, they would think that it is something very dangerous. Then after investigation, doctors would recommend them to see a psychiatrist because they can't find anything physically wrong with them," Dr Ung explained.

Dr Ung added that for cases when the panic is severe, victims could feel that the world around them is very different. In even more severe cases, when they hyperventilate, they could end up collapsing and having severe cramps because the muscles are locked up. "It's almost like a fit," said Dr Ung.

There are some youths who are in denial of their condition. Dr Ung explained that this is probably due to the stigma society has, branding these sufferers as weak individuals with character flaws. He said, "Maybe they think they're coming to see a psychiatrist and people may think that they're mad."

Mr Koh agreed, "In order to accept help and move on, they need to recognise that they have a problem in the first place."

Matt (not his real name), a 22-year-old polytechnic student, was one of those brave enough to seek professional help. He used to feel breathless and would break out in cold sweat whenever he went for his exams. Matt even blanked out in an exam once, which resulted in him having a breakdown.

For Matt, the panic attacks started when he became obsessed with achieving the best grades in his 'A' levels as he wanted to make it to the course of his choice in university.

However, when he failed to meet his own high expectations, he blamed himself and blew things out of proportion, giving himself even more distress and anxiety. He couldn't concentrate on his studies and started having irregular mood swings. Matt also isolated himself from friends and family.

According to Mr Koh, Matt appeared tense during his sessions. He could not relax as he had become impatient, wanting to do things quickly and perfectly.

However, through counselling, Matt was forced to see his strengths and weaknesses and worked with his psychologist to see things more positively. With professional help and medication, Matt has learnt to relax and monitor himself, learnt to manage his time better as well as slowly become more sociable. Matt is now off his medication and is successfully coping with his stress.

For students who find themselves in a similar situation, Dr Ung suggests they seek opportunities to relax their minds and balance out their studies.

He said, "Be realistic and don't become too fearful or complacent... Check and see if they have certain negative thoughts they need to deal with which are unrealistic and over-excessive ideas about failure and exams. Of course, they should structure their time well [and not] leave everything at the last minute."



### Am I at greater risk?

No one knows conclusively what causes or triggers panic attacks. However, according to the IMH website, panic attacks can possibly be caused by three factors – cognitive, genetics and biomedical.

Dr Ung explained, "The best clues that we have is that panic is a combination of probably physical or genetic vulnerability...your body is designed (genetically so that) your nervous symptoms tend to be a bit jumpy and then at a point, given sufficient stress, the body then starts to have physical symptoms, (and then) the mind (cognitively) tends to start to misinterpret these physical symptoms."

He also added that an exam period or past traumatic events can also trigger panic attacks. He said, "After the first attack comes, it becomes easier to understand as the mind locks the (intensity) and the memory of the fear (which then caused) the body (to feel) some kind of alert."

### What do I do?

Tranquilisers, blockers and antidepressants, are available for people who suffer from panic attacks.

While tranquilisers and blockers work fast and effectively to relieve symptoms, their effects do not last for very long.

"[However], people like it because they can take away the pain quickly. Unfortunately, you can abuse them by taking an overdose," said Dr Ung.

Antidepressants, on the other hand, contain anti-panic effects. However, the patient has to consume the medicine every day and it takes about two weeks for it to come into effect.

While antidepressants take a longer time, Dr Ung explained that once the medicine starts to work, "it exerts a long-term effect". However, patients don't have to take the medication for life and can stop once they start feeling better.

Sometimes, parents and schools unknowingly make things worse for the patients by adding even more pressure and stress.

In such cases, families and friends can play a part in the recovery process by being understanding and not competing excessively with them, advised Mr Koh. He added that they can help by not teasing or bullying them and by giving support and reassurance.

Schools like Temasek Junior College also help by dedicating part of their school website to information and counselling about panic and anxiety to increase awareness of psychological illnesses.

As in Matt's case, the good news is that with medication, patients are able to feel confident and, slowly, they recover from the panic attacks.

Dr Ung shared that some patients do not come back after their first consultation because they didn't feel the need to or are no longer bothered by reoccurrences of panic attacks.

He said, "The fear value isn't so high because they know they have something to fall back on. Just the idea of knowing that there is something that would work, they were secure enough."

Of course, it's better to have a combination of both medication and counselling. Mr Koh advised, "The counselling aspect lets you learn the coping skills, helps you relax and [change] your thoughts."



# Five Things That Make You Singaporean

Despite complaining ceaselessly about the ever-present heat, imbeciles who refuse to move to the middle of the MRT cabin to allow more people to enter and the massive queues during the Great Singapore Sale, deep down inside, FAZILLAH GAFFA still has a soft spot for her homeland. She pays tribute to the unique qualities that make us Singaporeans, just in time for National Day.

## #1 Hub city

While campaigns have been around for years, there's a new craze that has struck Singapore in more recent times. "Hub" now seems to be a word we can't get enough of.

From wanting to morph our staid city into an arts hub with the government pumping in \$50 million in the next five years, to a media hub that has received a \$100 million boost, to transforming ourselves into an arts hub. There is also a hubbub to be an air hub, a digital exchange hub, as well as the healthcare services hub of Asia.

And if that's not enough for you, there's also the HDB Hub in Toa Payoh and our favourite (and only) cable provider, StarHub.



Photo by: Adeline Chong

## #2 HDB flats

Fancy living "stacked on top of one another" as Fatimah Bee, a 54-year-old homemaker who has lived this way for almost 40 years, describes it?

Well, she hits the nail on the head about HDB living when she says, "You hang your laundry on bamboo poles out the window and you throw your rubbish down rubbish chutes!"

Adding to that list of HDB quirks are the silly squabbles neighbours have because some guy's potted plant has crossed to their side of the corridor, leading to the formation of the Community Mediation Centre which aims to civilly resolve these problems. Singapore's beloved HDB flats are truly an icon.



Photo by: Fazillah Gaffa

## #3 Singlish

With a nation that has four official languages and multiple races, it comes as no surprise that our own lingo has developed.

There are, of course, some instances where you shouldn't use Singlish. For example, if you're trying to get a girl's number: "We can go eat *rojak* together, *lah*", probably isn't going to get you a phone number.

However, if you're at the coffeshop on Aug 9, downing a warm *teh tarik* with your friends and watching the National Day Parade on the *kopitiam*'s plasma TV (a leftover from the recent World Cup), *hype* suggests you take pride in our nation's quirks, get on your feet and yell, "Majulah Singapura!"

EH, YOU WANT  
TO GO WATCH  
NATIONAL DAY  
PARADE OR NOT?

YA LAH!

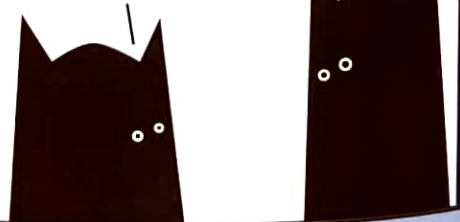


Illustration by: Adeline Chong

# ERP Ahead

## #4 Acronyms (or 'short forms', as we call them)

Singaporeans have a knack for acronym-ing almost everything – most commonly, expressways (PIE, ECP, CTE), government organisations (MOE, PAP, MICA) and schools (VJC, TP, SIM).

Marie Tudor, 24, a freelance writer from the UK who has been living in Singapore for almost a year, recalls, "When I first boarded a cab right after I touched down in Singapore, my friend told the cabbie: 'Go by PIE, then CTE, exit Cairnhill and you can stop us opposite the UOB.' And I thought people here speak English!" However, Marie is now accustomed to our quirky ways. "I probably use acronyms as much as any typical Singaporean on the street," she laughs.

Singaporeans are so accustomed to 'short forms' that even our local newspapers use them. For example, the acronym SMS in one article in *The Straits Times* can mean Short Messaging Service whereas in another article it could be addressing our Senior Minister of State.

While we at *hype* have nothing against acronyms, especially when you're struggling to send out a text message on your mobile phone, a Stop Using Short Forms Campaign (SUSFC, for short) might one day be put in place – which brings us to our next quirk.

# COURTESY BEGINS WITH ME

# The Great Singapore Quiz

You may have been born and bred in this country but how much do you really know about it? Discover Singapore as you've never known it with this quiz. By DORCAS LING.

1. Singapore is made up of one main island and \_\_\_\_ smaller islands.
2. There are a total of \_\_\_\_ train stations across the island.
3. Singapore sees thousands of these visitors a year. They are the \_\_\_\_.
4. Buildings in Singapore cannot be higher than \_\_\_\_ metres.
5. The three most common Chinese surnames are \_\_\_\_.
6. If you stretch all of Singapore's roads from end to end, they can cover the distance from Singapore to \_\_\_\_.
7. There are about \_\_\_\_ public toilets in Singapore.
8. The only Hollywood film shot in Singapore is called \_\_\_\_.
9. The tree featured on the \$5 currency note is the \_\_\_\_ tree.
10. Singapore has more \_\_\_\_ people than any other country.

Now, turn *hype* upside down and see how many you got right.

1. 63, 2. 67, 3. migratory birds, 4. 280, 5. Tan, Lim and Lee, 6. Hong Kong, 7. 29,000, 8. Saint Jack, 9. Tembusu, 10. short-sighted

## #5 Campaigns

Is there a country in the world in crisis, trying to overcome a declining birth rate? Or needing to encourage a population to use their second language? Play follow the leader and do what Singapore has been doing all along – launch a campaign. "We've got so many campaigns, I bet there's a campaign going on at any point of time!" quips Sheila Douradoo, 24, an events planner.

We have it all from the *Romancing Singapore Campaign*, to the *Speak Good English Campaign* and most recently, the *Four Million Smiles Campaign*. Perhaps our government should hold international workshops for other nations to learn from us.



# Dying To Be Thin

Anorexia has plagued image-conscious youngsters for decades, and now it has gone high tech, infiltrating the Internet with pro-anorexia sites and forums. NURUL HUDA RASHEED examines what really goes on there.

