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WATCH THAT BAG!  
FASHION MYTHS UNCOVERED  
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ISSUE 25  
AUG-OCT 2007  
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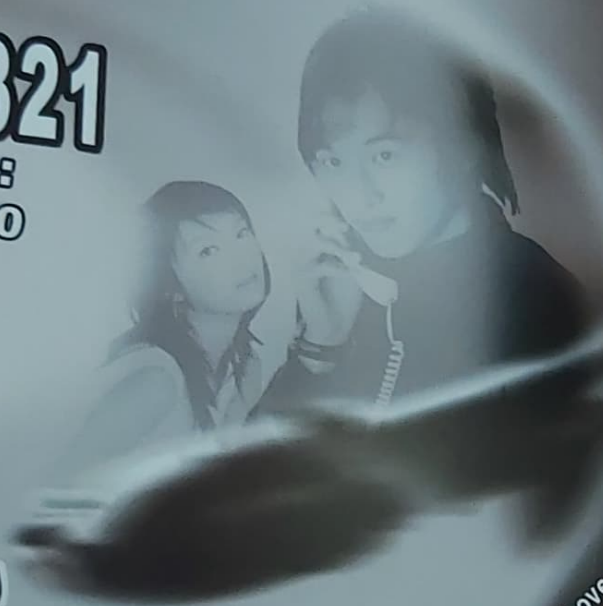
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I sat at the bus stop the other day and my friend punches me, saying, "Punch buggy!"

"What in the..." was my annoyed reply.

Here I am, working my butt off for loose change, waiting to fight for a seat with the hoards. And as if it isn't enough to enviously watch expensive exotic cars zoom past me, friends think it's fun to use me as a punching bag whenever they see a BMW or Mercedes.

It hurts even more when I see young adults (c'mon they're practically still in their late teens), driving these posh cars. (Let's just hope they don't drive on a suspended licence like someone we know too well. Hint: Think of a Hilton heiress.) Who do these rich kids think they are anyway? Well, **hype** got some of them to sit down and explain.

In the meantime, going by the number of these rich boys' toys on the roads, I might have to start wearing heavy armour to protect myself from 'punch buggies'.

Speaking of heavy armour, did you know that we could end up like the hunchback of Notre Dame if we continue carrying our lifestyle essentials? Take for example the laptop, iPod, phone, chunky wallet and other funky things that find themselves in the corners of my bag that I lug around. Maybe I'm exaggerating, but if you'd like to be safe rather than sorry, check out "Watch Your Bag" and you'll know what I mean.

On a less depressing note, if there's one event that I've been anticipating for the longest time, it's none other than indie music festival **Baybeats**. There's something about the combination of the nightly breeze, the waterside view and the music that can sweep you off the ground and into a state of musical ecstasy.

While I've probably missed out on many highlights for 2007 including blockbuster movies like **300** and events like the **Singapore Fashion Festival**, this is one event no assignment can override (and thank goodness **Baybeats** is free too!).

On a parting note to my fellow budget-teers, if there's one thing that the increase in GST has not been able to affect, it's **hype**, which is still free after two dozen issues! So enjoy this issue guilt-free!

Merci!  
*Eva Nastassia*

# EDITORIAL





The Bling Bling Ride



Fashion Myths Uncovered



Slap-Happy Singapore



Caracal - One Cool Cat



Watch That Bag!

## hype

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# WOMAD

turns 10 in Singapore

It's WOMAD Singapore's 10th anniversary and CELESTINE CHEW tells you why you shouldn't miss out on this year's fun-filled event from Aug 24-26.

Photo courtesy of WOMAD pro

After nine years of celebrating music, arts and dance from around the world, **WOMAD (World of Music, Arts and Dance) Singapore 2007** celebrates its 10th anniversary with many highlights that are sure to make this year's festival one that no one should miss.

The festival, which originated from England in 1982, has spread across the globe and is enthusiastically celebrated in over 20 countries, drawing crowds by the thousands.

Ms Seow Yee Low, marketing and publicity specialist for **WOMAD**, hopes that even more arts lovers will take part in this year's celebration.

"We do not like to jinx it by saying expected figures, but last year close to 20,000 attended and we hope for a bigger turnout this year," she said in an email interview.

For the first time, **WOMAD Singapore** will not be repeating most of its acts, making each performance a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

That is perhaps good reason why you should book your tickets, and the three-day pass, in particular early! Ms Low said of the programming that "It's a combination of old favourites (acts) and new ones that have not performed at **WOMAD Singapore** before, in light for our anniversary celebrations."

"Most of our highlights are all performing one performance only compared to the usual of two performances and one workshop so we are encouraging audiences to come for all three days to catch everyone."

Some of these one-night-only performances include highlights from international artistes Youssou N'dour and the Super Etoile de Dakar (France), Asian Dub Foundation (UK), Shogunifty (Scotland), hip-hop band Daara J (Senegal) and Muntu Valdo (Cameroon).

And for the first time, homegrown talent R-H (Rajesh Hardwani), will be performing solo at this

year's event. R-H, who plays funk and soul, blues and hip-hop, electronica, big beat and more, will give **WOMAD 2007** a distinctive ethnic flavour with his remixes.

Also, according to Ms Low, be prepared for an "All Star Jam" on the Sunday night of the three-day festival, "where all of the artistes will take to the stage for a finale performance". You may wonder what is so special about this, but the combined performance comes "after just three days of spontaneous experimentation".

## Be Prepared Party Go-ers!

If you're new to the festival, but open to giving the various musical tastes a try, do take previous **WOMAD Singapore** go-ers' advice before you head over to Fort Canning Park.

**WOMAD** fan Adeline Foo, 20, shared her enthusiasm with **hype**, "The music is great! I love the energy from the crowd! It just gives you that adrenaline rush. I'll definitely go for this year's **WOMAD**. I wouldn't miss it for the world."

However, a word of advice: don't arrive late!

The smart people that go for **WOMAD Singapore** every year already know that they have to go to Fort Canning Park early to snag a nice spot, spread out their mats and have a picnic while waiting for the performances to start. So if you don't want to get stuck at a spot with poor visibility, then take our advice: be a true Singaporean and head out early!

You should also avoid dressing like you're going for a night party, with heavy jewellery or killer heels.

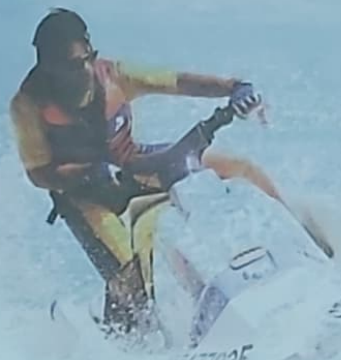
"I went for last year's **WOMAD** with jeans and a spaghetti top but I was still perspiring a lot. I should've just worn shorts," says Florence Ng, 18.

For the girls, if you want to look more dressy, a beach dress would be fine. For guys, just put on a comfortable and airy shirt, bermudas and slippers, and you're good to go.

So if you've been craving for a reason to get up and dance, the event will get you to boogie the night away!

As Festival Director for **WOMAD Singapore 2007**, Ms Sarah Martin aptly puts it, "Here's to another 10 years!"

Dates: Aug 24-26, Venue: Fort Canning Park, Time: Gates open at 6pm on Friday and 5:30pm on Saturday and Sunday. Performances begin at 7pm on Friday and Saturday, and at 6pm on Sunday. Ticket prices vary from \$38 for an early bird pass to \$190 for a three-day pass. For more details please visit [www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg) or call the SISTIC Hotline at 6384 5555.



# WaterFest 2007

## Makes a Big Splash

Take that wild ride down Adrenaline Lane, ditch your small-time super-soakers and swim on over to the big-time as **DIYANA ISMAIL** serves you **WaterFest Singapore 2007**.

Back for its third year running, **WaterFest Singapore 2007 (WF2007)**, promises to create huge waves this time. Centred on various aspects of water-related activities, this six-week long festival from Aug 25 to Oct 7, is the ultimate leisure romp of sports, food and entertainment locally.

The official launch kicks off with a two-day event from Aug 25 and will be held at the Marina Bay floating platform. Set against the enchanting city skyline, the dramatic beginning of **WF2007** will mark the start of an electrifying season of water sports.

The weekend launch promises to inject buzz and a flurry of vibrant activity to the waterfront. Everyone will enjoy the blend of food, sports and non-stop entertainment. Spectators can watch an extravagant water sports showcase from the platform's gallery and try out jet or banana boat rides and even water skis - all for the low, low price of absolutely nothing! Throw in novelty events and side activities and that should sum up **WF2007** by the Bay.

Following the launch is a series of events divided into four categories: **Standard Chartered Masters Swimming Series**, **Aviva Ironman 70.3 Singapore**, **Wakeboard World Cup Singapore 2007** and **FINA 10-km Swimming World Cup**.

Organised by the Singapore Sports Council with the aim of introducing water sports to the public, the event will also showcase top international athletes in the various events.

So get ready for non-stop, rip-roaring entertainment by watching the exhilarating competitions.

For more information, log onto [www.waterfestsingapore.com](http://www.waterfestsingapore.com)



## WaterFest by the Bay

Official launch at Marina Reservoir's floating platform. An exciting blend of food and sports. Interesting land and water activities for all ages. Includes free water ski trials, banana boat and jet rides.

Date: Aug 25-26

Time: 10am

Venue: Marina Reservoir (Floating Platform) **FREE!**

## SMU/Raffles Marina Beneficial Race & WaterFest Carnival

The Sailability Organisation in Singapore will receive the proceeds from this yacht race. Public will also be able to kayak, rock climb, sail in a specially designed boat for the disabled and watch a dragon boat race.

Date: Aug 12, 26

Time: 11am - 8pm

Venue: Raffles Marina **FREE!**

## Beach Ultimate Frisbee Tournament

Frisbee lovers across Singapore gather, perform and compete at this fun-filled tournament.

Date: Oct 6

Time: 8am - 6pm

Venue: Siloso Beach **\$10/PERSON**

## FINA Marathon Swimming World Cup 10km

A Premier World Cup series that showcases international swimming talents. The best will compete in 10-km swim.

Date: Oct 7

Time: 8:30am - 2:30pm

Venue: East Coast Park, Carpark F2 **FREE!**

For the sixth year running, indie music enthusiasts will be delighted to know that Singapore's very own alternative music festival, **Baybeats**, is back to rock you to the beat. VANESSA NG takes a sneak peek.

The line up for this year's **Baybeats** sounds as scrumptious as a menu for a savoury meal. Back with a fresh new format, the annual music festival will satisfy that hunger with some electrifying live music.

Relish the dainty appetiser as this year's festival will be launched for the first time with a pre-festival ticketed opening gig, Mercury Rev from New York will deliver their signature audaciously strange, dreamlike tunes and lulling lyrics with lead singer/guitarist, Jonathan Donahue's unique high-pitched vocals for the first time in Singapore, Aug 2. Expect this psychedelic band to earn every cent you paid for your ticket.

The entree will not disappoint either as the main festival's line-up is bursting with promising bands. Besides **Baybeats'** regular feature of regional and international bands, a new breed of thriving young local bands will also grace the stage this year. These bands had to audition before being short-listed to perform alongside international bands at **Baybeats**. The 10 local bands performing are Allura, Bismuth, Caracal (see pg 7), Deputy Siren, The Fire Fight, Giants Must Fall, King Kong Jane, Monofone, Stentorian and The Sallys. They might still be unfamiliar to you, but with such talent, you'll definitely hear more of them in the local music scene.

Some noteworthy local bands include Monofone and Allura. The former's music has been described by youth.sg as "a blend of new generation rock profiling textured guitar... supplemented with the classical strokes of heart-provoking piano", while the latter's distinctive style of delivering emotive, experimental music, which crosses from jazz to alternative, can be compared to Muse, U2 and Incubus.

In addition to all these enthralling features, **Baybeats 2007** will be opening a new stage at the Esplanade Park, called the Nokia Arena due to the ongoing construction works at the outdoor stage.

According to the official **Baybeats** website, the festival was created to give indie bands from Singapore and around the world a platform to interact and showcase their music in a free-for-all celebration of live music and good fun. It features bands that play alternative music like post-rock, punk, emo, electro and hard rock.

One indication of Singaporeans having greater interest in the local music scene is the notable hike in attendance of the festival from 9,000 in 2001 to last year's count of 69,000. With organisers expecting an even larger crowd this year, there's no reason to miss this massive music event!