Before Mary Kate Olsen or Kate Moss or Calista Flockhart, there was Karen Carpenter. Oddly enough, emaciated celebrities have always managed to hog the limelight for being scarily skinny. And young girls have been placing these stars on pedestals, desiring to be thinner than thin, despite being already thin.

Anorexia Nervosa is a serious eating disorder. "Anorexics will eat very little, especially avoiding food with fat and carbohydrate content or will just not eat at all," explained Dr Simon Siew, a psychological disorder expert from Dr Simon Siew Psychological Medicine Clinic.

This obsession with their body, their fear of getting fat and maintaining a desired unhealthy weight can lead to many medical complications, such as osteoporosis, loss of menstruation in women and kidney failure.

Dr Tay Soi Kheng, a General Practitioner from S.K. Tay Clinic & Surgery, says it "could be a medical, functional and psychological problem".

"They have no urge to eat because they have very low-esteem of themselves, no zest to life so they are very withdrawn. Therefore, eating is one of the functions they deprive themselves of."

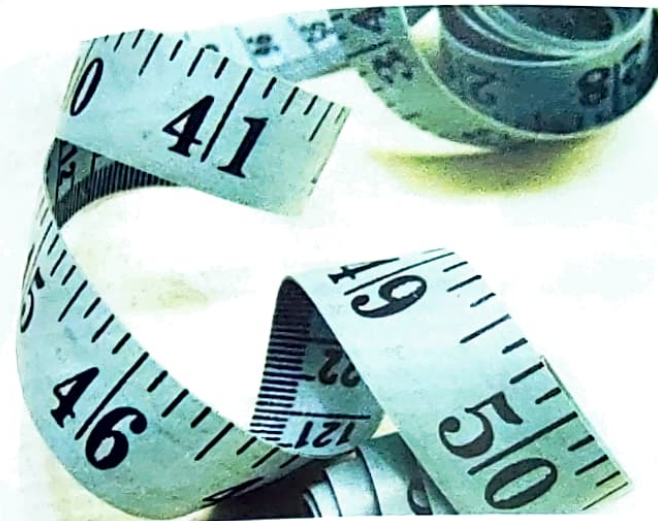
Anorexia predominantly affects teenage girls between 15 to 25. However, there isn't a fixed age range and males, as well as older women, can also fall victim to the disorder.

It's a serious illness that could lead to death in extreme cases. But incredibly, there are a number of people (both anorexics and non-anorexics alike) who misguidedly believe that anorexia is a lifestyle, not an illness. Calling themselves Pro-anorexics or "pro-anas", they find beauty in looking like skin and bones. To them, Beyoncé's killer curves are nothing to be coveted.

## Destruction is just a click away

Pro-anorexia websites have been spreading like wildfire and we're just clicks away from them. Type "pro-anorexia" in a search engine and be shocked by the whopping 700,000 websites catering to this ideology. Dr Siew commented, "If [those] are healing websites, then it's good and helpful but if they encourage anorexia, then [they] are destructive".

One is a pro-ana directory called The Thin Files with a comprehensive listing of 268 links ranging from personal websites, journals and bulletin boards.



## Where to seek help?

The Eating Disorders Clinic  
Singapore General Hospital  
Tel: 6321 4344

Dr Simon Siew Psychological  
Medicine Clinic  
Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre  
Suite 14-14  
Tel: 6735 6870

The Eating Disorders  
Support Group  
Singapore Association  
for Mental Health  
Tel: 6283 1576

On the surface, these sites put up an innocent front with disclaimers such as this from the webmaster of Pro-Ana in Livejournal - "We do not support you of starving yourself to death, and we will not give you tips on how to do so. This community is a safe place for those with eating disorders to speak freely about what is happening in their lives. We are not a "secret society", a "club", an "elitist group", or anything of the like. We are simply people just like you who are dealing with a very serious psychological disorder. We do not encourage each other to become or stay unwell."

Look further though and you'll find a hidden agenda. The website becomes a place for pro-ana people to come and exchange tips. They also give words of encouragement to other like-minded people who relate their experience in starving themselves off from food.

## Safe haven

Even though pro-ana websites are slammed repeatedly, a rare few have been helpful. These websites provide an avenue for anorexics to come together and share their innermost feelings about their condition without being judged.

Jean Loo Chuan Jin, 21, who once visited these pro-ana websites, like a forum called Ruby's Gloomy Place, when she was an anorexic, explains that "pro-anorexic sites merely provide a lot of materials in one single website, so it really feeds into the disorder".

"When anorexics get on the forums, they have a platform where they have a voice and can finally be heard and understood and loved. They have a community where they can finally feel normal and not be told off or have pressure put on them to change because somehow they're not good enough. I guess that's why a lot of pro-anorexia websites actually call themselves "pro-support," not pro-anorexia."

Somethingfishy.org, is a website that wants to be known as "pro-recovery" instead of pro-ana. Their bulletin board forbids discussions on weight loss and the lack of "thinspiration". Instead, they believe that

"everyone deserves to, and has the strength inside them to recover, without exception".

Another pro-recovery website, Anorexic Web, states that "having any eating disorder is a painful, lonely, scary experience" but reassures readers that they are not alone. They include information on what could happen if the sufferers motivate themselves to discover the road to recovery.

Dr Tay believes that such pro-recovery websites have "beneficial effects".

He said, "If they have misconceptions about something they can clarify with the website quickly, although of course, it's still very much encouraged to check with their doctor."

## Stay safe

What should you do if you're an anorexic and stumble upon a pro-ana website? Stop. You may come across information that may be harmful and provide a negative influence to your recovery.

Take the website Ana's Underground Grotto, one of the most visited pro-ana websites around, which tells anorexics the importance of drinking water. For good health? Not. They say water is important because it "gets you through the next hour or two without thinking about food". Worse, it offers a list of things to say to people who are persuading you to eat, or asking why you are not. The site also takes it a step further by blatantly listing "Things to do instead of eating".

Jean said that it is just "a matter of eating disordered people being obsessed with thinness and food-related issues". But Dr Siew disagrees, saying that "guidelines as such are taking things a little too far and are dangerous".

Your best bet then, is to steer clear from such websites. Take heed of the many pop-up windows that warn you not to enter if you're recovering or non-anorexic. If you're anorexic, get help from a real support group, doctors, family and friends. And if your loved one is anorexic, your support could be key to their recovery.



# Multiple Choice

Bona-fide shopaholic **FAZILLAH GAFFA** delves deep into the world of local fashion for the low-down on a new trend that's thrown fashionistas in a shopping tizzy – the rise of the multi-label boutique.

American actress Bo Derek once said, "Whoever said money can't buy happiness simply didn't know where to go shopping." This will no doubt receive agreement from shopaholics around the island. After all, the favourite past-time Singaporeans love the most, next to eating, is shopping.

Experienced shoppers like freelance fashion stylist **Siau Xindi**, who is in her mid 20s, say that it takes effort to stand out from the crowd in Singapore. "You see these stunning clothes online and in foreign fashion magazines but you cannot get your hands on them because the stores in places like Far East Plaza, Bugis Village and The Heeren Shops all bring in the same things," she says.

If you agree with Xindi, it's time to join the cult of fashionistas and their brand new shopping experience – multi-label boutiques, which offer a one-of-a-kind multi-sensory shopping experience for everyone.

At last count, there were about 10 such boutiques in Singapore. Latte, a store that stocks numerous labels from Italy, opened its doors almost two years ago. However, the store's marketing executive, **Loo Chuan Lin**, 23, says, "Business started perking up only about a year ago when people found out about us through magazine editorials. The prices also range from \$35 for a top to over \$200 for a very glamorous dress."

Another multi-label boutique with a similar price range is Eclecticism – which boasts more than 28 brands that can only be obtained overseas, such as American Apparel, Free People, Trina Tarantino – at the recently revamped Mandarin Gallery at Meritus Mandarin Hotel.

**Thomas Ho**, 21, an undergraduate at the National University of Singapore is a regular at Eclecticism. He says, "I love how comfortable the t-shirts from American Apparel are. I used to purchase them online

with the help of my debit card but the shipping from the States to Singapore is so expensive that it sometimes costs more than the t-shirt itself! So I stock up on tees from Eclecticism now, because it's so much cheaper than buying it from their website."

**Paul Khor**, the man behind Actually, a four-month-old multi-label boutique on the second floor of a Seah Street shophouse, says that his customers are just as discerning when it comes to labels and prices. "A lot of them come in looking for cult brand jeans like Blue Trip and GSUS, whose prices start from about \$200. A lot of them are very brand conscious, they don't like mass-marketed labels like Levi's and such, and they're fashion savvy."

Another multi-label boutique that will stop you in your tracks is **Front Row**, a three-storey shophouse in the historic heart of Singapore – the conservation quarter of Ann Siang Road. This beautifully-preserved building houses a boutique that envelops almost every aspect of your everyday lifestyle – from food to music to fashion.

The first floor of Front Row is where you'll find a delightful selection of gourmet food and gifts from brands such as Dean & DeLuca from New York and Tea & Philosophy from London.

The next floor stocks women's and men's apparel, footwear and accessories from labels from various cities including London, Milan and New York.

**Christy Chow**, 19, a graduate from Temasek Polytechnic's School of Design says, "Sure, it is expensive for students and people who've just started working, but instead of filling up my wardrobe with tons of clothes, I don't mind blowing my budget on a top that's unique and (is of) good quality, rather than four tops that will probably shrink in the wash."

**Ann Kositchotitana**, owner of Front Row spoke to **hype** about her baby. "I love food, fashion and art, and Front Row is like all my passions in the form of a lifestyle store. Our style is progressive contemporary and I tend to pick fashion brands whose clothes go along these lines. It's very off-beat, yet very wearable."

While it might be the case of items in boutiques being pricier compared with your average store in Far East Plaza, you can also be assured that you're paying for quality and will not be as likely to run into someone who has the same top or dress as you along Orchard Road. Happy shopping!

On Joanna: M.blem top from Actually  
On Jeremy: 2K by Gingham top from Eclecticism  
Blue Trip jeans from Actually

Photos: Nessi Esteffa  
Styling: Fazillah Gaffa  
Models: Joanna Johan, Jeremy Gopalan



# PLAY THAT FUNKY MUSIC

Napster's long gone so how has the online music download scene in Singapore changed since? WILSON YEO finds out.

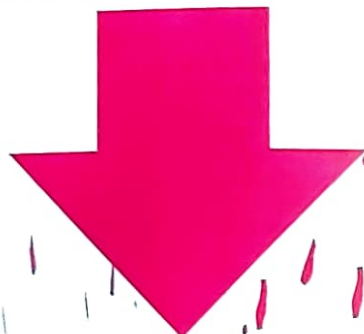


Illustration by Adeline Chong

hype 50

Five years ago, digital music was a new phenomenon among only the most technologically-inclined. Today, iPods and other digital music players are among the most sought-after devices for plenty of consumers.

One reason for digital music's quick rise into public consciousness was Napster – the pioneering download service that offered free music sharing worldwide through the Internet.

Many teenagers got hooked onto Napster because it offered an unprecedented amount of music online, including rare or defunct tracks for free.

Colin Chu, 23, a civil servant, remembers his experience on Napster, "(It) was my gateway to music. When it collapsed, it was the end – there was no more (choice in) music."

## The rise, rise and fall of Napster

Napster was conceived by Shawn Fanning, then a Northwestern University undergraduate in Boston, Massachusetts in 1999, as a service that would allow users to find new music quickly and easily. At its peak in Feb 2001, Napster had 26 million users.

The record labels in America blamed Napster as a major reason for the fall of music compact disc (CD) sales back then and The Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) sued Napster for copyright infringement. Napster had to shut down its servers in July 2001.

With the end of Napster, music retailers across the world, including Singapore, thought that CD sales would once again soar. However, it was a hope shortlived as the end of Napster was only the beginning of the continuous slide in sales for the recording industry.

## The state of the scene

According to a 2006 International Federation of Phonogram and Videogram Producers (IFPI) report on digital music, global music sales have fallen 16 percent over the last five years.

The situation is similar in Singapore. Mr Edward Neubronner, chief executive officer of the Recording Industry Association of Singapore (RIAS), said local CD sales have fallen by "20 to 30 percent" in 2005.

While he feels the drop in sales was partly due to illegal music downloading via the peer-to-peer (P2P) file-sharing services and parallel imports – CDs meant for other countries brought in to Singapore by independent local distributors who sell them much cheaper than record stores – "for their effect on the potential growth of the industry".

According to Real Network's chief executive officer, Rob Glaser, in an interview with UK's newspaper, *The Guardian* in May, more than half the songs on all iPods sold are obtained illegally, either through P2P networks or through ripping CDs.

Under Singapore's Copyright Act, downloading music online on a commercial scale, meaning, in large quantities, is a criminal offence. Offenders can be fined up to \$200,000 or be jailed up to six months, or both, depending on the severity of the crime.

## Music downloading – the legal way

While there are already ways to download music legally for a small fee, illegal downloads still persist

partly because most downloading services have not launched well due to cost and lack of awareness.

Mark Lim, 24, an undergraduate who was a Napster user, says, "No, I don't download music online because I don't want to pay. I can get all my music from listening to the radio."

Ms Yen Ong, general manager of Soundbuzz.com, one of Asia's largest online music and mobile retailers, highlighted a few problems with the current legal music download market.

She said that a big obstacle is consumer ignorance. Like other companies, Soundbuzz.com does not have a huge marketing budget due to costs, and relies on alliances with music device manufacturers such as Creative Technology to promote its services.

Ms Ong added that there was also a lack of avenues to purchase music. She admitted that while illegal downloading will always persist, the problem can be minimised if more action and interest is put in by companies and the industry to provide more and better avenues for users.

While measures like Digital Rights Management (DRM) exist to curb illegal downloading and file sharing, it has intensified the problem for some.

Whereas customers in the past were free to do as they please with their purchased CD, be it to copy or sell it, DRM restricts all that by limiting the number of times customers can transfer the song to mp3 players or burn it into a CD.

This seeming infringement of consumer rights by DRM has riled many consumers, including popular blogger, Lee Kin Mun, aka Mr Brown, who shuns copy-controlled CDs.

Mr Neubronner, however, said that while there had been "some consumer concerns" over copy-controlled CDs, the unhappiness wasn't on the scale of other countries like the United States and the consumers here also seem to have "accepted it".

Ms Ong explained that DRM was necessary to protect the work of the composers, singers, musicians and sound engineers involved in creating music. She said that DRM will become more open, allowing consumers to play and stream their music on all digital entertainment devices at home.

## Future of online music

While legal music downloads are taking off slowly, Soundbuzz.com is making an effort to provide customers with alternatives. They launched pre-paid cards at 30 retail outlets in Singapore this May. The cards allow consumers to purchase music for their mobile phones without having to use credit cards, by streaming music into their phones. Soundbuzz.com also intends to provide a subscription-based plan for mobile phones users next year, to cater to customers who prefer not to pay song-by-song.

Ms Ong and Mr Neubronner said that the stronger stance against music piracy, with the past criminal suits against two Singaporean teenagers for sharing music online, helped to lessen the problem here.

But to truly arrest the slide in CD sales, recording companies need to heed consumers needs and make their products compelling and hassle-free to users. Either that, or provide better download services than what is currently available.

hype 51



# LOVE OF THE GAME

There's finally a place for gamers to get together as a community. JULIAN LOW's just joined the Singapore Gamers' Association and boy, is he reaping its rewards.



Photo by Tim Smith



Imagine finding out about upcoming game exhibitions before everyone else, getting your hands on the latest gadgets and games in the market, and being connected to thousands of other like-minded gamers. Need game training? No problem. Got a gaming addiction? Get help here.

The Singapore Gamers' Association (SGA) is great news for local gamers. Through its various gaming-related programmes and initiatives, gamers can finally feel at home even when they're not in cyberspace.

As a gamer, surely there have been moments when you've wanted to pit your "1337" (Internet lingo for "elite") skills against others in a tournament but can't because of school commitments?

No problem. If you're registered under the SGA, the association will verify your gaming skill level and if you are good enough, they will send a letter of authorisation to your school, certifying your leave of absence. So far, this has happened in two polytechnics, Temasek Polytechnic (TP) and Singapore Polytechnic (SP), who granted permission to gamer teams to participate in overseas tournaments.

Or, perhaps, being a game ambassador would suit you better. There's no greater satisfaction in telling your

'outdated' gaming peers about the latest video games and gadgets or handing them special invitations to events such as conferences or a mass Local Area Network (LAN) game competition. There are over 300 ambassadors to date, and counting, according to Chris Soh, 26, the Associate President of the SGA.

Joining the association is no hassle at all. Gamers can join as volunteers to help in gaming events or sign up as members and pay a small yearly fee.

Just this year, members have one extra goodie to show off – the Gamers' Access Card, which is the ticket to gaming heaven. Each card has a 16-number PIN that can be used for special privileges, like receiving discounts at LAN shops, obtaining free items online or as an identification pass at bank conferences.

The card can act as a bank account for gamers to set aside money to spend monthly for gaming.

Chris explains, "As we have more Internet security, the use of NRIC will be restricted. So as a substitute for it, we wanted something more casual, fast and convenient. This is the card for gamers."

Besides having fun, there is also an educational benefit in joining the SGA. The association is planning workshops to give gamers an insight into topics related to gaming.

For example, gamers can learn how a game is developed, what a game developer does and what goes on in the gaming industry, helping to find out

more about the industry they love.

There are also practical workshops where gamers learn hard skills (technicalities like how to programme games) and soft skills (communication skills) and how to develop and improve on them.

To gamers who are already planning on gaming as a career, the SGA is ready to assist you in achieving that dream. Chris pointed out that there are companies in the industry who are looking for game reviewers, game developers and even game testers, and the SGA is willing to help both members and non-members get exposure to these companies.

"Game reviewers can earn up to \$2,000 a month. (A game developer), which is the hottest job in the game industry now, can earn at least \$2,500 to \$3,500 a month. Besides, these are the only jobs [where] you're allowed to play video games during office hours!" Chris laughs.

As the SGA is a non-profit organisation, they have only been able to put together one gaming event so far – GAMEFEST, an event to help gamers carve out a career in video gaming.

Chris revealed that the SGA might launch a second event either this December or next year. The aim of the workshop is to educate parents on the positive aspects of gaming and to show how their children can benefit from it.

Gamers who feel that they have a gaming addiction and need help should know that SGA is keeping a lookout for their welfare too.

"If a gamer is hooked on a particular game, we try to encourage that obsession to turn into a passion. We'll give advice to the gamer about the importance of controlling his addiction and that he shouldn't just lock himself in a room but to also enjoy life outside.

"If it's more serious, than we refer them to TOUCH community (a counselling organisation) and some doctors for advance counseling," Chris explains.

Avid gamer Timothy Han, 19, a final-year Business student from Temasek Polytechnic, feels that while the SGA is helping the gaming industry in Singapore move in the right direction, the industry has to start taking greater risks.

"Singapore has a small chance of expanding our game industry, but in order to make it a bigger chance, we need to try different things and get out of our comfort zone. If some of these things work, then it'll be good," he explains.

Sean Ong, 23, a medical undergraduate from the National University of Singapore, is more optimistic about the situation.

"I don't see why Singapore can't make it. We've held the World Cyber Games and we have our own gaming magazines. We can already show the world that we can do this."

Chris hopes that at the end of the day, gamers will join the association for the right reasons.

"We hope that gamers don't sign up because they think it's cool or that they're out to get discounts. We are an association that consists of people who have a passion for games and hope to turn Singapore into a recognised global gaming hub," Chris states.

More information can be found at the SGA's official website: [www.sgga.net](http://www.sgga.net)

The Singapore Gamers' Association has three different types of membership.