**Baybeats '07**  
Opening Act: Esplanade Presents  
Mercury Rev  
Aug 2 (Thu)  
Esplanade Theatre  
8 pm  
Tickets from Sistic: \$58, \$78  
(Early bird specials and concessions available)

Aug 3-5  
Nokia Arena (Esplanade Park),  
Nokia Powerhouse (Stage@  
Powerhouse), The Village  
(The Lawn), Observation Deck  
(Singapore Art Café, Library@  
Esplanade, L3)  
Entry is free

For more information, visit  
<http://www.baybeats.com.sg>



Monofone

Allura

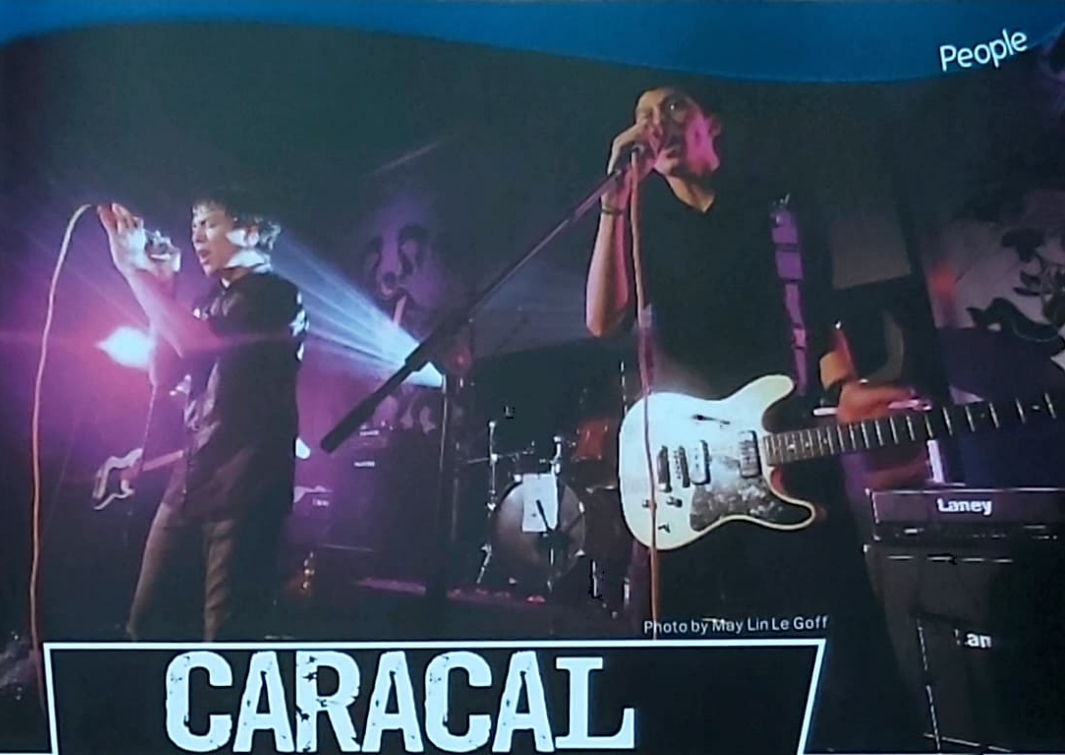


Photo by May Lin Le Goff

# CARACAL

## ONE COOL CAT

Dubbed by many in the local music scene as THE band to look out for, Caracal has garnered praise from their peers for their raw, energetic live gigs. JARRYL CHIA hangs out with the guys and finds out what the real Caracal is like away from the limelight.

The boys of Caracal are totally clueless about their rising fame. Comprising of front-man Christopher Ng, 19, drummer Martin Kong, 20, guitarists Field Teo, 20, and Gabriel de Souza, 18, and bassist Kenneth Meals, 18, otherwise more affectionately known as KC, Caracal is as down-to-earth offstage as they are onstage.

It's hard to believe that they are fast becoming stars in their own right. They are irreverent, full of punk, energetic, passionate; everything rock 'n' roll should be.

**hype's** hour-long interview with the boys was peppered with lots of laughter, toilet humour and conventional wisdom, very indicative of the distinct personalities of each member and the band as a whole.

Even the name "Caracal" says a lot about their approach to music. According to the Oxford American Dictionary, "Caracal" is a "long-legged lynx-like cat with black tufted ears and a uniform brown coat". Now you may ask, what has this got to do with their music? The answer is, well, nothing. These guys are just about as random as anyone can get. They picked the name Caracal after a friend of theirs flipped through an encyclopedia and showed it to them.

Their unwillingness to take themselves too seriously is perhaps the secret to their charm, while taking their music seriously is the secret to their success. Christopher says, "We take our music seriously because we don't want to let our fans down," a view that is echoed by the other members of the band. "Interaction and building an emotional connection with the audience is the most important," he adds.

It appears that their newfound fame hasn't gotten to their heads just yet, judging from the fact that they still get star-struck when they see local veterans like A Vacant Affair and West Grand Boulevard perform.



"They're our friends, but when we see them onstage, we're like 'Wvho! These guys are so good,'" Christopher explains.

Indeed, veteran bands who have been around way longer than Caracal have been instrumental in helping them improve, be it by giving them tips, sharing their experience, or securing gigs for them to play at. West Grand Boulevard, in particular, has played a pivotal role in exposing Caracal's music to the masses by allowing the latter to play during the opening of their album launch last year.

It was the first time that Caracal played to such a big crowd of "about 200 people", according to Martin. Quite a feat, considering the fact that they started off playing to crowds as small as eight people at The Third Place (TTP), a preaching point operated by Wesley Methodist Church (WMC) located at Outram Road. This landmark in Caracal's career was both an encouraging and humbling experience that fired up their passion for making better music and taking their music more seriously.

Describing their music as "rock with emotive lyrics", they say their sound is influenced by alternative rock and post-hardcore bands such as The Used, Thrice, Alexisonfire and Circa Survive. Their heavy, punchy and hard-hitting sound is backed by meaningful lyrics that touch on social issues that are close to their hearts. From family and friends, to building self-confidence, being comfortable in one's own skin, they have a message to put across and they're not afraid to do it louder and with more attitude than anyone else.

These are young musicians with a fire, a hunger in them to go regional, global even.

And they are finally going to get their big break in their virgin appearance in **Baybeats 2007**, an annual indie music festival organised by the Esplanade. It's the biggest music event in Singapore and it has always been a dream of theirs to play in it and rub shoulders with other more established and experienced bands.

"It's huge and unites a lot of people in Singapore who listen to different genres. I've been one of them in the audience. We want to see more bands like us go up and play. We want to pave a way for them, to show people that even though it is difficult to break through the international barrier, it is still possible," Martin quips.

Indeed, the sky is the limit, as KC puts it. They've come a long way indeed, from playing for an eight-man crowd to playing for thousands. They are constantly re-inventing their sound and they hope to sound "minimalist but more technical" for their upcoming projects, according to Martin. With creativity, drive, endearing personalities and age on their side, these boys are set to go far. But first, onwards to **Baybeats!**

## DREAMS CAN COME TRUE

At the mere age of 23, he became the first Singaporean ever to be honoured at the Cannes Film Festival where he received the Special Mention award this year. **ADDISON WONG** chats with local filmmaker Anthony Chen about what it's like to be a part of the world's most prestigious film festival.

**How does it feel to be the first Singaporean ever to be honoured at Cannes?**

It's definitely a huge honour for me as a filmmaker, and a very big encouragement, because filmmaking is a real bumpy ride. Such recognition gives us filmmakers more determination to walk down this road of guaranteed obstacles.

**Did you expect this honour at all?**

Not really. After we watched all the films in the running for the same award, we realised that the competition was really strong. The films were very different from one another. Anything could have happened, so I didn't hold high expectations.

**Tell us something about Cannes that only someone attending the festival would know.**

There is this strong sense of love towards film that is constantly in the air at Cannes. It's something you can't experience anywhere else. Being among an audience made up solely of renowned filmmakers worldwide is a very spiritual experience.

When a good film is screened, you can easily expect a continuous 20 to 30 minutes standing ovation when the credits roll, and within the applause, you feel very strongly the love people

have for the film and the filmmaker. It's really an awesome experience.

**Were there any learning experiences at Cannes for you as a filmmaker being there?**

I attended Martin Scorsese's Cinema Masterclass. He shared about his films and works, his style of working and his inspirations. That, itself, was a great learning experience, because Scorsese's a legend. It helped me gain insight into the various reasons and ways people make film and their take on the art of filmmaking itself. I don't think I'll ever have such exposure anywhere else.

**In 20 words, define what a "good film" is to you.**

The story. It's the essence that defines whether a film is good or not. Everything else just enhances the quality.

**What are your top three favourite movies of all time?**

**YI YI** (2000) by Edward Yang, **Nobody Knows** (2004) by Kore-Eda Hirokazu, and **L'Enfant** (2005) by the Dardenne brothers.

**FESTIVAL DE CANNES**  
The Cannes Film Festival is the most prestigious film festival in the world. Held annually in France, the 11-day event holds the premieres of films pre-selected by a jury for running in the festival's official competition. The Special Mention award is presented to films which fail to be honoured in their respective competition categories, but are deemed worthy of recognition by members of the jury.

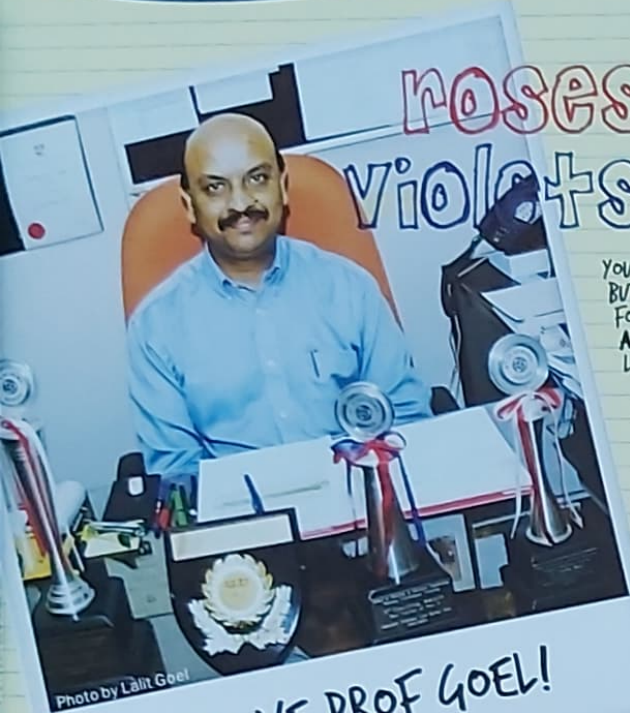


Photo by Lalit Goel

**WE LOVE PROF GOEL!**

## roses are red, violets are blue

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD ABOUT HIS SEX APPEAL, BUT WHAT MAKES THIS MAN, WHO HAS TAUGHT FOR ALMOST 16 YEARS, AN INSPIRING TEACHER? ADELINE YEO BRINGS YOU BEYOND YOUTUBE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT PROFESSOR LALIT GOEL.

If teachers out there think Professor Goel, or Prof Goel as he is usually called, has been using YouTube as a mentoring tool, hold that thought! A seven-minute YouTube video of the professor in October 2006 showcasing his feedback forms/love letters got him in the radar of *The New Paper*, which featured him in People Watch on Mar 13.

### on confessions of love

The 47-year-old head of one of the engineering schools at Nanyang Technological University, amuses his students with flirty, naughty comments written by former students in reference to him, for the sake of easing the students' exam stress. These "confessions of love" and flirty drawings of kisses and lips are drawn by anonymous students to express their fondness for Prof Goel, as well as to provide some harmless entertainment.

With a laugh, Prof Goel says, "We don't know how serious they are, you know. [It] could be a guy parading as a female saying 'I love you.' But he admits with a smile, "It's still good to get comments like this."

### on teaching

He might seem a joker, but when Prof Goel steps into the classroom, he gets down to business.

After his introduction to the class he sets three basic rules:

1. No sleeping in class.
2. No talking in class.
3. Handphones must be switched off.

This is, he says with much vigour, "Because I want [you] to learn. I don't want [you] to sleep. You're not here to sleep! Listen to me!"

Returning to his laidback self, he says he occasionally cracks jokes to provide students with some humour and relaxation. "It's the way you project yourself," he explains.

The self-confessed workaholic replies e-mails within a day even from home (the Indian national stays on campus), except on weekends. Otherwise, the father of two sons aged 11 and 17, says with a chuckle, "my family will kill me".