## 1. Free

Members will receive the latest news and access to gaming events or tournaments.

## 2. Associate, at \$15 a year

Members will get invited to seminars, conferences and workshops.

## 3. Full, at \$40 a year

Members will receive perks such as being the first few to get their hands on the latest gadgets and games.





## Small Wonder

Nanotechnology might sound like scientific mumbo-jumbo to most of us but REZA OMAR finds out that this microscopic piece of science is already changing the way we live, work and play.

It's the small things that count in life but where nanotechnology is concerned, things are poised to get even smaller.

We won't bore you with long-winded definitions. Nanotechnology is simply the science of using microscopic materials. According to the nanotechnology company Yashnanotech's website, the word "nano" means "dwarf". These materials, or matter, as scientists call it, are so tiny – a "billionth of a metre", says Yashnanotech – that you'd have to split a strand of hair 800 times to get one nano.

Although there's been word about it since 1959, it's only in recent years that nanotechnology has become hot. In fact, scientists predict that in 20 years, it will be cheaper and more convenient to harness the Sun's power using nanotechnology. While that might not really excite most of us, **hype** takes a look at where this microscopic science has permeated our lives.

### Clean up your act

One product that's been around is Fanci's Mild Cleansing Oil. Nanotechnology has been used in the rosehip oil, which has been sized down to such minute proportions that it helps to completely remove makeup and cleanse away sebum and dirt.

Often, we have to soak a cotton wool in eye make-up remover to cleanse the eye area. With nanotechnology, you only need to apply the cleansing oil on your skin and wash it off when you shower – no cotton wool needed at all.

### No more fakes

There are those of us who swear by fake goods – think of the fake Gucci or Prada your cousin bought from Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Shanghai – but nanotechnology hates fakers.

According to a Channel News Asia report, scientists from Singapore's Institute of Materials Research and Engineering (IMRE) are now using nanotechnology to help manufacturers tag their original products to prevent counterfeiting. By using a new magnetic composite embedded into the products, merchandise can be tagged individually, guaranteeing you the real deal and not some cheap dead cow.

### In the future

While nanotechnology isn't as pervasive yet, experts predict there'll be lots more potential for its use in the near future. Dr Edwin Chow, 32, a research scientist at the Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology (IBN) in Singapore, shared in an e-mail interview that nanotechnology can be used to harness a much wider range of solar energy. This would make converting solar energy to electricity 60 percent more efficient,

resulting in cheaper costs.

Dr Chow says that some day it might be possible for solar technology to become so portable and efficient that we'll never have to charge our mobile phones and music players – as long as we stay in the sun!

### Your nano must-have

Dr Chow also singled out educational kits, contact lenses and artificial fibres as being the next must-have nano gadgets of the future. He said that IBN researchers have designed three educational kits to help teachers introduce students to cutting-edge research in nanotechnology and bioengineering and this will be available in late 2006.

They have also developed nano-structured contact lenses that can function as both an optical-correction tool and as medication to treat eye diseases and dry eyes, creating cleaner and healthier contact lenses.

While nanotechnology's still in its infancy, Dr Chow sums up the ever-developing scientific field by saying, "Nanotechnology is going to be like air. You can't really feel the wonderful world of nanotechnology yet but in time it will come in leaps and bounds and will translate all sorts of products into something evolutionary."

Photo by Institute of Bioengineering and Nanotechnology

## LG Chocolate KG800

It's sleek, cool and chic, and has a gorgeous design. LG has produced a phone with killer looks – the KG800, more glamorously labelled by LG as the **Chocolate**.

### Design

LG has come up with something truly unique in the **Chocolate** – a heat-sensitive touch pad. This means you don't have to press any buttons – the heat from your fingers will activate the phone.

Without the typical chunky buttons, the **Chocolate** keeps its look sleek and minimalist.

### Function

The phone suffers from several obvious functional problems. For one, the "end call" button is placed on the right side of the phone, away from

the rest of the touch pad, which takes some getting used to.

Sending an SMS can be a problem too. It takes forever for the text to appear, even if you're fast with your fingers.

While the mp3 player gets a major thumbs-up, especially with the built-in remote control, hands-free set and quality sound, the memory allocated to it is somewhat malnourished with just 128MB of internal memory.

Most of the phones today either provide an external memory slot or at least 256MB of internal memory.

### Overall

The **Chocolate** is incredibly gorgeous and incredibly hot with a touch pad that makes it all the more irresistible, but it's not incredibly useful.

Improvements could be made to the SMS function and the overall user-friendliness. It's great if phone design is at the top of your list. – SYED ARAFAT

## Samsung SGH-D520

Samsung treats fans of slider phones to the SGH-D520 with its beautiful and sleek contour design.

### Design

The Samsung SGH-D520, just like its predecessors SGH-D820 and SGH-P300, is sleek, stylish and thrives upon its slimmess.

Measuring 10.1cm by 4.6cm by 1.59cm, and weighing a mere 93g, as much as a deck of cards, it's a great convenience to carry around.

At the same time, it adds a touch of style with its beautifully crafted and contoured design.

Though slightly smaller than a packet of tissue, the phone fits nicely into your hand and is easy to grip while on the run. The slider also runs smoothly, giving you easy access to any of the phone's many functions.

### Features

The camera was disappointing. With such a stylish phone, the 1.3 mega-pixel camera didn't do the SGH-D520 any justice. A two mega-pixel camera should

have been offered, at least.

The screen made up for it though. Samsung has a reputation for its clear sharp screens and this phone's rich 2.12 inch QGVA, with its 262k colour capability, didn't disappoint.

Without an external slot, the 80MB internal memory is rather stingy, comparing to the market's 512MB storage phones. Before the week is over, you might have to delete files in your phone to make space.

### Overall

This phone may be one of the most stylish to date but the functions do not live up to its look.

This is the phone for you if you're someone who's high on aesthetics and style but low on tech. – CHONG YI HAN





# RUSH FOR BERLIN

The makers of the **Codename: Panzer** game put forth yet another World War II Real-Time Strategy challenge but will it live up to its name? LIM JUN XUE discovers.

**Rush for Berlin (RFB)** puts you in the final months of World War II as the Soviets and Allies make their final advancement into Germany.

Players choose to play the Soviets with their overwhelming infantry, the Allies (the Americans, in particular) with their air superiority and advanced tactics or, in an alternate twist, as the Nazi replacement for Der Fuhrer as you try to ward off the advancing Allies and Soviets.

Unlike the predecessors of First-Person Shooting (FPS) games, **RFB** finally gives players a decent challenge with better artificial intelligence (AI). The enemy using common strategic techniques like pincer attacks and distractions on multiple fronts is a common place in **RFB**.

Strategy and diversions play an important part in this game compared to other Real-Time Strategy (RTS) ones. And while most strategy games can be easily won by brute force, the subtle tactics of feints and hit-and-runs can bog down your enemies more effectively than rushing in with guns blazing.

Game play is nothing short of brilliant, with a truly authentic feel to it. The enemy constantly goes after the greater threats, such as medics or supply trucks, and the terrain your troops travel on impacts their speed. Vehicles cannot move without their crew and you can carry all sorts of soldiers in the multitude of vehicles and tanks at your disposal.

**RFB** is a victim of its genre however, something which World War II games suffer from. All the vehicles and locations, while historically accurate, have been seen before in previous World War II games. Programmers seem to be aware of this as **RFB** also provides players with new toys such as the Goliath, a remote controlled mini-tank and the formidable German "Maus" super tank.

Gameplay is taken a notch higher with the inclusion of "officers". Like the "heroes" in **WarCraft III**, they'll provide assistance in your journey to Berlin as long as they survive on your wild missions. Regular, surviving units will also follow and assist you in your conquest.

While the voiceovers were not up to scratch, the music and sound effects were excellent and engaging. The sound of the caterpillar tracks of a Sherman tank knocking over a chain-link fence to run over German troops is extremely satisfying and the ambient music score fits the military theme.

The graphics are merely ho-hum with each mission beginning and ending with a short computer-generated video. What's more, a lot of horsepower is required to run **RFB** especially during the larger missions with plenty of troops and tanks on all sides.

While **RFB** might provide the adrenaline required for World War II game fanatics but despite its decent package of sound effects, AI and gameplay, it doesn't really shine. As the dust settles over the Reichstag, gamers will remember **RFB** as just another war game.

Available at all retail gaming shops for \$59.90.

# Rise of Nations: Rise of Legends

The second sequel to the popular **Rise of Nations** game series has **JULIAN LOW** diverted to his computer screen for hours.

If you've played the previous two **Rise of Nations** games, you'll feel right at home with its sequel, **Rise of Legends (RoL)** as Microsoft Game Studios and Big Huge Games offer this appealing instalment.

The game presents you with a set of three unique civilisations, each with their own band of heroes and style of play.

There is the Renaissance-styled Vinci (humans who rely on steam technology to produce weapons and machines), the ancient Alin race who use magic to wither away their opponents from the depths of the desert, and the highly advanced 'god-like' Cuotl race who use mysterious energies for combat.

In campaign mode, you take on the familiar objectives of wiping out the enemy or defending a siege. You'll also be involved in a **Risk**-style (yes, the board game) tactical strategy where you get to plan your move on a 'world map' during the campaign.

The options are numerous. You can choose to attack a neighbouring territory or reinforce a city to prevent enemy invasions. Here, different territories offer varying bonuses and conquering them will earn you points that can be used for upgrading to a larger army or gaining access to new military units.

Unfortunately, you can't choose which race to start with if you're playing the campaign mode as you have to control each of these races in turn. Furthermore, it was disappointing that the races (in their respective campaign modes) fought amongst themselves instead of waging war with another race or all races at the same time.

Graphics-wise, the buildings are well-detailed and look convincingly real, although the 'blocky-graphic' terrain could have been much better in terms of realism. The music was generally satisfactory and the voice acting did not disappoint too.