### mentor me, mister!

As for offering advice to other teachers, the professor says humbly that he doesn't know if he's good enough to do so, but his only suggestion based on many years of experience, as well as earned affection and appreciation from the students is that "they want teachers who can relate to them".

He also showed the "sing-song" way he teaches to stress how vital communication skills are, a demonstration that left **hype** very amused.

"Your intonation, your variety. Are you speaking in a monotone? You've got to go up, you've got to go down. Have crests and valleys. You've got to be interesting."

To understand what makes Prof Goel so well loved by his students, one of his students, Soe Hnin Hnin, 24, simply says, "He teaches with passion and great interest."

## Challenge your friends to a game of Hooky.



Who'll be the first to make it through university? Go up against your friends at a game of online Hooky and see if you have what it takes to be the best. Just visit [buildyourownfuture.info](http://buildyourownfuture.info) and take the SIM Hooky challenge today.



Members of The SIM Group



The Pen is Mightier  
than the Sword

Buzz, blood and burly men. These words conjure images of obscene tattoos and hard-talking outlaws, right? DENISE TAN has a heart-to-heart chat with Singapore's first female tattoo artist.

You walk into Exotic Tattoos in Far East Plaza and expect to see a Herculean man hunched over a hairy back inking the scowl of a tiger. But lo and behold, it's a lady wielding the menacing tattoo pen, undaunted by the incessant hum of the needle.

Sumithra Debi, or Su, 27, is Singapore's first female tattoo artist and Exotic Tattoos' resident tattooist. The young lady, who's chalked up 11 years of experience, apprenticed under her uncle, Richard Tat from the famed Johnny-Two-Thumb Tattoo Studio. At 16, Su completed her first artwork, the Chinese character for love.

The spunky tattooist isn't a dropout but holds a diploma in graphic design, from the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.

#### Strength of a Woman

Despite her academic background in design, being young and female meant meeting many sceptics and challenges. But Su persevered and knew that when the pen touches a person's skin, the effects were irreversible.

Her meticulous manner did nothing to ease her initiation. "It was challenging to prove to people who I am. My customers had to look beyond age and gender," Su says, her eyes burning with determination.

Now, Su has it much easier. She enjoys a steady stream of customers and is hugely popular among first-timers.

And despite her elevated status, Su says modestly, "It takes awhile before I can say I am an artist."

"It was challenging to prove to people who I am. My customers had to look beyond age and gender."



#### Pen on Skin

What has made Su so popular, especially with girls and first-timers who are contemplating getting a tattoo, is her approach to dealing with customers.

"I do things in a different way," she says. And it's clear. Exotic Tattoos doesn't tremble with head-banging music and isn't shrouded in cigarette smoke.

Instead, Su concentrates on "giving a lot of privacy to female clients and making them feel comfortable".

#### Too Fast, Too Soon

She remembers a 12-year-old bouncing into the studio with a picture of a Teletubby. He demanded that she inked that purple blob on his chest. Appalled, Su told him that when he turns 20, he'll regret the hideous scarring.

She explained to **hype** that even if the law permitted her to tattoo children as young as 12, she would not do so.

#### The Tattoo-less Tattoo Artist

Su, unlike most tattooists, refuses to get a tattoo. Su proclaims that she'd rather perfect art on paper.

"I wanted to get one when I was younger, but I thought, Uncle Richard never got one, neither did my grandfather. I'm not going to break the tradition that only brought good things to our line of work," Su explains.

For this feisty tattooist, with "consciousness and perfection" comes morals and obligations and with her passion for tattooing, headstrong determination and modesty, she seems all set to leave her mark in the testosterone-filled industry.

# THE SCENE BEHIND THE SCRIBBLES

DENISE TAN plunges head first into the thick aerosol fumes surrounding Singapore's 'graf' artists and reveals in the popularity this deviant art is rapidly gaining.

Pristine Singapore is hardly the place for a growing graffiti scene. I mean, come on, our walls are clean, our alleyways are merely spotted with measly paint splatters and our trains are vandalised by an onslaught of expensive advertisements. Yet what was once associated with inner city delinquents and drugged out hip-hopers from the United States is now a recognised facet of art even encouraged by the Singaporean government.

#### Big Man says YES!

Who would have thought that straight-laced Singapore would encourage such radical ideals, not to mention messy, façade-defacing spray paint?

It does seem a little bit of a conundrum that a country known for its unwavering stand on vandalism (remember the Michael Fay saga) has a thriving street art scene.

Scepticism aside, the deviant art form is now embraced by the ever-eager government which has gone out of its way to show support for this art form with the installment of the Singapore Graffiti Artist Bench, a graffiti art organisation endorsed by the National Youth Council that was started in late 2006 to give creative arts – graffiti in particular – a much needed boost.

#### Street Art, Street Wear, Everywhere

But wait! It's not just the government who is embracing graffiti. Even fashion designers are taking on graffiti-themed motifs. Granted, street fashion has always been popular with youths but who would have thought bags splashed with paint would be hankered after with such zeal?

Designed in Singapore (DIS), an initiative started in May 2007 by a group of local designers, provides a hub for local artists and designers to consolidate marketable designs for commercial sale. One of the four founding members and product designer of the company, Benson Lee, says that DIS is a platform to "initialise local art into the fashion industry".

The DIS boutique at Mohammed Sultan Road is still taking baby steps, recruiting and collaborating with few homegrown designers such as The Killer Gerbil. The boutique also carries customised sneakers, accessories and furniture (yes, furniture) some of which are designed by the house artists.

#### Artists on the Move

Nudging graffiti further into commercialism are companies like Singtel and Nokia who pepper their advertising campaigns with graffiti in hopes of appealing to the growing market of youths.

Graf artist, hailed as Zero, 28, was commissioned to design and spray paint murals for Nokia and customise a van for Singtel. The van and mobile store is Singtel's RedWheels and was the centre of attraction at the RedWheels Roadshow at Cineleisure during the June school holiday this year.

Does he feel like he's compromising his art for money? "Art is timeless, the way it's communicated

is not important. As long as someone remembers seeing my art, I'm happy," he says. Zero is just glad his day job doesn't need him to "haul himself out of bed at the crack of dawn".

#### Master Painter

Synonymous with the local graffiti scene in Singapore is 27-year-old Luthfi Mustafah, a graffiti artist extraordinaire better known as "The Killer Gerbil".

Wielding his \$8 spray can, Luthfi believes in using everything as a canvas and spreading street art by utilising different media and surfaces. Luthfi's killer resume extends to painting murals for local creative marketing firm, Back Alley, conducting graffiti workshop classes and collaborating with labels such as Sole Obsession to produce limited edition merchandise that are sold on his website.

You'll find his signature on lamp poles in Orchard Road and his artwork displayed in exhibitions all over

the world (Germany, Italy, the USA). But one more honourable mention, this highly sought-after artist even had the opportunity to paint the facade of the Singapore Art Museum last year.

Secondary schools such as Ping Yi Secondary School and Bukit View Secondary School have even paid him to impart valuable lessons on graffiti as an art form and how it differs from vandalism.

Like Zero, Luthfi believes that the support and enthusiasm from the public and especially the government have shown works for a "win-win situation where the government can curb major vandalism and artists can still spread their art forms".

And just when you scoff at his readiness to churn out merchandise and collaborate with the government, Luthfi springs right up to defend himself. "No one can make money just by painting so you have to move on. At the end of the day, it's all about putting the food on the table and nothing beats doing what you love and getting paid for it," he said.

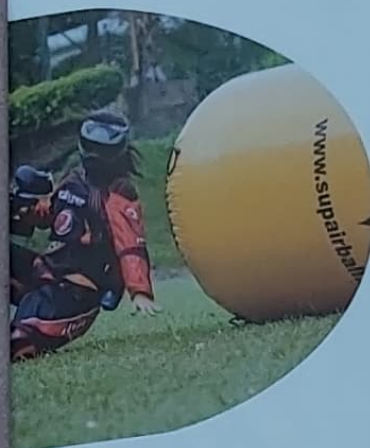
#### From the Ghetto to the Museum

Of course, some in our society are still affronted by the liberty granted to what, according to someone going by the pseudo name of Errol Goodenough, is "trigger-happy defiance of the law". Mr Goodenough was indignant when he wrote to The Straits Times' Forum page on Jun 5. In his letter, he expressed his displeasure at having "officially-sanctioned graffiti" at street festivals.

But contempt aside, graffiti is no longer frowned upon and is an art form in its own right. Spray-painted murals are framed and hung decorously on the walls of schools and museums. Even whole sections of art festivals are dedicated to graffiti – just look at the Singapore Arts Festival 2007 (what horror for Mr Goodenough) and you know society's take on graffiti is changing.

Fortunately or unfortunately, graffiti artists have shed their image as outlaws and are embraced by the Singaporean government, designers and corporations as artists with more than a little creative licence.

For more information about The Killer Gerbil, please visit [www.thekillergerbil.com](http://www.thekillergerbil.com)



Photos courtesy of Desmond Foo

## Ready, Aim... Paint!

Paintball shooting is about losing an eye and aimlessly shooting jets of paint at masked people who run around like lab rats... not. ADELINE YEO debunks myths about the new game on the block.

Technically speaking, paintball isn't an all-new sport in Singapore, but with the birth of the Red Sevens in 2006, Singapore's one and only competitive paintball team, paintball could potentially be one of the hottest shooting games around. Who plays Counter-Strike nowadays, anyways?

The Red Sevens has taken part in several intra-regional competitions this year and clinched 11th place in the third division of the **Malaysian Paintball Official Circuit 2007** that took place on Apr 28. The team takes part in at least three tournaments every other month, usually in neighbouring countries like Malaysia. This means they are always on the search for more teammates.

But before you decide if paintball's your sport, Ben Seow, 29, the leader of the Red Sevens, shares some basic advice for recreational and competitive paintball. "Both are different in nature: recreational does not allow you to develop your game in terms of techniques and strategies. Competitive paintball is very much tournament driven as there are fixtures, rankings, point systems and has a platform for growth."

Competitive paintball (also known as speedball), is what the Red Sevens specialises in and interested paintballers can join them for their practice sessions in Malaysia.

Recreational paintball (also known as scenario paintball), on the other hand, can be picked up as a

sport or just a one-off leisure activity with a bunch of your buddies. Ben advises beginners keen on competitive paintball to "begin playing scenario paintball and progress to competitive paintball once they have learnt fundamentals such as marker handling and safety regulations".

Playing recreational paintball in Singapore costs about \$60 a person, with about 1,000 paintballs worth of "ammunition" for a six-person team. But once you think you've got what it takes to go onto the next level, you can play the sport competitively, which is also more economical.

To keep up with their tournaments, the Red Sevens makes regular trips to Malaysia as speedball fields are not available in Singapore. The cost of each trip ranges from \$50 to \$80, but the team shoots thousands of paintballs while they are there.

So what are you waiting for? Load your gun with ammo, and get down and dirty for some good paintballing action!

Scenario paintball can be found at T.A.G Paintball in Orchard Country Club ([www.paintball.com.sg](http://www.paintball.com.sg)) or Crossfire@Singapore Discovery Centre ([www.crossfire.com.sg](http://www.crossfire.com.sg)).

Parties interested in joining the Red Sevens can contact Ben at [info@redsevenspintball.com](mailto:info@redsevenspintball.com) or visit the website at [www.redsevenspintball.com](http://www.redsevenspintball.com).

# The BLING BLING Ride

Photos by Stephanie Goh

While most of us can only dream of driving downtown in our parent's car, STEPHANIE GWEE meets the new generation of rich men's sons whose bling aren't flashy jewellery, but cars that may cost in excess of half a million dollars.



For the past five minutes 19-year-old Michael Lim, a National University of Singapore undergraduate, has been absentmindedly licking his thumb and rubbing it against the glistening metal, unaware that he has been meticulously polishing the iconic wheel logo of his \$320,000 Mercedes SLK 55.

"I don't mean to sound arrogant, but it's a fantastic feeling to know that people are admiring your car when you drive it around school. Most of the drivers I meet on the roads are shocked when they realise that it's a young punk driving the expensive car, and not your typical young executive," says Michael.

"It also gives me a sense of pride when my friends request to ride in my car," he adds.

At the BMW Performance Motors Centre, a spokesperson who declined to be named, said, "Many customers come in and request to test drive our expensive sports cars, as they want to buy one for their children. It is no longer the parents making the buying decisions, it is their children," he said. Lest you think people like Michael are rarer than uncooked steak, he also estimates that about two families buy such cars for their children every day.

## Daddy's Little Boy

Despite the large dent their children's demands might inflict on their savings account, most of these parents are willing to entertain the whims of their children.