You'll probably need a decent computer to play **RoL**. Having a computer above the 1.4Ghz processor and 64MB video card requirements didn't spare me from the occasional lags and freezes as I launched attacks. Luckily there's the auto-save option which does its job everytime I complete a mission so I don't have to keep facing the tough bosses.

The multi-player aspect of **RoL** was decent though. Similar to other online games, there are plenty of maps, various challenges, news and friend lists which give options to gamers who want to experience the action with their own community.

While **RoL** can be improved in terms of graphics and more freedom with gameplay, fans will enjoy it and those who are new to the series shouldn't hesitate to give it a try.

Available at all retail gaming shops for \$59.90.



# Kayu's Food Fest

Jalan Kayu's no longer just about plain ol' prata as our favourite 'wooden road' evolves into Singapore's latest food district. **STEPHANIE HO** sniffs out scrumptious food offerings from four eateries.

## The Tale of Thohirah

RATING ★★★★★

Along the dusty road of Jalan Kayu, lies a restaurant that multitudes of customers, both regular and new, flock to – the distinctively green Thohirah Restaurant.

Thohirah's boss, Raheel Abdul Rashid, 35, firmly believes in delivering only the best quality, at cheap prices. Ghee is used for cooking instead of oil, which makes their prata tastier and fuller without being too oily. Their famous fish head curry costs \$10, compared to \$25 at other restaurants. Raheel says, "I eat quality food, so I'd want to give people quality food as well."

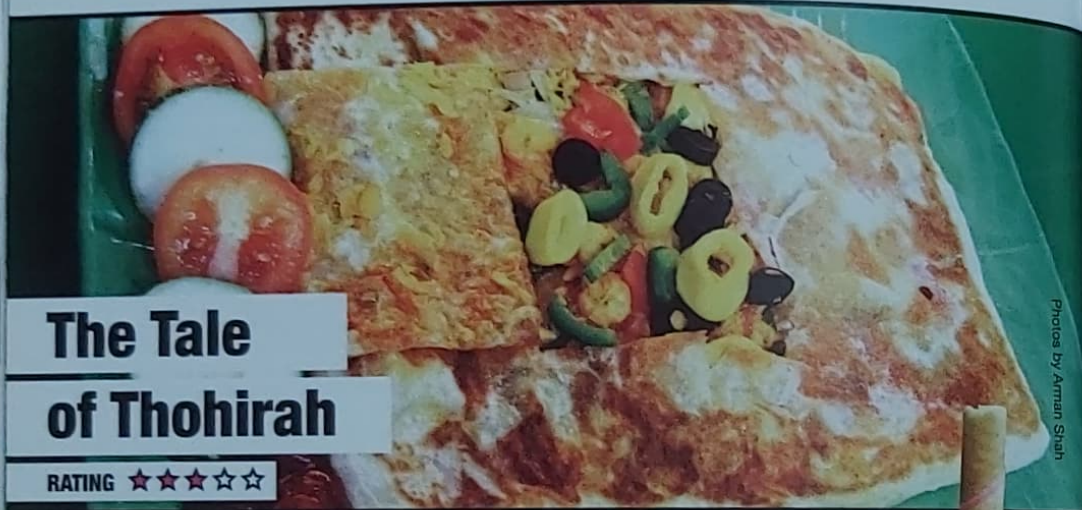
Thohirah," Raheel smiles. "But we're coming up with new types of drinks."

Raheel explains that since teh tarik is deemed old and boring, Thohirah is introducing new items like honey teh tarik and banana shakes in mugs even taller than this magazine. We tasted their Special New Bandung (\$2.50) made with their own syrup, whipped cream and sprinkles on top and it was simply amazing.

If you're planning to head down, be prepared to wait at the car park for 20 minutes for a parking lot, another 10 minutes for a table and then another couple of minutes for the menu to arrive. The bonus is children get to eat Raheel's special Indian biscuit treat for free!

258 Jalan Kayu.  
Tel: 6481 2009. Open  
24 hours, half day on  
Hari Raya Puasa.

He thinks that in four years' time, Jalan Kayu's going to become a bonafide food district and because of that, Raheel keeps inventing new dishes to keep the crowds coming. This October, expect a bar at the side of the restaurant, right in time for Hari Raya Puasa and Deepavali. "No, we aren't introducing alcohol to



Photos by Arman Shah



## Bali High

RATING ★★★★★

Zsa Zsa's Warung is popular with Seletar Camp Estate residents who come for the special concept – authentic Indonesian food cooked to recipes created by owner Clive Chua's Indonesian-Chinese wife, and a beer garden serving up more than 25 types of beer. Warung means coffee shop in Bahasa Indonesia.

It's the relaxed, chillout culture of Bali that people come for. The exterior has a Balinese concept, with elaborate-looking benches, a wooden shelter and bamboo wind chimes. Inside, lighting effects ripple on the ceiling as eclectic paintings line the reddish-brown walls. The bar is decorated with classic collectible Coca Cola cans and bottles, which give the restaurant a broken-in feel. A table cloth celebrating the Rastafarian movement lines one of the tables, while Balinese wood-carved statues decorate corners. Rattan lamp shades make everything soft and warm. What's best though, is that for all the elaborate design and concept of the restaurant, the food is pleasantly cheap.

House specialities include ayam panggang (crispy grilled chicken) (\$10), beef rendang, tender soft beef oozing flavour (\$5), Hot Plate Sambal Prawn (\$8), Bananarama – goreng pisang topped with ice cream, and their latest addition, Satay Kajang (it costs 50 cents a stick).

The satay is cooked with a special technique which enhances the flavour and makes it slightly raw to taste but really mouth-watering and it's named after the Malaysian town in Selangor, made famous for its satay. The Bananarama will satisfy any die-hard sweet tooth.

The service at Zsa Zsa's Warung is friendly and laidback, suiting the atmosphere of the place, but it's a nifty little restaurant with food to die for. After all, their unofficial tagline says it all, "The Warung is free and easy, no rules or regulations, whatever, whenever, kampung style."

247 Jalan Kayu, Tel: 6482 4763. Open daily, 6 pm to 1 am, up to 3 am on Fridays and Saturdays.

## Old is Gold for Otah

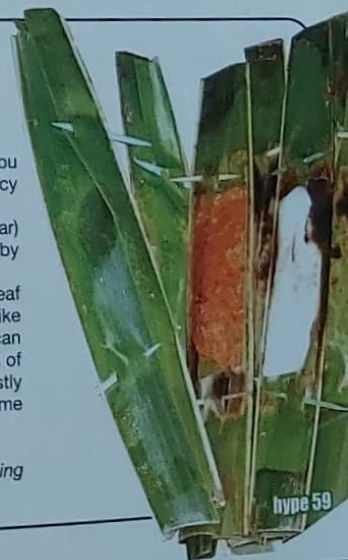
RATING ★★★★★

You've scouted the entire island in search of the perfect otah. You know, otah with just enough meat, juicy and succulent, and spicy enough to make the back of your neck sweat?

The answer lies right in the heart of Jalan Kayu. Hiang Soon (Otar) Food Catering has been at Jalan Kayu since 1990 and was set up by Liau Chwe Lian and her husband, Lee Hoon Soon.

If you're not a fan of spicy food, then try their milder banana leaf otah, which is even more moist but not as smoky as we would like it to be. They've specialised in otah for almost 20 years, so you can be sure what they're churning out is the tastiest around. Said Liau of her customer base, which has been built up over the years, mostly through word of mouth, "The customers always ask how come outside otah isn't as good!"

Three for \$1. 261 Jalan Kayu, Tel: 6483 3808. Open daily, late morning till 6 pm.



Photos by Arman Shah





## Kayu's Amazing Spizza

RATING ★★★★★

Standing out from the surrounding shops and restaurants lies an Indian-owned pizza place. Opened last May, and run independently by Marianne Srinivasan and her partner H.D Nimal, Spizza's Jalan Kayu outlet has a more personal touch than the five other franchised outlets around Singapore.

The brick walls lined up along the huge wood-fired oven gives the place a homely ambience while the warm lighting makes the atmosphere extra cosy. Plenty of fans on the inside keep the place cool but in keeping with the convivial (and almost essential) open-air concept of Jalan Kayu, you can opt to sit outside as well.

On the menu, there's one pizza for almost every letter of the alphabet. Marianne strongly recommends her personal favourite Ursula – pizza with Smoked Salmon, Spinach and Mascarpone.

Not a fan of that? There's a huge variety to choose from. They have Laura, a pizza heaped with four cheeses (Mozzarella, Taleggio, Smoked

Scamorza, and Gorgonzola), Olivia for chilli lovers (pizza with tomato, mozzarella, salami and fresh chilli) and even Zara (a sweet dessert pizza with melted chocolate, bananas and almond flakes). A medium thin crust pizza is \$16 and a large is \$19. To top off your meal, order Carmen – lip-smacking pastry puffs filled with cream and white chocolate profiterol (\$7.50).

You can fill up nicely for about \$20 a head though the servings are a bit small. However, the sumptuous tastes make up for it.

Still, it's the little details that count here. Children can sit at the little tyke tables and play with rolling pins and real pizza dough straight from the kitchen while the friendly staff serve their parents. On Mother's Day this year, Marianne had her sister bake cookies, which she dressed in ribbons and gave away to all mums. She says, "It's the little touches that we do that makes us different."

268 Jalan Kayu.  
Tel: 6481 2453.  
Open daily,  
11 am to 3 pm  
and 6 pm to 11 pm



NURUL HUDA RASHEED tucks into Italian food and finds a student-friendly café affordable for everyone.

Step into Adorica Café and you will soon realise that this is a place unlike many others. While many eateries don't like customers using their premises to study, this quiet café is refreshing in its decision to establish itself as a student-friendly café. With a sign that reads, "studying is allowed" boldly placed at the entrance, Khairul Rahman, 21, the owner of Adorica Café, welcomes students with open arms.

Tucked away at Haji Lane in the Arab St area, the two-month-old Italian-themed café is a haven for students with its affordable menu.

Adorica offers four Value Saving Meals but two instantly stand out: The Rock Star Meal and The Strangling Tomato Meal.