Michael's father, Mr David Lim says, "I don't mind buying expensive cars for my son if it makes him happy. In a way, I think it boosts his self-esteem when he gets the admiration from others around him."

Mr Lim adds that he bought the car for Michael's 18th birthday, before he had even got his driver's licence, as Michael had agreed to pursue his university education in exchange for the car.

## It's A Rich Man's World...or not

The influx of youths driving these fast cars has raised concerns that they might result in an increase in the number of driving accidents in Singapore, since these drivers are relatively inexperienced and might not be able to handle these fast cars.

According to the Singapore Police Force website, 9,896 Singaporeans have been killed and injured in road accidents in 2006, almost an 18 percent increase from 8,399 in the previous year.

The readiness to purchase expensive cars for teens has also received criticisms from youths as most believe that such indulgence would spoil them.

"It's nauseating to see teenagers flaunting their cars, as they are belittling people who can't afford them. This way of showing off is like waving stacks

of money in someone's face!" says Charlene Tan, 18. Adds the Temasek Polytechnic student, "I've also seen students driving convertibles with the top down in school when the weather is blisteringly hot. It is so obvious that they want people to notice them driving it."

However, some parents dismiss such criticisms, and say that the practice of buying branded cars can accelerate their children's driving force (excuse the pun) to excel in school.

"I don't believe that giving him such cars at such a young age would cause him to be materialistic and arrogant when he grows up. In fact, I think it is good that he has a penchant for expensive cars, as it will motivate him to work harder later on in life to finance his expenditures," says Mr Lim.

But Focus on the Family's youth programme's manager, Ms Ruth Kan, begs to differ.

"For some youths, the fact that they are able to obtain these cars so easily may cause them to take the cars for granted. They might think that such items are easily obtainable, and think that they do not need to work hard to get them," she says.

"Others may feel that they can easily rely on their parents to buy the cars for them so, they don't see a need to work hard in life, as their parents will always be there to finance their wants," she adds.

Mr Lim confesses that peer pressure and not losing face also motivated him to purchase the car for his son.

"If all of my friends' children own expensive sports cars, it would be very embarrassing if Michael does not own one also," he says.

Nicholas Foo, 20, also craved for this sense of social status and prestige when he convinced his father to buy him his \$498,800 BMW M6.

"My dad knew that I wanted the M6 really badly, as I made it a point to keep talking about it, and I had purposely left pictures of the car all over the house. So he decided to buy the car for me after three months," says Nicholas.

Adding in mock seriousness, Nicholas admits that the car is a natural "chick-magnet", and that most of the girls he dated were more impressed with his convertible than his personality and sense of humour.

"I felt neglected when they swoon over the car and not over me!" he quipped.

But despite holding onto the steering wheel of a \$500,000 speed machine, some of these rich men's sons claim that they remain unfazed by the prestige and glamour of their car.

Jonathan Tay, 20, a student of Ngee Ann Polytechnic and the owner of a \$450,000 BMW e46, says, "I don't feel any different when I am driving my BMW, as I get used to it after a while. I'm quite used to having people stare at me when I'm driving, and I have learnt to just ignore them."

"Brand is nothing but perception, and I don't really care about the brand of car that I drive."

## Licence for trouble

Not everyone can take the backseat when schoolmates drive flashy cars. So they are sometimes vandalised.

"There was once when I left my convertible in school, and it was filled with drink cans and food wrappers when I returned to it," recounts Michael.

Nicholas is not spared either. "My car always gets scratched and vandalised when I park in school. I often get people carving vulgarities and drawing cartoon figures on the sides of my car," he says.

"After a while, driving the car is not so exciting anymore, and people are not so impressed by it," he adds.

Perhaps what it boils down to is that while you can put a price on a car – even if it's a whopping half a million dollars – if there's one thing that can't be bought, it is genuine peer admiration and respect.



Photo by Goh Ying Min



While many people stereotype riders as reckless, rowdy troublemakers, GERMAINE LIM discovers two bike groups that put riders in a more positive light.

"When I raise my left hand, everyone is to be in a single file, otherwise, please spread out into a staggered formation," instructs Hassan Bin Saidi, 28, leader of leisure bike group, Devilika. This is how a bike group leader teaches the rest of his riders to obey the group's rules so as to avoid accidents on the road.

Channel NewsAsia reported, "of the 4,300 accidents involving motorcyclists last year (2006), 740 or 17 percent involved motorcyclists who were newly qualified and still on the 12-month probation period after obtaining their licences". But Singapore bike groups, Devilika and Bulan Sabit, are out to change the public's negative perception of riders.

Hassan and three other founding members started Devilika last December to educate newly qualified riders about road safety and to organise social activities for riders as well as non-riders. Today, Devilika has 25 members and has formed an alliance with a six-men bike group, Bulan Sabit. Their members range from the ages of 17 to 35 and what might seem surprising to many is that the bike groups also attract non-riders "to let non-riders who have not earned their licenses get a feel of travelling on a bike," says 25-year-old Masyudi, leader of Bulan Sabit.

Every Friday night, members will meet at HarbourFront where they travel to favourite spots like Changi Village, Jalan Kayu and sometimes even as far as Johor Bahru to treat themselves to sumptuous suppers. Every three months, regional trips are organised to places like Kukup or Malacca in Malaysia. In fact, members of Devilika and Bulan Sabit are currently in the process of arranging a trip by coach to Genting this National Day.

But before the fun can begin, safety and road discipline are top priorities for both groups. Masyudi, 25, leader of Bulan Sabit, shares Hassan's view that young riders have to be disciplined to be a rider. "Although most of our members ride big bikes which are 400cc

and above, we still keep within the speed limit so that we can brake in time should anything happen," said Masyudi. Riders must also ensure their "babies" are in tip-top condition as "you'll never know when they will break down," says Masyudi.

Dressed in signature white polo t-shirts when travelling together, Devilika ensures uniformity in road formations and directions with a series of hand gestures that the groups' leaders will use. "We apply the skills and hand gestures we learnt from our riding schools when we're on the move in a big group," says Hassan.

Both groups are even partnering to turn this leisure activity into a business venture that will also benefit society.

Jesper Ng Xiang Hao, 19, who is in charge of promotions and communications in Devilika, says that they are currently getting into contact with old folks' homes and churches to volunteer their services by "bringing the elderly to the zoo or, perhaps, bringing them to join in [our] bimonthly picnic events."

While outreach activities are still in the planning, both groups are developing their business's mission and goals. The group has previously worked as escorts for wedding ceremonies and hopes to add this as one of the services it offers. "At the same time we have fun riding, we're also earning money for the group," says Hassan.

With at least three members joining every month, Devilika hopes to clinch more deals from motorcycle companies that will come in useful when the group expands Devilika as a motorcycle accessories shop. In the meantime, both groups are still looking for more members to expand their biking family.

For more information on the groups, visit their website at <http://bulanOsabit.multiply.com> (Bulan Sabit) or <http://devilika.110mb.com> (Devilika). You can also email them at [BS.sabit@hotmail.com](mailto:BS.sabit@hotmail.com) (Bulan Sabit) or [hr\\_devilika@yahoo.com.sg](mailto:hr_devilika@yahoo.com.sg) (Devilika).

# Rare Countryside Luxuries

Space is a luxury most Singaporeans only dream of or experience while holidaying in less populated parts of the globe. On our tiny island hidden and civilised country spots are waiting to be explored. GERMAINE LIM takes a two-day tour of the rural charm of Singapore.

67 Sungai Tengah Rd, Tel: 6219 9897. Shuttle services from Choa Chu Kang Bus Interchange are available from 10am-10.30pm every night.

After an intense week of school or work, you can unwind at Austwine Restaurant located off Choa Chu Kang Central. As its name suggests, the restaurant is the perfect place to enjoy some of the best selections of red and white wine from Southern and Western Australia.

For just \$23, you can get a bottle of Lucky Country Merlot, a red wine from Victoria, which is usually sold at \$60 as a premium wine at many places.

The indoor dining area is serene with its dimmed lighting and English contemporary pop music playing softly in the background. The generous

space between the dark teak rectangular tables, makes it easy to shed your inhibitions. The alfresco

section accommodates up to 70 people and gives diners a view of the buzzing city. The scenic view from the hilltop makes for the perfect ambience whether you're part of a large group or are having a quiet lunch or dinner with a favourite person.

The manager, Mr Ang Beng Keat, recommended **hype** two of Austwine's signature dishes, namely the Austwine's Pork Knuckle (\$28) and Emmentaler Cheese Sausage (\$9) to go with Wills Domain 2003 Cabernet Sauvignon (\$55). The Cheese Sausage, served with mashed potato and salad on the side, was tender and juicy and the cheese added a lovely, creamy touch. A sip of the medium-bodied red wine I chose left a bittersweet after-taste that complemented the dish perfectly. The pork knuckle was served with an array of vegetables and homemade sauce on the side. The generous portion deserves full marks for its crispy and slightly salted skin and its tender and juicy meat.

Although getting to Austwine can prove challenging, it is not just a place to eat but an experience worth trying at least once. Do note that you will be charged a corkage of \$5 per bottle that you bring in.

Free shuttle services from Choa Chu Kang Bus Interchange are available from 10am to 10.30pm every day.



51 Fairways Drive, Tel: 6466 5123

While some Singaporeans go to Johor to ride horses, you really don't need to go as far, because the Bukit Timah Saddle Club (BTSC) is located off Eng Neo Drive.

Supported by the Singapore Turf Club, BTSC was established in 1951 to ensure that the elitist sport is a little more accessible.

The original riding arena, named "Heaven", is where the popular beginner's course is run and offers those who have never experienced horse riding a chance to try it out.

Although BTSC only serves members, a one-month trial membership at \$460 (excluding GST) is available, which entitles you up to four group lessons with the guide of a professional trainer. Each lesson is three hours.

# The Rainforest at Green Fairways

The Rainforest at Green Fairways offers you a relaxing atmosphere to soothe your tired body. As it only provides a drinks list, you can first dine at the Chinese restaurant next to the cafe, called 60s Live Seafood, which is affiliated to The Rainforest.

Located next to the golf range, the place was packed with golfers, as can be expected. Such a natural setting can rare in Singapore and it is a wonder indeed that so many foreigners know of this little piece of heaven. Mr Kumar, operations manager of The Rainforest, said that many customers love the countryside feel and have become regulars.

Despite the well-heeled clientele, drinks are reasonably priced, with mocktails priced from \$6 and cocktails starting from \$10.

A must-try is the Rainforest Special, which comes

as either an alcoholic cocktail, or a mocktail (non-alcoholic). The Rainforest's bar is well-stocked with syrups, even the rare guava syrup, and juices of your choice. Be creative and customise your own drink.

Tequila Sunrise (\$10.50) at The Rainforest is one of the best drinks to have there. The fruity sensation has quite a distinctive flavour that sets this order apart from others.

With a drink in hand, you can laze back on the couches and rest your drink on the low-lying long tables that gives a very laid back feel.

The dim lighting makes dining both sensual and peaceful – except when soccer fever hits. It may spoil the tranquillity of the place, but the large projection TV and spacious couches undoubtedly make the cafe an ideal spot to watch live football matches.

The Rainforest, 60 Fairways Drive, Tel: 6469 5050. Opening Hours: 11am - 1am. Sun, Mon and Public Holidays: 10am - 11pm.

# THE TEAR OF FATE

Once deemed the executioner to a sportsman's career, a unique but serious type of knee injury is beginning to strike unsuspecting youths, MOHD SHAM reports.

If you're an avid sport fan or exercise regularly, you might have heard the term ACL (Anterior Cruciate Ligament) tear. After all, its victims include famous footballers like Michael Owen, Ruud van Nistelrooy and even Singapore striker Indra Sahdan. But what you may not know is that many youths are unknowingly suffering from ACL tears.

Dr Francis Wong, a consultant orthopaedic surgeon at Mount Alvernia Hospital and Mount Elizabeth Medical Centre, said, "For every 10 adults I see in consultation, there will be two to three youths suffering from ACL-related injuries."

Although it's more likely to affect those who engage in rigorous sports, ACL tears can also occur when a person twists his knee when he falls down.

Dr Wong explained, "The knee joint is stabilised by two ligaments in the centre of the knee, namely, the anterior and posterior cruciate ligament. The anterior ligament is the most commonly damaged due to sudden twisting and pivoting movements and acts of acceleration or deceleration that cause it to get torn."