The Rock Star Meal consists of a Focaccia (a popular Italian bread) Tuna Sandwich served with fries and a choice of soft drink or fruit juice going for just \$5. It's called the Rock Star Meal because just like popular rock stars, Focaccia is a popular bread.

The Strangling Tomato Meal offers you spaghetti cooked with tasty beef or tuna, in a home-made sauce, and is both deliciously sweet and spicy. The meal also comes with any drink on the menu for a mere \$5.50.

Another Adorica Café speciality is the Black Pepper Fries. It's served in one full basket for \$2 but it's so addictive that the food's finished before you know it!

If you're parking yourself at Adorica for an intensive cramming session, the drinks menu will keep you going for hours. The café has "almost everything you can find at Coffee Bean [and] Starbucks", says Khairul, from Ice Latte (\$2.60) to Caramel, Mocha and Chocolate Frappe (\$3.50).

For bite-sized snacks, the café also serves delicious pastries like chicken pie (\$2.50), curry puff (\$2), tuna puff (\$2) and desserts like apple crumble (\$3), cheesecakes (\$3.50) and brownies (\$3).

Although Adorica Café prides itself on being Italian-inspired, it's not apparent from the decor. Instead, you see old records of old bands hung up on the red and brown walls and a display of toy cars on the shelf.

Ambience-wise, there isn't much to take notice of either. Everything here is simple and ordinary but it is still conducive enough for self-study.

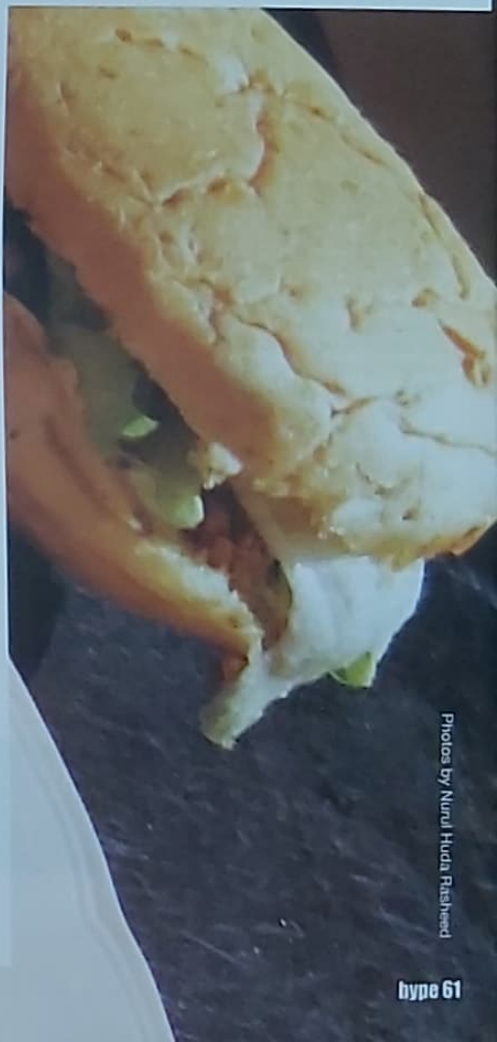
Slow rock music plays in the background while you savour your tasty treats, but if you're studying, you can always ask them to turn down the volume. The café also holds weekly acoustic performances from July onwards.

The small but cosy Adorica Café is a place where you might want to mug away, or just unwind and catch up with your friends without burning holes in your pocket, but only if you don't take ambience and décor into consideration.

67 Haji Lane, opposite Golden Landmark Shopping Centre.  
Open daily, 3 pm to 12 am (including Sundays and public holidays)

## Adorica Café

RATING ★★★★★





## Food For The Soul!

Art is the latest addition to the menus of these two cafes, as NOOR EZAIDA ABDUL RAHMAN discovers.

Art and food are intimately intertwined. The culinary expert's clever use of only the freshest ingredients is akin to an artist's careful blend of colour. The precision of food preparation is similar to the meticulousness of brush strokes. And the attention to food presentation – colour, light, texture and contrast – is no different from that lavished on a sculpture, painting or even, a dance.

While that might sound pretty intense, it proves the point that food and art make a good match. **hype** takes a look at two cafes which offer your usual café grub – deep-fried finger foods, pasta, pizza – but which also double up as jamming studios or art galleries.

### Singapore Art Café

**RATING** ★★★★★

While libraries smell of musty old books, the library@esplanade emits a lingering smell of freshly brewed coffee and good food, thanks to the Singapore Art Café.

General manager Jonathan Kwong, 34, believes that good forms of art should accompany good food. Tucked within Singapore's signature performance and arts hub, this café not only serves up local dishes like chicken curry and laksa but is also a performing and exhibition space for local artists and musicians.

While art might just be food for the soul, starving artists (literally and metaphorically) can enjoy main course set meals with dessert and coffee or tea from \$9.50. If you like something more unusual, the café has delicious sandwiches like chicken mayonnaise and avocado, as well as turkey and cranberry.

On Wednesdays, from 7 pm to 8.30 pm, serious artist types gather to sip freshly brewed coffee drinks from \$4.50 as they listen to performances from local musicians at the Open Mic located within the café. Diners, too, can become performers by dropping the Singapore Art Café an e-mail.

Alternatively, there are soothing tinkles on the grand piano to be enjoyed, thanks to performances by local pianists. If you're more a visual than an audio person, then feast your eyes on the walls of the café which showcase local visual artists' paintings, art installations and product designs.

#03-02 Esplanade Mall, 8 Raffles Avenue. Website: [www.artcafe.sg](http://www.artcafe.sg)



### Kaki 5 (Galerie and Café)

**RATING** ★★★★★

How many ways can a café be more than just a café? The two-storey Kaki 5 (literally "five-foot way") Galerie and Café is a jamming studio, a cinema, an art gallery and a discreet hangout for some of MediaCorp Suria's celebrities.

The owners of Kaki 5 – Suria producer and actress Wahyu Rahman, in her mid 20s, and painter and indie film-maker Adi Yadoni, in his 40s, – often invite celebrity friends like Suria host Dalina Jaafar and local rap group Triple Noize over.

Wahyu and Adi believe strongly in the beauty of life, freedom of expression and local talents. "We welcome local bands to perform for us. There's always new happenings at Kaki 5 – gigs, functions, celebrations," says Wahyu.

For this, the second-storey, called the Sinema, is a room for a "heightened moment of awareness", says Wahyu. This is where framed paintings hang from walls, independent films are played, gigs are performed and private functions are held. Sinema also doubles up as a recording studio, and those who purchase Kaki 5's Revolution ice-blended beverages (it comes in more than 10 flavours), can win up to 10 hours of recording time.

When you're there, have some fried calamari, wedges, nuggets and cheese sticks, or Kaki 5's Roti Boyan (a traditional Indonesian bread dish), made with mashed potato filling in between folded soft bread, fried golden-brown, then served with a creamy cheese or salsa dip.

The bowling pins on the stairway, the mismatched furniture, and the old crate acting as a table also give visitors the opportunity to enjoy life's whimsical moments.



9 Haji Lane

Open daily, 6 pm to the last customer.

Website: [www.kaki5.net](http://www.kaki5.net)



Dinner at the Kaki 5 (Galerie and Café)

## Mad About Jack!

I'd heard from my friends how wonderful a place Mad Jack Café is. And PK Express, which owns Mad Jack Café and five other outlets, has made it a cool place to chill out. What's attractive about it is that it serves the best Aussie-styled fish and chips in town and it's also halal-certified.

What's more, if you can't get enough of Xbox games, the café has one.

It doesn't try too hard to be all things Australian. I saw no boomerangs or kangaroo motifs on the walls. Instead, simple abstract art adorned the pastel walls and wooden floors, giving it a bohemian feel. The staff were friendly and warm and there was nary a "g'day mate" to be heard.

I took a seat, and while waiting for a plate of what they dubbed 'Aussie's Best Fish & Chips', I noticed a collage of newspaper and magazine clippings giving the dish a big thumbs up.

So it was with great anticipation that I dug into my generous serving of fish and chips minutes later. The first bite was simply amazing – the taste immediately erupted in my mouth. The crispy batter, with its light taste, combined well with the flaky, juicy fish on the inside. It tasted even better when paired with vinegar.

Mad Jack Café won't reveal where they get their fish from, but suffice to say, it's totally unlike the kind of fish and chips Singaporeans are used to: too-thick, tasteless batter, overly greasy and poor quality fish.

Accompanying my MSG-free meal was an equally delicious glass of Weight Watchers – an interesting blend of fruits such as cucumber and tomatoes, all without the calorie-guilt.

To make the experience complete, I tried their delicious banana crumble which was topped with vanilla ice cream. And boy, did I feel like I was in heaven. – SYED ARAFAT

### JUST FOR READERS

Students get an even better discount at Mad Jack Café. Drop by their Bukit Timah outlet (before Coronation Plaza) at 6 Duke's Road and sign up to receive a 30 percent discount on weekdays and 10 percent off on weekends.  
Tel: 6462 4300 / 6289 1506

Photo by Noor Ezaida



# Starlight, Star bright

An open field, a cool night breeze and a four-storey high, blown-up screen make Starlight Cinema a charming way to spend an evening out, says **KHAIRIN KHAMARULDIN**.

It's big! It's inflatable! And it screens movies to boot! It's Starlight Cinema featuring Asia's largest inflatable (yes, it's like one big giant balloon, but better!) screen for the fifth time this year.

The romance of drive-in theatres has returned, except you don't even need a car. Come in your pyjamas, stretch out, snack on whatever you have in your picnic basket, without being forced to snack on something sold outside the doors – they're all possible from Sep 20 to 30 as Starlight Cinema lines up another slew of exciting blockbusters at the Padang.

Barring horrid weather, which is less likely in September, you'll be entertained through the night from 8 pm to 1 am by top-notch and recently run movies like **The Break Up**, **Mission Impossible 3**, **X-Men 3: The Last Stand**, and **Pirates of the Caribbean 2: Dead Man's Chest**.