What's worrying though is that most people just take the pain in their stride, without knowing the consequences of doing so. Although he doesn't have figures, he said, "I can reveal there's a substantial amount of youth-related ACL cases and they aren't even aware of it."

Mr Eugene Keng, 35, a senior physiotherapist at Mount Alvernia Hospital agrees with Dr Wong and said that few youths actually seek treatment for knee pains.



Former national gymnast Hoe Pei Shan, 19, is well acquainted with ACL tears after having torn hers twice.

She recalled an accident which occurred in 2003. "I was doing a double twisting layout on the floor and I was still in a twisting motion when I landed more towards my right and my feet were on the floor. I heard a crack sound coming from my right knee and my knee was very shaky and unstable."

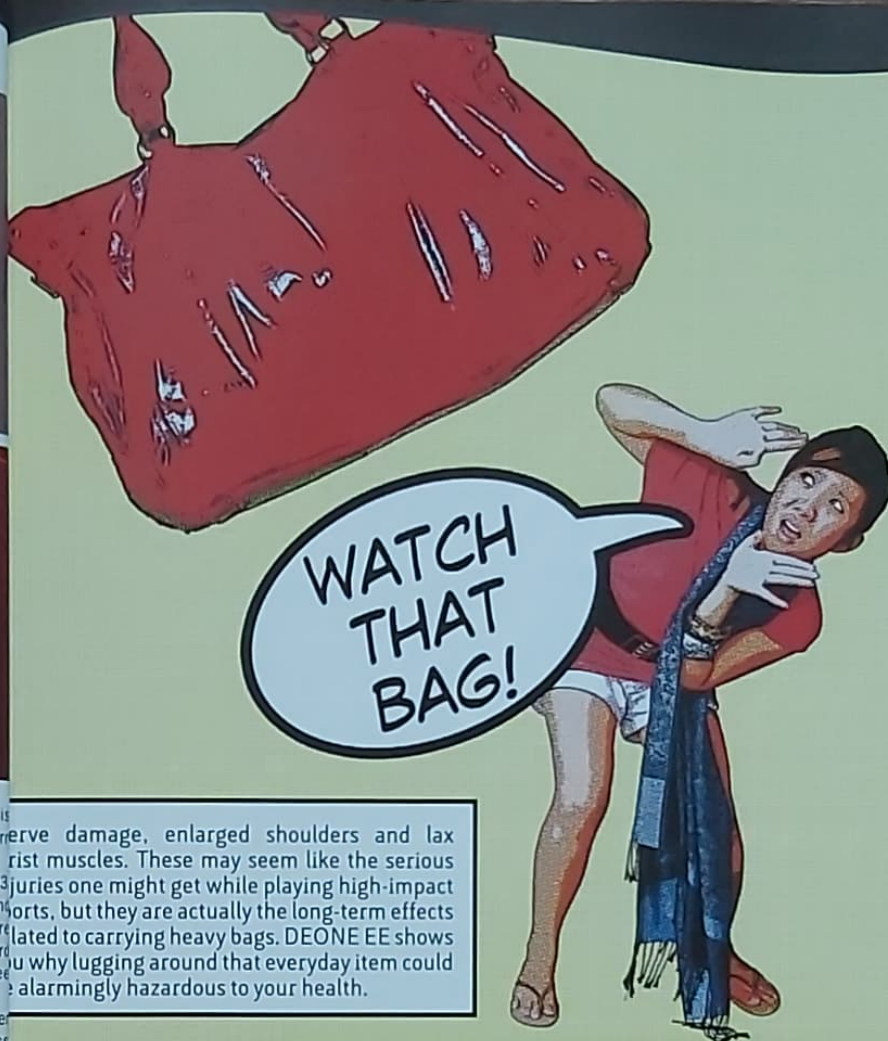
Pei Shan had to undergo surgery in December 2003. But she rushed back into gymnastics prematurely, resulting in her knee breaking down again while doing simple gymnastic movements, requiring a second surgery.

## Project Prevention

But before you start to panic and decide to stop exercising altogether (think about the potential weight gain!), it is possible to engage in sports without causing an ACL tear. According to Dr Wong, stretching is critical in order to prevent an ACL or any other muscle tear as it allows the muscles "to handle the rigours of the movements".

It is also important to build strength and endurance in the knees. Such programmes are highly recommended by doctors as increased knee strength reduces the chances of ACL damage.

Dr Wong urges youths with suspected ACL tears to visit orthopaedic specialists immediately for consultation. Otherwise, they could face grave consequences, such as problems with walking and intense pain around the knee joints.



Armed with a laptop, mobile phone, iPod and an array of other digital appliances, you are on the go, go, go and nothing will hold you back.

Nothing, that is, except that 5-kg deadweight strapped across your aching shoulder.

While men have to endure the burden of heavy backpacks and army equipment during National Service, women do not have it light. With fashion trendsetters coaxing the growth of the "big bag" phenomenon, women willingly bear the pain for style.

Dr Serene Ng, 36, a chiropractor from Holistic Chiropractic, who has treated a number of youths with postural problems resulting from carrying heavy bags, shares her expertise with **hype**.

According to Dr Ng, these are the common problems that you might encounter while hauling that bag around:

## The Hunchback of Notre Dame

Though it may seem that carrying a backpack helps to prevent back strain, having the straps slung too low can also cause a series of problems. According to Dr Ng, the uneven distribution of weight from behind causes an "Anterior Head Carriage". This means your chin will poke out because your shoulders and neck are straining forward to carry the weight. In the long run, this habit will cause poor posture and can even make you a "hunchback".

## Bigger Vs Smaller

One thing you might not realise, Dr Ng says, is that carrying your bag on one shoulder can actually strengthen the muscles there much more, as it does when you focus exercises only on one arm. This creates an imbalance in muscular tone on one side

and might lead to one shoulder being permanently larger than the other. Just don't use this as an excuse to get out of going to the gym!

### Stretching It

Having weak shoulders, elbows and wrist joints while carrying heavy bags in your hand can create a traction force. When the sudden jolt is applied to your joints, Dr Ng says it could cause the "feeling you get when someone pulls on your hand too hard and there's an electric shock that runs through your arm".

Furthermore, the traction force strains your arm muscles and can increase the laxity in the ligaments of your joints. For people who had dislocated their shoulders, this can create a wider gap in their joints and might lead to another dislocation.

Dr Ng says that "it is not good to carry heavy bags for a prolonged period of time on one side, especially if you plan on walking for hours along Orchard Road with your bag."

### Stooping down

The extent of force and gravity pulling on your shoulder while you are lugging around a heavy bag can cause your shoulders to droop. This affects your posture and eventually, the way you walk.

Amy Lim, 19, who has carried a laptop to school every day for the past two years, noticed a droop in shoulder height. She says, "I'm always carrying a shoulder bag and stuffing my laptop inside it. I have gotten used to the aches, but only recently have I realised that my left shoulder is now slightly lower than my right shoulder. It makes my body look uneven."

### Be Very Nervous

Who would have thought that simply bending down to carry a heavy load could cause not only a back sprain but nerve damage? If heavy objects are carried on a daily basis, this might lead to an increase of trauma on your spine. This can cause a herniated disk, or slipped

disk, as it is commonly known.

Once the herniated disk begins to compress the nerves in the spine, it can cause a variety of problems like a tingling sensation, pain and numbness. This pressure can also cause sciatica, a lower back and leg pain caused by the compression of the sciatic nerve in the lower back.

Fortunately, with sufficient treatment prescribed by a specialist or chiropractor, most patients recover from the pain and the nerve damage.

### Pile On Another Load

If you already have an existing back problem, the pressure placed on your spine when carrying something heavy will be greater than for a normal person with poor posture. "There would be a larger imbalance in the way the weight is distributed, especially if you are not aware of what you are doing," says Dr Ng. Therefore, it's important to create a habit of constantly realigning your posture to make sure you are carrying the weight the correct way.

### Taking the Ache Away

Here are some ways to relieve your muscle aches:

- Use a hot pack to relieve muscular tension.
- Stretch your muscles to boost the circulation around the affected area.
- Shrug your shoulders occasionally if you have been carrying the bag for a long time to prevent numbness from setting in.
- Apply a medicated plaster on the shoulder you are carrying the bag with.
- Get someone to give you a well-deserved massage to drive the pain away!

It's also important to strengthen and continuously tone the muscles to prevent degeneration of the muscle into fat.

Dr Ng says, "If you have any aches and pains that re-occur, take it as a signal that something might be wrong, and seek medical opinion immediately."

## FIVE SIMPLE STEPS TO REDUCE THE WEIGHT OF YOUR BAG

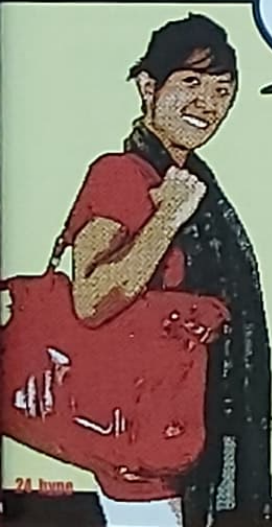
1. Choose a bag with wide and flat comfortable straps. "The wider the strap, the lighter the bag will feel," advises Dr Ng.
2. Haversacks or backpacks are best, but sling bags carried across and close to your body are also supportive.
3. Invest in a smaller or lighter laptop to lessen the strain when you carry it with you.
4. Balance, balance, balance! Always make sure the weight of what you are carrying is evenly distributed over your body. Shift the weight on alternate shoulders from time to time.
5. Don't choose bags that have very heavy embellishments.

Dr Serene Ng specialises in solving mechanical problems of the body's muscular and skeletal systems, and also dispenses advice on lifestyle and ergonomic solutions.

# Fashion Myths Uncovered

Do you dismiss trapeze dresses because you think they might make your derrière look big? **STEPHANIE GWEE** solves this and other problems facing fashionistas with the help of image consultant **Audrey Quek** and freelance stylist **Charlene Sim**.

■ **STYLIST** Antoinette Patterson **COORDINATION** Eva Nastassia **PHOTOGRAPHY** Stephanie Goh  
**DESIGNER** Nur Hafizah A Hamid **MODELS** Amelle Soon & Kenneth Lim



AMELIA ) Sweater Top \$68, Headband \$9, Bangles \$13 from Forever 21. Skirt, Model's own.  
KENNETH ) White Smart Shirt \$99, Linen Pants \$108 from River Island



## White on White is Boring

"It is definitely not true that you can't wear white pants with a white top. It just takes someone who's very careful not to stain it!" says Audrey.

"The look is so fresh and romantic, especially for girls when they match a flowing white skirt with a white top, and accessorise with chunky bracelets and chokers. This look makes you look so fresh-faced and sweet," says Charlene.

## Trapeze Dresses: = Huge Butt



AMELIA ) Trapeze Dress \$68 from Forever 21  
KENNETH ) Men's Cotton Shirt \$45, Jeans \$123 from River Island

Marc Jacobs has it. Topshop has copied it. Zara has plastered it all over their shop-front. The trapeze dress is an item to covet for many fashion-forward women, and contrary to popular belief, the flared skirt doesn't necessarily add bulk to bottom-heavy women.

"The right way to wear a trapeze dress is to have its hemline extended at least two inches above your knees, so that it will not make your butt look enormous," says Charlene.

## Black Matches Everything



AMELIA | Dress \$89 from River Island. Belt \$28 from Forever 21. Shades, Model's own  
KENNETH | Smart Shirt \$89, Belt \$59 from River Island. Pants, Model's own

"Black is terrible, positively terrible, with colours like brown and navy blue. Not only does it make the entire outfit look dull, the colour combination is not easy on the eyes. It is much better if you stick to a completely black ensemble, or use bright colours to add variety to the colour," says Charlene.

"For example, for the girls, you can use a red or white belt to cinch a black dress at the waist, to break the monotony of the outfit. The guys can also throw on a different coloured jacket or wear a bright coloured T-shirt under a black button-down shirt," she adds.



Woven Shirt \$38, Black Shorts \$58 from Forever 21

## Only Tall Women Go Shortie

Runway pieces hit a new high this season with high-waisted shorts. When worn correctly, these shorts can help to elongate your legs and create a slim silhouette, especially when paired with a pair of killer heels.

"You can either pair your shorts with a high-heeled top, or make sure that the top has vertical stripes on it, to elongate the body and ensure that your body does not look disproportionate," says Charlene.