The benefits don't just end there! The \$15 nightly pass buys you more than just an outdoor cinema festival. Besides movie screenings, prizes\* can be won in SMS Movie Quizzes, and audiences can sing and dance along to 'live' band performances. For the terminally restless, there's even a flea market to check out! The flea markets are on Sep 21 – 23, and Sep 28 – 30, so don't miss these good deals starting from 6 pm.

To top it all off, there are offers on certain nights that are not to be missed out on! On Ladies' Night, simply buy one ticket and your female friend gets FREE admission! On Campus Night, students get a FREE ticket for every one they buy!

So pack your picnic baskets and mats, bring along your friends and loved ones and just enjoy the night under the stars.

\*Tickets are sold at \$15 per movie night. Available at all Times Bookstores and at the door. Got an enquiry? Call the Customer Service Hotline at 6457 3280.

\*Prizes not confirmed at press time.

## hype's Starlight Cinema promotion

We are giving away 50 double-passes to Starlight Cinema Singapore worth \$1,500! Simply answer this question correctly, and you and a friend stand to win a night out on us worth \$30!

Q: Where will Starlight Cinema be held this year?

☐ The Padang ☐ Fort Canning Park

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

NRIC: \_\_\_\_\_ Contact No: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Cut this out and drop it off at the Ngee Ann Polytechnic Student Services Centre at Blk 1. Alternatively, you can mail this to us. Closing date: 11 September 2006. Winners will be notified by e-mail or phone.

Starlight, Star bright  
hype magazine,  
TriMedia Publishing  
535 Clementi Road, Blk 52 #07-01/02  
Singapore 599489



Wednesday, 20 September

OPENING NIGHT: Launching Gambit

SHOWING

\*\*American Dreamz – Premiere

Thursday, 21 September

LADIES NIGHT (1 FOR 1): Song Dedication & Flea Market

SHOWING

Just Like Heaven

Friday, 22 September

STARLIGHT LIVE: Band Performance & Flea Market

SHOWING

Pirates of the Caribbean 2:  
Dead Man's Chest

Saturday, 23 September

STARLIGHT LIVE: Band Performances & Flea Market

SHOWING

Mission Impossible II  
Mission Impossible III

Sunday, 24 September

STARLIGHT KIDS: Make a Wish Charity

SHOWING

Ice Age 2: The Meltdown

Tuesday, 26 September

\*\*\*\*CAMPUS NIGHT (1 FOR 1)

SHOWING

Dark Waters

Wednesday, 27 September

\*\*\*\*CAMPUS NIGHT (1 FOR 1)

SHOWING

King Kong

Thursday, 28 September

\*\*\*LADIES NIGHT (1 FOR 1): Song Dedication & Flea Market

SHOWING

The Break-Up

Friday, 29 September

STARLIGHT LIVE: Band Performance & Flea Market

SHOWING

The Fast And The Furious:  
Tokyo Drift

Saturday, 30 September

STARLIGHT LIVE: Band Performances & Flea Market

SHOWING

X2: X-Men United  
X-Men: The Last Stand

\*\*American Dreamz is an exclusive premiere and entry is by INVITATION ONLY! For your chance to win an invitation, please log on to [www.starlightcinema.com](http://www.starlightcinema.com)

\*\*\*On Ladies' Night, buy one ticket and your female friend gets FREE admission!

\*\*\*\*On Campus Night, students get a FREE ticket for every one they buy. Students are to show student ID at the entrance to be eligible for the 1 FOR 1 offer.

Note: All information is correct at time of print.

Movie schedule is subject to change.

Find the updated schedule on [www.starlightcinema.com.sg](http://www.starlightcinema.com.sg)



## JAMES & THE CITY

Craving for a space that's fresh and inspiring? REZA OMAR checks out two venues at HarbourFront that are set to define what vivacity is.

### St James Power Station

Stuck in our urban jungle, where work and school are our top priority, it's always great to escape from stress and seek a new form of entertainment. Of course, we have the likes of big clubs like Zouk and Ministry of Sound (MoS), but now those clubs had better toughen up their act as a new clubbing complex is ready to take Singapore by storm.

Once Singapore's first coal-fired energy plant built in 1927, St James Power Station, located at HarbourFront, will be transformed into a massive 60,000 sq ft complex, sheltering nine fantastic clubs. There'll certainly be no lack of entertainment as each room will focus on a different genre.

These venues can play host to anything from 50 to 800 people. Now we know why St James is the region's most expensive nightspot, built at a cost of \$40 million.

The big draw, however, is slated to be the dance club, Powerhouse. St James's public relations manager, Ms Cheryl Khong, 26, singles it out as the next big dance spot – it can hold 1,000 people and is an ultimate clubbing experience with its \$4 million world-class German d&b audio-technik sound and lighting system. Also expect trapeze performances, Cirque du Soleil-style.

St James will open seven days a week and you only need to pay one cover charge, which gives you access to all nine clubs. Sign up to be on the St James Power Station mailing list at [www.stjamespowerstation.com](http://www.stjamespowerstation.com) to receive updates on the outlets there and stand a chance to win invites to its launch party.

The date of the launch party and cost of cover charge have yet to be confirmed at press time.

For more information, go to  
[www.stjamespowerstation.com](http://www.stjamespowerstation.com)

### VivoCity

Set to open in October, VivoCity is a 1 million sq ft retail, lifestyle and entertainment haven at HarbourFront. VivoCity is set to be the island's biggest shopping paradise, designed by Japanese architect, Toyo Ito.

Besides the usual shopping draw, VivoCity is also an amazing lifestyle hub for visitors to chill out. There will be a play pool the size of four Olympic swimming pools, a 300m waterfront promenade, an open-air amphitheatre and an alfresco-styled courtyard with water displays. Movie buffs will also find VivoCity a great place to hang out as the Golden Village (GV) cinema complex here is the largest in Singapore, boasting 15 screens with the capacity to seat 2,293 people in total. The largest cineplex now is Cathay Cineleisure Orchard which has 12 screens and can seat 2,135 people.

The cinema will feature VMAX – one of the widest 35mm indoor cinema screens in Asia, the Cinema Europa – where international movies are shown throughout the year – and the Business Class Cinema, where you get to watch art house films.

Present a GV flyer, to be distributed at MRT stations and its multiplexes from now to Oct 7, and receive a gift at GV VivoCity during its opening.

Photo by St James Power Station

## THE BANDS PLAY ON

Warm up your vocal cords, dust off your drumset and tune up your electric guitar for the fourth instalment of the **Singapore Battle of the Bands 2006**. JOANNA JOHAN finds out what makes this year's competition so special.

With the booming underground music scene and the increasing number of do-it-yourself gigs these days, local bands are poised to make the leap from anonymity to the big-time. Here to help them, is the **Singapore Battle of the Bands 2006 (SBOTB)** competition, which has certainly helped the careers of past winners.

Take, for example, 2003 winner Bay Area Rock Blasta. They have recorded a full-length album with a major label, which the band wants to keep under wraps for the time being. There's also Soul'd Out, who won in 2004. These guys are playing in big shows like **Jam X 2004**, with LIME magazine as the official media partner, says SBOTB project coordinator, Asrafi A'Sat. Last year's winner, No Divider, has released a compilation album and will be making a guest appearance in this year's finals, Asrafi adds.

To be held in D'Tent at Downtown East in Pasir Ris, the competition has received 40 entries. Competing aside, Asrafi says this is a chance for bands to up their performing skills by a few notches. He stated that in addition to gaining a larger fan base and listeners, bands will also come away with tips on producing quality music and "the chance to actually be seen by other event management and other big labels or production houses".

Besides the chance to be talent-spotted, the winner will get to rock the nation in the New Year's Eve party. "We have recently confirmed that this year's champion will play at the New Year Countdown show at D'Tent," Asrafi revealed.

And the good stuff isn't only for the winners. The audience is in for a treat too. "Every week, we're giving away prizes to the audience worth \$130 in lucky draws during the quarter-finals, semi-finals and grand finals," Asrafi disclosed.

There are also \$500 worth of vouchers from NTUC and clubs like Nu Bar and Planet Paradigm for the person who guesses the winner in the grand finals.

And the winner of **SBOTB**? The band will walk away with \$12,000 worth of cash and prizes, including an exclusive custom-made Jim Beam Gibson electric guitar. "The judging criteria will not be influenced by whether you're old or young, good looking or not, stylish or not – it is all about the music," reassures Asrafi.

Semi-finals on Aug 20 and Aug 27, at DXO, at The Esplanade. First drink cover charge. Grand finals on Sep 16, at D'Tent, Downtown East. Tickets at \$12 pre-sale and \$15 at the door.

For more information, visit [www.sbotb.com](http://www.sbotb.com).





# BAY WATCH

Where can sitting on a plane for just over an hour, followed by a bumpy 45-minute ride take you? Paradise – or rather, Damai Beach Resort. So stop the pencil pushing and join **KHAIRIN KHAMARULDIN** on a great weekend away from hectic city life.

If you haven't heard of Damai, you're not alone. Damai is a little beach town tucked away in one of Malaysia's least visited states, Sarawak. But don't let that keep you from visiting this beautiful and serene town.

To get to Damai, you'll need to take a plane to Kuching, the capital. As your plane touches down at the airport, you'll notice meandering rivers, green hills and mountains, and sporadic patches of red and brown land from your window. This is a far cry from Singapore's concrete jungle with its man-made canals and relatively flat terrain.

Kuching, like most major cities in Malaysia, is a maze of rows of shophouses, jam-packed winding roads, one souvenir shop after another and the occasional four-star hotel. While the beauty of the city is apparent the moment you arrive, the rustic charm of Sarawak really lies in the pristine beach town of Damai about 45 minutes away.

This is where **hype** found paradise – cool, shady weather, white sandy beaches, sparkling, alluring water, enveloping mountains. No traffic noise. No

glistening tall buildings, no crowds. Just you and Mother Nature.