AMELIA ) Bangles \$13 from Forever 21, Cream Sequin Top \$106, Skinny Jeans \$125, from River Island  
KENNETH ) Men's Cotton Shirt \$40, Vest \$106 from River Island, Pants, Model's own



"First, it was Avril Lavigne, then it was Green Day and all the thousands of other rock bands. They made it cool to jazz up a serious outfit with casual sneakers and limited edition Vans and Nike shoes," says Charlene.

For the boys, Charlene suggests pairing a formal, fitted black vest with an edgy-looking T-shirt to lend street chic appeal to a smart casual ensemble.

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# Street Heat

Even MediaCorp artiste Ben Yeo has been sold on and can be spotted using street label. A Bathing Ape. JAIME LIM gets into the street vibe and finds out what the hype's about.

Once designed for comfort to fit skateboarders and basketballers in the hip-hop scene, street labels like Neighborhood, Visvim, Comme Des Garçon, and GOODENOUGH, now design their street wear clothes to keep up with trends. In other words, you won't find street wear players in loose jerseys and baggy pants anymore. Instead, you'll see them in fitted T-shirts and low-rise skinny jeans.

While the rising status of street labels can be attributed to features in magazines and street fashion websites like streething.com and hypebeast.com, street wear has somewhat lost its underground roots. Moving away from its origins in the United States' hip-hop scene, street fashion has become more accessible with more street fashion specialty shops. The increasing demand is also supported by the sprouting of street labels shops, namely in Far East Plaza and the hip strip at Haji Lane. Local initiatives like sneaker shop Left Foot and Revoltage have also expanded their operations to Cineleisure.

While the average street label T-shirt costs \$100 and jeans and shoes, up to \$300 and \$350 respectively, what justifies the price is the exclusivity of each item as there are limited designs printed for each item.

But street fashion also boils down to your own individuality. Danny Tan, 31, store operations manager at local street label store, Surrender, says, "No matter how many people buy, it's very individual. Ultimately, it's how you carry it off. There may be 10 people wearing the same thing but there's always a different

vibe."

Al Azhar, 22, an old hand at the street wear game, shares his expertise about street fashion. He advises buyers to look for details, namely the garment's cutting, fit, material and design. Also, he says to expect to pay more for limited edition items and not to just follow brands blindly.

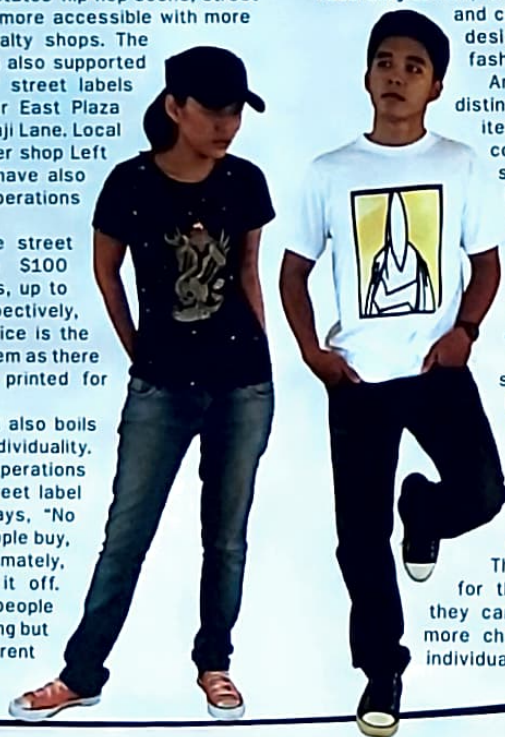
Al swears by Futura Laboratories T-shirts because they're personally designed by illustrious graffiti artist, Lenny McGurr (also known as "Futura 2000") and shoes from Visvim because they use quality materials such as deer skin.

According to him, it's ultimately the hard work and creative talent behind each design that makes street fashion money well spent.

And while it's hard to distinguish a genuine street wear item from the mass of over-commercialised products, Al shares how to spot a shady item from the real deal. According to him, the most obvious tell-tale signs are the price and quality. "Any deal too good to be true is probably fake," Al advised.

With street fashion seemingly destined to become even more prominent in the fashion scene, Al predicts, "I foresee more collaborations between the labels and the different styles".

This is indeed good news for the players out there as they can look forward to having more choices and retaining their individuality with more designs.



# Slap-Happy Singapore

Photo photos by Avie Merrado

Schoolyard bullying crosses into cyberspace when the acts are filmed and broadcasted on YouTube. FARIDAH SAAD examines the Singaporean version of the Happy-Slapping fad that has hit our shores.



"They want to share that experience because they find it entertaining."

As slaps rained on her face, she was stripped of her uniform, as a camera phone documented her hurt and humiliation. Her half a dozen attackers were her schoolmates, who brazenly and without remorse, threatened to upload the five-minute video on YouTube if she didn't pay them. Frightened, she reported the incident to the police, only to discover that the video had already been uploaded and dubbed the "Singapore Girls". This incident which took place in April is the latest local incidence of the fad known as "Happy-Slapping".

#### Origins

South London was where it was said to have begun. Happy-Slapping was the latest prank trend in 2004. Teenagers would go up to unsuspecting victims in public places and "slap" (in some cases, full-body assault) them before running off. An accomplice would film the "slap" act and before long the video would be free for all to view and rate its popularity on YouTube. As youths sought to capture the funniest "slap", Happy-Slapping progressed to violent beatings and even sexual assaults.

As the fad moved across Europe, France passed a law on Mar 3 to curb Happy-Slapping. It became criminal for anyone, except professional journalists, to film and broadcast real-world violence. Out of 20 Happy-Slapping cases that occurred in Nice, France, one was of a teenage girl who was photographed while she was gang-raped. The photographs were circulated around her school through phone messaging. Although it was not stated in the media what punishment the boys received from the court, under the new law, the boys could be looking at up to five years in prison and face up to \$5100,000 in fines.

#### Slap-Happy?

Here in Singapore, there have been four other local Happy-Slapping incidents reported since the "Singapore Girls" incident.

All these cases occurred among secondary school students, the targets were known to their attackers and the physical assaults were filmed and broadcasted online. Which is to say, Happy-Slapping in Singapore is a new but far more serious twist to classic school-bullying.

According to Ms Kit Phay Ling, a Psychological Studies lecturer at the National Institute of Education (NIE), publishing the clip online is more damaging in that it "encourages others to [bully] the person as well, because you are broadcasting to the world that this person is easy to bully".

Agreeing, Ms Serene Goh, the editor for the Youthlink, IN and Little Red Dot sections in *The Straits Times* was quoted saying in a blog, "Happy-Slapping involves violence which itself is bad, but what makes it even more grievous is when you post it online and everyone knows."

It is debatable if it really is common knowledge, however. Despite the media hype, the proximity and social indignation surrounding the "Singapore Girls"

incident, **hype** found that 56 percent of the 88 youths it polled have "never heard of Happy-Slapping". The youths polled are aged between 13 and 18.

#### Whose Fault Is It Anyway?

Classic school-bullying has always existed, but in the 21st century the blame for Happy-Slapping is pinned on media and the Internet.

For one, the media scene has changed. Television shows have "normalised violence such that it is cheapened", says Ms Sandra Tee, a Learning Support Specialist from the Coalition Against Bullying For Children and Youths (CABCY) organisation.

She adds, "So much violence happens on the Internet and TV that [youths] are over-exposed to [it]. It creates not just modelling of the behaviour but a loss of empathy for others."

While many might point the finger for such violence at the Internet, Dr Brian Lee, a lecturer at the School of Film & Media Studies, Ngee Ann Polytechnic, believes that it is not the sole "bad guy".

Ms Tee agrees that youths don't have to be passively led to do by what they are exposed to online, even as they appear to constantly seek alternative recreational activities.

"You can look at the Internet and not do it. The choice made is made for [a] social reason – peer pressure," adds Ms Tee.

Peer pressure often determines the choices of youths, especially the less self-assured ones. "Teens who don't feel good about themselves, and want to fit in the 'in' crowd might commit to doing things so that they can be accepted by their peers," says Ms Kit.

It may not be coincidence that the Happy-Slapping cases in Singapore involved group acts of three to five youths from the same cliques. Ms Tee believes that because the acts were conducted in groups, the individuals in the group were unable to view Happy-Slapping as intended "aggression" and they feared that objecting would "offend their friends".

When the youths view their peers carrying out aggressive acts and uploading the videos online, "they want to share in that experience, because they find it entertaining," says Dr Lee. He adds, "It becomes part of the popular culture. Young people sometimes don't think about the consequences... they don't think that it is illegal or unethical."

#### Youth Pop Culture

Does this signal that something has gone horribly wrong with the moral standards of local youths?

After all, you only have to ask the man in the street what he thinks of teenage violence or assault and he'll probably say "disturbing" or "criminal". The choices "funny" or "entertaining" are unlikely to be his answer.

According to Dr Lee, it just takes "one [youth] to come across a Happy-Slapping clip on the Internet... look at it and think it's quite funny... When he informs his friends, peer pressure kicks in and they will be conditioned to think it's very funny."

Ms Tee says that this is also a problem with the

Singapore culture.

"We don't assert ourselves by telling [others] what we like or what we don't like... to a certain extent, the victim might not see [himself] as a victim," she adds.

Which is hardly a defence for the perpetrators in the "Singapore Girls" case who obviously sought pleasure from torturing their victim, showing the sadistic bent of some Singaporean youths. They laughed as they stripped their victim, even deciding among themselves the different camera angles to record her from.

Uploading the videos on YouTube was not an act of revenge, but rather one to show that they are powerful enough to cause such damage.

In reference to this, Ms Tee adds that by uploading the videos the perpetrators "have willingly provided proof of act that can be traced back to them". Dr Lee terms this the "catch-me-if-you-can" mentality.

#### Letting It Slide... or not

Five cases may not seem a lot or enough to sound the panic alarm, but if the numbers increase, it could pose a potential threat to the welfare of our society. Will the line between a "slap" and actually causing someone to die from the assault be so blurred people don't know when they have crossed the line?

In December 2005, in London, a gang of youths were convicted of manslaughter after severely beating a bar manager until he died and filming it.

"Youths might not know that it is wrong if nobody tells them. If it becomes a socially accepted form of behaviour, it will become a big issue for children with learning disabilities or disabled children who cannot

defend themselves," says Ms Tee.

#### Knowledge Is Power

All our experts agree on education being the best way to curb Happy-Slapping before it becomes a dangerous trend. Still, it is not only the teachers who are responsible for educating youths about Civics and Moral Education. Families should play a part as well.

If you have younger siblings, teaching them the difference between a harmless prank among friends and bullying is a start.

Youths should also learn how to assert themselves and not be afraid of losing their friends, says Ms Tee. Other social skills such as empathy can also be modelled after siblings and parents.

Dr Lee adds that "education on media usage and media responsibility" will help youths to be critical of the information that they consume and put online.

Currently, there are no laws within the Penal Code that deal a separate sentence than that of assault or rape for Happy-Slapping cases.

The Happy-Slapping perpetrators reported here so far are below 18, which means that they will be judged in court as minors and only face the possibility of being sent to a home, in extreme cases. It is time, perhaps, to think about a new law on Happy-Slapping.

That said, it is probably better to deal with the problem at the source, that is to bring into the open the harm of Happy-Slapping to youths.

Organisations such as CABCY and the Singapore Children's Society (SCS) do this by conducting talks in schools about bullying, including what it means to be a cyber-bully.

For more information about the various organisations mentioned, please visit Singapore Children's Society (SCS) at [www.childrensociety.org.sg](http://www.childrensociety.org.sg) or Coalition against bullying for children and youths (CABCY) at [www.hrted.com.sg/CABCY](http://www.hrted.com.sg/CABCY)

Posed photos by Avie Mercado

Posed photos by Stephanie Goh

# Playing Parents

Baby dolls, toy prams and doll houses are toys we'd play with as children. Imagine having your own real-life baby to look after when you are barely out of your teens. RACHEL TAN speaks to two young parents who are determined to make their marriage work.



"I'VE LEARNT FROM BEING AFRAID OF CARRYING BABIES TO CARING FOR THE ONES I CALL MY OWN."



Some teenagers get caught up in the heat of the moment, but when trouble brews and the stork arrives, not many are prepared to say "I do". Yet, there are a rare few who are brave enough to face up to the responsibility of having a child and getting married.

Wong Wei Min, 21, had to face this responsibility when she was 19. After realising that her period had not arrived for months, she headed down to the doctor's, only to receive news that she was five months pregnant.

After informing her boyfriend of two years, Terrence Tan, who was then 20 years old, they decided to inform their parents as soon as they were mentally prepared for it.

Revealing such news to parents is never an easy task. Says Terrence, now 22, "I found it especially hard to break the news to my mom."

Ms Dora Wan, 59, Terrence's mother, recalled her reaction to the news, "I was just dumbfounded and struck with silence. I honestly couldn't think momentarily."

Wei Min's parents, on the other hand, took the news more calmly than Ms Wan. Wei Min says, "My mom's reaction was really sedated as compared to my mom-in-law. She merely asked if I had told Terrence's family yet."

## Balancing Act

Unlike most brides, Wei Min was not able to experience every girl's childhood dream of walking down the

aisle in a radiant white gown. There was no wedding ceremony, no dinner and no honeymoon. In fact, even though they were officially registered in 2005, they could only afford to buy their wedding bands in May this year.

Life has changed drastically for Terrence and Wei Min. Being young parents has made them give up many things that are part of young adults' lives. Watching movies, going for a romantic dinner for two and staying out late with friends are now rare treats. "We haven't had fun in a long time!" Wei Min groans, but with a smile on her face.

Most of their money goes into providing for their little tykes. With a combined income of \$1,400, Terrence and Wei Min's bills and insurance costs take up almost a third of their income. The rest goes into paying for daily expenses such as food and travel, leaving very little to save for their future or to indulge in little luxuries.

"I had to start thinking like a parent. I could no longer spend my money on the things I wanted for myself," says Terrence.

## Life Now

It has been two years since Wei Min found out that she was pregnant. Now the happy couple are married with two daughters, 16-month-old Kristen and three-month-old Kathleen.

"We decided to have Kathleen because we didn't want Kristen to grow up and think she was an

'accident'. We thought that having a younger sister close to her age would make her more comfortable about her parents' young age when she starts to think for herself," Terrence said in a serious, father-like manner.

To describe their life in a paragraph, a typical day at home starts at 5am, when Kathleen wakes up for her first meal for the day. This is followed by the continuous supervision of Kristen and Kathleen throughout the day, as the former is learning how to walk and talk. The latter requires constant attention to pacify her to sleep, feed her and change her diapers. Even with help from family members, Wei Min usually feels worn out by mid-day.

Wei Min says of her growth as a parent and a maturing adult, "I've grown from being afraid of carrying babies to caring for the ones I call my own. Changing diapers, showering them, feeding and all other motherly things you can think of, I can do them all."

As Terrence is serving National Service and will only be out in a year's time and with Wei Min working in the retail sector, money is a challenge and time is not on their side either.

"My parents take care of my two daughters while I am out at work, allowing me to have ease of mind when I'm away," says Wei Min. The paternal and maternal grandparents understand how tiring it can get to look after the little ones and hence take turns to take care of their grandchildren.

## In The Public Eye

According to the Statistics of Marriages and Divorce 2005, though marriages taking place in the under-20 age group account for one fifth of all registered marriages, the young family still feels scrutinised by the public.

Because of this, Terrence and Wei Min do get weird stares when they head out as a family. "Many give bewildered looks to second-guess our ages. Initially it felt weird, but now we're used to it," says Wei Min.

Terrence relates, "In the army, all my platoon mates call me 'Big Daddy' because I am the only one who is married with kids!"

"I tried to hide my pregnancy from my colleagues to keep the gossiping away. Of course, it didn't work," Wei Min recounts.

Despite the disapproving looks from the public, Ms Wan puts it simply, "As a parent, I can only say children make mistakes, but we should never condemn them and instead try to make the best out of each situation. I wouldn't say I approve, but I'm happy I have two beautiful granddaughters."

Clearly, young couples face much criticism and awkward societal responses. And even though the odds might be against them, with courage and determination that comes from family support, it is possible for them to work towards a brighter future and a contented family life.

# Just Married, and Divorced

While some couples are lucky enough to make a success of a shotgun marriage, the reality is that rushing into marriage is not the best start to a relationship. VANESSA NG looks at the local scene of shotgun marriages.

The Oklahoma State University conducted a study in 2001 which showed that young marriages, meaning those who enter marriage before the age of 20, are most likely to end in divorce. However, the US isn't the only place where the number of young marriages is on the rise.

According to the State of Families Singapore website, the number of young marriages resulting in divorces, within the first five years of their marriage have increased from 10 percent in 1990 to 15 percent in 2003.

Mr Leong Wai Mun, a student counsellor at Ngee Ann Polytechnic, said, "Based on studies in US, more than half [of teenage marriages] result in divorce." If this trend continues to climb, it will eventually escalate into a big social problem in Singapore as the sanctity of marriage is being compromised and the values upon which we build our society are put to the test. This could just be the beginning of more complicated relationships, and families, in the future.

One bugging question is why these couples are tying the knot at such a young age. Among all the reasons, one of the more prominent would be that of a shotgun marriage. While getting hitched might seem like the logical ending to an unwanted pregnancy, it's usually not.

## The Other Way Out

Ms May Yang, a volunteer counsellor at Pregnancy Crisis Services states that couples who are ready emotionally and financially are more likely to be young adults in their 20s rather than teenagers.

However, Ms Yang was quick to add that abortion should never be the answer. She said, "Every life is precious. Abortion never justifies why an innocent life should be snuffed out." She suggests that putting the child up for adoption might be a better solution.

"Adoption has got its benefits [and] advantages - I've known of many couples with adopted children and they are jewels in their parents' eyes. Especially in Singapore, where the adoption process is so stringent, the babies would be much loved and cared for by their adoptive parents," Ms Yang said.

That said, Mr Leong also feels that couples caught in such a situation should seek marriage counselling so they can be led to see the various options available to them and make better decisions.

Sanctuary House: 9817 0588  
SOS (Samaritans of Singapore): 1800 221 4444  
Touchline: 1800 377 2252  
The Pregnancy Crisis Service: 6339 9770

# Essential Guide for the Young Soul

MABEL LEE shows you how you can create your own aromatic healing world.

Not every day is a good day, but you can smell your way to good health. Cynthia Ho, an aromatherapist at Belle Workshop in Mid Point Shopping Centre, shares with **hype** the essential oils way to a stress-free week.

## Monday

The party last night was a blast, but now you wake up to find yourself with what appears to be a major hangover.

**Hangover Healer:** Put one drop each of Peppermint, Rosewood and Lavender essential oils onto a cool, wet towel and massage temples with this for about 10 minutes. The oils contain special properties that will help ease your headache, fatigue and queasiness.

## Wednesday

"It's not you, it's me." So you never thought you'd actually be a victim of his unbelievably clichéd break-up line. But it has happened, and you can't deny it.

**Heartbreak Balm:** Apart from furiously ripping up your ex-partner's pictures, you can blend 15 drops of Sandalwood, nine drops of Lavender and four drops of Rose oil in a 300 ml bottle. Fill the rest of the bottle with carrier oil and add 10 drops of this mixture into the warm water of your bath.

## Tuesday

The reality of school and its murderous assignments is beginning to sink in again. As your deadlines draw dangerously near, the thought of it quickens your heartbeat. You're so pre-occupied with stress you simply can't get anything done.

**Stress Stomper:** Blend six drops of Clary Sage with two drops of Lemon and Lavender essential oils in a cobalt glass bottle. Before massaging the oil blend onto the areas of tension, be very sure to add two tablespoons of carrier oils such as sweet almond to your blend.

## Thursday

You head for school to slave over the completion of your final project only to realise with disbelief that your group mates have chosen this critical period to mysteriously vanish from the face of the earth.

**Anger Relief:** Fill up a bowl with hot water and add one drop of Rose, one drop of Vetiver and three drops of Orange essential oils into it. Bend over and take slow, deep breaths.

## Friday

Thank God it's Friday! No doubt, the week has been a gruelling one, and you want nothing more than to collapse in bed and sleep in for the weekend. However, you find yourself unable to relax fully (you're quite the worrywart, you admit) and instead, spend your precious sleep hours tossing and turning in bed.

**Insomnia Inhaler:** Simply put about two drops of Benzoin or German and Roman camomile essential oil onto a handkerchief and tuck it inside your pillow to help you relax your nerves.

# SAVE THE ENVIRONMENT? SAME OLD, SAME OLD.

Did watching *Live Earth*, all those short films and ads by celebrities like Ben Affleck, make you realise that plastic is non-biodegradable? Did it make you care? If your answer is "no" and you only tuned in because Madonna was performing, EVA NASTASSIA says you're not the only one.

Many youths who tuned into the much-publicised 24-hour worldwide music concert on Jul 7 were hardly moved by the cause behind the initiative, which was, "to trigger a global movement to solve the climate crisis", according to its official website.

The event may have sold itself to 100 artistes, including music icons such as Bon Jovi, Madonna, The Police and Kelly Clarkson. It may have had a combined viewership of a third of the world's population, meaning two billion people. But it might still be considered a flop if it has not achieved its aim of making the world sit up to the "climate crisis" better known as global warming – today's biggest environmental challenge.

The irony, as observed by a BBC News website article the day after the concert, was "Thousands of plastic cups were left on the Wembley Stadium floor at the end of the London concert, despite organisers urging the audience to put them into recycling bins provided."

If the environmental impact up close was lukewarm, it is no wonder that in Singapore, some felt no impact at all. 19-year-old Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) student, Daniel Tan's response was quite typical. "I knew about it (*Live Earth*), because I saw the ads on TV, but I only caught a bit of the concert on the bus. My friends told me that the Linkin Park performance was good."

"I knew that the concerts had something to do with global warming, but I don't really feel propelled to go out of my way to save the environment. I mean, where do I even start?" he added.

The feeling that the cause is too big for individuals to make any difference was not unique to

him. "I think it's come to a stage where even if we do save a few pieces of paper here and there, or if I cut down on the number of hours I leave my air conditioner turned on, it won't help much. The damage seems to be beyond repair," says 19-year-old student from Nanyang Polytechnic (NYP), Sharania Navalana.

## Light at the end of the tunnel

But while some seem to have given up or refused responsibility, there are other young people who are going the extra mile to help to save – or at least reduce – the amount of damage on the environment.

Take for example final-year NP Business & Accountancy (BA) students John Melissa Ann and Joanne Lim, who are the organisers for the *Ten Tons 2007* movement on Jul 14. The two 19-year-olds managed to garner other like-minded youths – 3,500 to be exact – from their school as well as secondary schools, to support them in their island-wide initiative that raised \$60,000 by selling articles and receiving donations from various organisations. The proceeds from the event were given to 12 Voluntary Welfare Organisations.

And they did this by knocking on the doors of neighborhood homes – 300,000 households from 3,000 HDB blocks, to spread the message of the importance of environmental protection, by distributing leaflets given by

the National Environment Agency (NEA) and by collecting old newspapers. The old newspapers were then transported to public waste collectors: Altwater Jakob Pte Ltd, SembWaste Pte Ltd, Colex Holdings Limited, and 800 Super Waste Management Pte Ltd.

The students from the school were so keen to make a difference, they challenged themselves to set a national record. One of the BA student leaders Liu Yuhong, 19, was quoted in the NP website, saying, "We are booking a place in the Singapore Book of Records for the largest amount of recyclable materials collected in a single day so it is going to be very exhilarating."

The students took up this project under BA CARES (their school's community outreach programme), which according to Joanne "kills two birds in one stone as we get to help the environment, as global warming is a big issue in the world today, as well as contribute to charity".

While Melissa agrees that the government has done their part in promoting the message of conserving the environment through its various policies, she says that it is now the youth's turn to do something.

"While many youngsters think that nothing that they can do will solve the problem of global warming, every little bit counts – that's why we want to reach out to polytechnic students as well as secondary school students. Even though we may not be able to make a drastic change or impact now on the environment now, we should still do our part," Melissa said.

## WHAT'S THE BIG DEAL ABOUT GLOBAL WARMING?

TEXT BY PAUL CHIA

Are people make a big mountain out of a little dirt? **hype** sees if there's cause to lose sleep over environmental issues.

### Climate Change

According to British paper *The Guardian*, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warned recently that global warming will likely cause a "rise in world average temperatures of up to 4 degrees Celsius" over the next century.

### Glacier Retreat

With increasing global temperatures, glaciers around the world are in danger of melting away. One example according to the BBC, would be the region surrounding Mount Everest, "between 1970 and 1989, Japanese researchers discovered most glaciers in the Everest region had retreated 30-60m".

### Rising Sea Levels

Melting polar ice caps means that sea levels will undoubtedly rise. According to the *National Geographic*, experts have admitted that, "Thermal expansion has already raised the oceans 4 to 8 inches (10 to 20 cm)." But they forecasted that if "Greenland's massive ice sheet were to melt", then the trouble of rising sea levels would really increase.