Driving along the bumpy roads of Damai is an eye opener. The scenery transforms from rows and rows of huge and elegant mansions to the never-ending stretch of beautiful flora and fauna.

Upon reaching the Holiday Inn Resort – Damai Beach, you are greeted by friendly staff and a cool sea breeze in the spacious Bali-like lobby decorated in dark woods and loads of white and cream fabrics. Most of the guest rooms are on the hilltop and a shuttle van takes visitors to and from the lobby.

Once in your room, take your time to revel in its spaciousness (a room for two can fit six). But most importantly,

marvel at the the view of the magnificent beach, inviting sea and rolling mountains from your window and private balcony (every room has one).

The beauty about this place is you know you're not alone but you can't help but think you are. Time seems to stand still as you immerse yourself in luxury and untouched natural beauty. Add to that magical combination a picturesque sunset and you're truly in heaven.

## Be a Water Babe

With the pristine sea and white sand just a stone's throw away from your hotel room, it would be a pity to simply languish inside, tempting as the six cable

## WHEN TO GO?

February to September is when most animals come out to play; they're nowhere to be found during the monsoon season. Pack light, casual clothes. The warm weather is very much like Singapore's.

channels, TV channels and the luxurious bed may be.

When in Rome, do as the Romans – when at a lovely beach resort, don your best beach outfit and indulge in some sea activities. The resort can plan an itinerary for you, or you can choose what you fancy doing, from sailing, scuba diving, or island-hopping to just swimming.

One of the highlights is the dolphin watching trip.

The hotel can make a booking for you – all you need to do is prepare to be awed by these amazing creatures. Just get onboard a speedboat with your expert guide who will take you to where these graceful sea mammals are.

## CURRENCY

S\$1 = RM\$2.31 at press time.

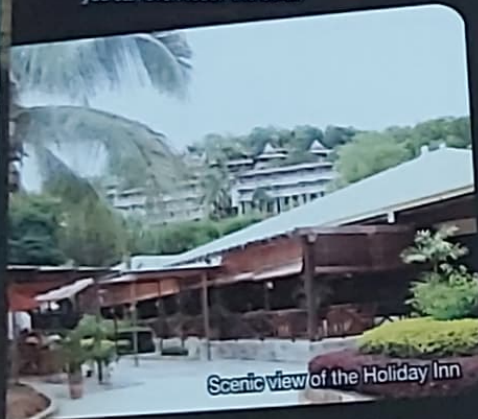


After a 20-minute ride, you will be greeted by pods of dolphins swimming and surfacing for air. Although these dolphins are friendly, they tend to keep a safe distance from the boat – but don't worry though, as they'll be in full, clear view.

Unfortunately, you can't swim with the dolphins. Our guide, Mr Sabarian Jali, 54, who lives in a nearby sea village, explained in a mixture of English and Malay, "These dolphins aren't like those you find at zoos [and shows], they aren't tame. We don't encourage people to swim with [the dolphins because] their actions aren't predictable."

If you'd prefer to be in the deep end of things, literally, go snorkelling at the nearby Satang Islands, a 30-minute boat ride away. The tour guides will provide you with snorkelling gear and basic know-how so you can start on your own undersea adventure.

We got to swim with an arm-length barracuda, a school of clown fish (we found Nemo!), tiger fishes and were mesmerised by an amazing seabed with a gorgeous coral reef. And if you were wondering... yes, you can even touch the coral!



Scenic view of the Holiday Inn

For those who are licensed to scuba dive, Damai is also a diving hot spot. Remember to keep breathing though, as you'll be entranced by colourful marine life. It's so surreal that Mr Sabarian laughed heartily as he related how some divers feel as though they are on the set of Disney's *Little Mermaid*.

Another popular activity is island hopping. You'll be brought to different islands, namely the Satang Islands and the Talang-Talang Islands to picnic and swim. If you're lucky, you might get to see turtles coming ashore to lay their eggs between July to November.

Still wondering what else the resort has to offer? There's always sailing, kayaking and the usual jet skiing but if you're looking for something less intense, just lie on the pristine beach and bask in the sun.

## Cultural Exchange

What is Sarawak without its *orang asli* or indigenous people? Stretched across 14 acres of land, the Sarawak Cultural Village showcases the homes of seven Sarawak ethnic groups – the Bidayuh, Iban, Penan, Orang Ulu, Melanau, Malay and Chinese.

Thanks to the Sarawak Cultural Village, a five-minute ride in the free shuttle bus that takes tourists to and from the nearby resorts to the village, we got more than just a walk through galleries. In fact, the cultural village is a living, breathing museum.

Unlike most other museums, you get to interact with the staff (who are natives). You can help them cook, or join in a game of *congkak* (a traditional Malay game of collecting shells in a board).

Think you can bring your LAN game shooting skills to life? Try the Penan hunting technique where you get to aim and shoot at cans with a traditional Penan blowpipe. Or you can learn to make a *gambus* (a traditional Melanau guitar) out of tree trunks. Don't worry about communication though, as all the staff can understand and speak basic English.

Curious visitors get to observe the natives carrying out their usual daily activities in their homes such as cooking, making crafts, hunting and on some special days, a traditional wedding, providing a deeper insight into their lives.

American tourist, Sarah Lee, in her late 20s, was impressed with the simple life the natives led. "My boyfriend and I were amazed by how much these people can do with so little technology."

Don't miss the chance to walk down the steep and narrow tree-trunk stairs of the Melanau Tallhouse. Kate Atkins, 20, from Australia, said she'd rather go on five rollercoaster rides than have another go down the stairs.

After the tallhouse, visit the Orang Ulu Longhouse and be dumbfounded by the large number of human skulls dangling from the verandah while a rhythmic tune is played on a traditional xylophone.

To really appreciate how the *orang asli* live, learn the art of being a deadly hunter at the Penan Hut. Try your hand at aiming a lethal blowpipe for only RM\$1 (45 cents). These

## LANGUAGE?

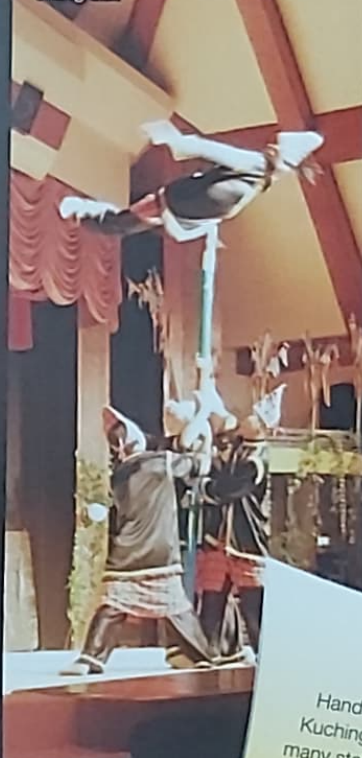
Most Sarawakians understand and speak basic English, but it's better if you can speak Malay, although their Malay has a mix of Tagalog and Indonesian accents.

## TUN JUGAH



the heart of Kuching

Jaw-dropping performances by the *orang asli*



Surprisingly soothing music from the wooden xylophone



## MUST-BUYS

Handicrafts and pottery. Head for the Kuching Waterfront Bazaar, which has many stalls selling from souvenirs t-shirts to handmade vases. Bargaining is a must – at least 70 percent lower than the asking price. So a t-shirt priced at RM\$20 can be had for just RM\$6.

blowpipes are still used today by the Penan natives for hunting animals.

You basically give one hard blow into the blowpipe. "It's very easy," said Bob Semet, 36, the *orang asli* who demonstrated his skills to us. Easier said than done, we say – it took five attempts to hit the target.

You can also explore the entire village on a marked trail and end off the entire experience with an exciting and interactive 40-minute cultural dance performance at the Cultural Theatre.

Performers pull stunts like twirling on their bellies on three-metre high poles with no safety nets or cables and at one point, you'll be panicking in your seat, wondering if the Penan warrior is aiming at you or the balloon right above your head.

A Malaysian student on holiday, Nurul Huda Ali, 21, exclaimed after her short stint on stage when an Orang Ulu performer pulled her up on stage to perform a hunting ritual dance, "It was frightening at first because I didn't know what he wanted me to do! At one point, I thought he really

wanted to chop my hands off!"

The entire package at RM\$45 (\$19) was well-spent and an eye opener as it gave us a better understanding of the dying minority in Sarawak. Damai Beach is a home away from home, a paradise that makes you feel right at home.

The next time you need a quick getaway from bustling Singapore, hop on the next budget flight to Damai Beach and immerse yourself in all the peace and serenity that a paradise on earth can offer you.

## TRAVEL TIP

Be prepared for a bumpy ride! Shuttle bus drivers everywhere drive at breakneck speed.



# CHILD OF OUR TIME

Your inner child shouldn't have to forgo Children's Day on Oct 1, so here's what you can say to convince the Higher Powers (your teacher/lecturer/boss) that you deserve to have a holiday too. By **KHAIRIN KHAMARULDIN**.

Dear higher power, I am still a child because...

"... I can name all the main characters in **Power Rangers** and sing the theme song backwards!"  
Alyayayay!

"... those toys you find in my bedroom aren't my younger brother's. They're all mine. Yes, and so is that **Sesame Street** VCD."

"... when my parents bought tickets to **Disney on Ice** for the entire family, I threw a huge fuss. 'Cause it wasn't front row tickets! How to see Cinderella clearly?!!"

"... when no one is around, I blast my favourite **Backstreet Boys**, **Britney Spears** or **Spice Girls** song and reminisce about the time I performed in primary school."

"... **Lost? Desperate Housewives?** Are you kidding? No way! **That's So Raven** is the only show deserving of a **Golden Globe**."

"... honestly, what I really want is to live in one of those **Disneyland** castles."

"... I still wear my lucky **Care Bear** underwear."

\*Disclaimer: These tips may or may not work. But research shows they are more successful when one is in a straitjacket.

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Admission Requirements (Intakes in January, April, July and October)

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