# WANTED: MUST LOVE MUSIC AND THE ARTS

Learn real-world skills, expand your portfolio, give back to the community and be surrounded by music or the arts. If this sounds too good to be true, FARIDAH SAAD reveals how you can be an arts and music advocate as well as a philanthropist.

Volunteering at an old folks home or hospital may not be your cup of tea but volunteerism nowadays reaps two-way benefits. Not only do you get to contribute your services for the better of the community, but in return, you'll also gain new contacts, favourable testimonials and a list of valuable real-world skills.

## National Museum of Singapore

With its 120th Anniversary celebrations coming up later in the year, the National Museum of Singapore (NMS) is opening its doors to even more youth volunteers to help with the running of some of its events.

All museum volunteers will be given training suited for the duties that they sign up for, from front-of-house helpers consisting of gallery assistants and tour guides to ad-hoc helpers who are called in to assist in the setting up and running of the various festivals and event previews. You can also opt to be trained to assist in conducting educational programmes for students and members of the public.

## MusicForGood

"We're looking for people who love music or love to be around music," says Nick Chan, Music Outreach Executive for MusicForGood. As its name suggests, MusicForGood is a non-profit organisation that reaches out to youth beneficiaries through various music programmes and provides avenues for young local musicians to showcase their talent.

Interested to be a part of their movement? Volunteers with a music background can teach youths keyboard lessons up to four times a week, at the Handicap Welfare Association. Gig-enthusiasts can try organising or helping to run MusicForGood's events that range from small showcases at the Esplanade outdoor theatre to mega concerts like Rock For Good, the series of secondary school concerts held in the middle of each year. This year, it was renamed Rock For Wayne to pay tribute to the passing of local musician Wayne Seah, drummer for the Melbourne-based rock band, The Suns.

## Wake Me Up Music

They're one of the producers of the annual three-day mega indie/rock concert, Baybeats (see pg 6), happening from Aug 3-5 at the Esplanade. Wake Me Up Music (WMUM) supports the local music scene by publicising the artistes, organising events to showcase local talents and distributing local music through its label. It also generously shares the same opportunities with volunteers to get in on the action.

"We gather volunteers who want to help in events, such as artiste liaison, publicity and promotions and those who want to be generally involved. We also have volunteers giving talks to schools," says Esmond Wee, executive for WMUM.

Esmond adds that some of their former employees from WMUM Shop are now working in independent recording labels in the USA. The shop may have closed down but the Wake Me Up Music label is going full-speed ahead.

Did we also mention that volunteering with these organisations come with their own unique benefits?



Photos courtesy of National Museum of Singapore

Being a volunteer at the NMS gives you the opportunity to gain access to the NMS resource centre that contains a substantial number of old reference books from the Raffles Library. On top of expanding your general knowledge, you'll also get the privilege of being invited for festival previews and exhibition openings. Development programmes on customer service and leadership skills, are also offered to committed volunteers to help them gain the knowledge and experience that will also benefit them in their future careers.

From music gigs to arts performances, volunteers are also entitled to free entry passes to events organised by WMUM and Music For Good. That's if you're not already back-stage, rubbing shoulders with local music meisters such as Electrico and Ronin. Build your business skills and contacts by socialising with the hip and happening people from the music industry. It's especially a boon to young musicians, as it doesn't

hurt to get a few pointers!

The opportunities that these organisations provide for those who thirst for a fun learning experience are plentiful and rewarding. Whether it is to gain entry into university or secure that job position, none can deny that extra-curricular activities such as volunteerism at established organisations is highly valued. On top of the perks, all three organisations happily provide great recommendations guaranteed to spruce up anyone's portfolio.

If you would like to get in on the action, you can contact the organisations directly or you can find out more at: [www.wakemeupmusic.com](http://www.wakemeupmusic.com), [www.musicforgood.org](http://www.musicforgood.org) and [www.nationalmuseum.sg](http://www.nationalmuseum.sg)

# Transiting in Frankfurt:

*A City Of Urban Beauty*

You expect transit destinations to offer too little to do and see, and

sometimes, poor infrastructure. Frankfurt, where globally renowned financial organisations like Deutsche Bank and the European Central Bank are headquartered, is none of these.

Another thing you figure of one of Europe's financial capitals, is that it's priced beyond the average tourist. A UBS study put Frankfurt 23rd on a list of the most expensive cities to live in for 2006. Singapore ranked 34th on the same list.

But the truth is that Frankfurt is reasonably affordable by European standards. My entire stay (excluding of the cost of air ticket) cost \$500, thanks to money-stretching techniques including staying at a centrally located budget Ramada Hotel, which cost 38 Euros (\$79) per night, and walking instead of taking public transportation. A return trip of 5-minute duration on the very efficient S-Bahn (their version of the MRT) costs about 3 to 4 Euros.

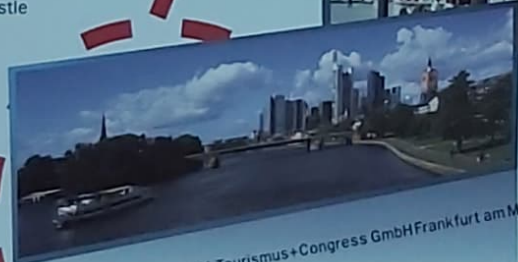
In the city centre, the energetic vibe of Frankfurt becomes increasingly evident. Some of Europe's tallest skyscrapers populate the business district even though the grey landscape and subdued business-like atmosphere of the city is in stark contrast to the hustle and bustle of cities like Tokyo or Hong Kong. The cobblestone streets and low-rise European buildings in the city centre are a romantic throwback to centuries of tradition.

## Food!

Given its profile as a business and conventions hub, you needn't worry about having to just eat hotdogs in the city that the popular "Frankfurter" sausages are named after. The city has a wide range of food outlets that cater to various tastes. 7 Euros (\$14.70) will get you the typical kebab, fries and drink, 15 Euros, pasta served at a small café. Considering the portions are enough to feed two, food is reasonably priced.

But on my second day there, I was already craving Asian fare, so I ventured into a joint at the fringes of the city staffed and owned by immigrant Vietnamese. The food was authentic and not adulterated for German tastes and at eight Euros, the huge serving of deep-fried seafood noodles and soup represented excellent value for money.

It was supposed to be a short transit en route to the Big Apple. However, after just three days in Frankfurt, KENNETH YAP packed in a season's worth of shopping and sightseeing, not to mention memories of the city to last a lifetime.



Photos courtesy of Tourismus+Congress GmbH Frankfurt am Main

## Fast Facts

Getting there: Qantas, Lufthansa and Singapore Airlines fly direct to Frankfurt from Singapore, offering up to four flights a day between them. Fares start from \$900 (excluding taxes).

Currency: Euros (1 Euro is about \$2.10 at press time)

Visa: None needed for Singaporeans. Requirements for other nationalities may vary. (Visit [http://www.germany.info/relaun...info/consular\\_services/visa.html](http://www.germany.info/relaun...info/consular_services/visa.html) for more information)

## Shopping!

Seeing that shopping bags are a common fashion accessory, Germans clearly enjoy their share of retail therapy. And who can blame them when Frankfurt has so much to offer shoppers, from global fashion chains like Zara, H&M and Mango to more localised department stores like Kauhof, Karstadt and Douglas, which boast a wide selection of German and European brands. One such example is Italian trendy street wear clothes label Replay, which is not available in Singapore.

Tourists can also take advantage of the fantastic range of watches available at these stores, with designs you will never find here. You get much more variety when it comes to brands like Swatch and only need to pay 30 Euros (\$60) for the regular models.

German household brands like adidas and Birkenstock, in most German department stores, also prove to be worthwhile buys. Savings of up to \$30 for a pair of Birkenstocks footwear, over local prices, are common.

Prices for many luxury products are also lower than in Singapore. This coupled with the partial refund of the 12 percent VAT (Sales Tax) for

tourists proves a good excuse for visitors to splurge on that LV tote. While most of us may not willingly part with so much money, for those who are, savings can range up to 15 percent, which, on a \$1,000 item, is significant.



Römerberg Plaza!

## Fast Facts

Best time to visit: Fall (Sep to Nov) or spring (Mar to May), with temperatures ranging from 10°C to 15°C

Accommodation: Hostels aren't always a bargain. For a night, Stay and Learn Hostel charges \$120 for three to stay, while Hotel Cult only costs \$60 for two.

For more information: [www.cometogermany.com](http://www.cometogermany.com), [www.frankfurt.de](http://www.frankfurt.de), [www.singapur.diplo.de/Vertretung/singapur/en/Startseite.html](http://www.singapur.diplo.de/Vertretung/singapur/en/Startseite.html)

## Sightseeing!

To hopping from store to store does no justice to the city's famous tourist attractions.

One such stop is St. Paul's Church, where Germany's first democratically chosen parliament first convened in 1848. The building's traditional architecture is in stark contrast to its modern interior design. Also, because of its historical role, it is considered by many to be an icon of German democracy. Besides being a perfect photo opportunity, St. Paul's church will definitely draw those who can spend hours admiring the intricate detailing of stately old buildings.

The Frankfurt Opera House is also worth visiting, being home to one of the world's leading opera companies: the Oper Frankfurt. The building also features a futuristic glass-panel design and is definitely deserving of its "must-visit" reputation.

Finally, head down to explore the unique beauty of the ancient buildings at the Frankfurt City Hall. Located in Römerberg plaza, this captivating building has been the meeting place for city councillors for almost 600 years and is a favourite for couples to hold their weddings ceremonies and for visitors to gaze dreamily at. Interestingly, despite its age, some parts of the interior of the gothic building have been kept the same since it was built, sustaining no damage from World War II.



Outside Zara

# Country Cruiser Vs City Slicker

Whether you are a scenery-loving, outdoorsy traveller or a metropolitan city buff, DEONE EE shows you how to make the most of your travelling adventure without having to spend a bomb on accommodation.

## Country Cruiser: WWOOF

WWOOF-ing is one way to solve the nightmare of finding cheap accommodation. And no, despite its canine-sounding name, you won't have to stay in a dog shelter. WWOOF actually stands for World-Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms or Willing Workers on Organic Farms. For those who enjoy being in the great outdoors and aren't afraid to rough it out in a farm for about four to six hours a day, this is a great way to see the world while saving a whole lot of money on accommodation.

### How Does it Work?

WWOOF is an organisation that pairs up hosts looking for labour, and volunteers looking for accommodation and food. Essentially, this means unpaid work in exchange for a place to sleep in for free.

The first step to kick-start your WWOOF-ing experience is to become a member of the organisation. This allows you to access the database of WWOOF hosts, providing you with the contact details of all the farms that are available.

Because there are so many different hosts in various locations, it really depends on the specific country you are looking to WWOOF in. For example, if you want to find a host in big countries like Germany or Australia, you'll have to register with that specific country's national organisation. However, if the location you are interested in does not have a national organisation, you can just register with WWOOF independents (which is a list of all the independent hosts within the countries).

With WWOOF hosts located in every continent, you can get the chance to visit the most far-out

destinations like Togo and Iceland, without worrying about the cost of accommodation.

### Tips to WWOOF

- Choosing the right host is a very important aspect that should not be overlooked, based on 23-year-old Fiona Tan's experience. "I thought that working in a rice farm in Kyushu, Japan, would be pretty interesting, but what I didn't realise was that I had to wake up at 4am every morning for work," she said.

- Check the terms of your host. Some WWOOF hosts have strict rules and regulations, precluding no-smoking policies, language barriers, minimum age restrictions and minimum lengths of stay. However, some hosts live in very remote areas and only get into town every second week, so their minimum stays may coincide with trips to town to pick up and drop off WWOOF-ers and supplies. Don't forget that your hosts are in charge and can kick you out if they want!

- Don't forget the official documents. Remember to bring along your WWOOF ID card, because hosts have the right to turn away anyone without a registered card. There are no VISA exemptions for WWOOF-ers, so be sure that you have the right one before you enter the country.

For more information about WWOOF or to join as a member please visit <http://www.woof.org>



Photo by Nur Hafizah A Hamid

## City Slicker: CouchSurfing

testimonials are handy when sifting through the honest Joes from the downright creepy weirdos. Lim Wei Sheng, 23, recounts his bad experience when travelling through Zurich. "I had a hard time understanding my host as he was barely fluent in English even though his profile said otherwise."

On the other hand, there are also some who have had pleasant memories. Take for example 20-year-old student, Melissa Lim, who said, "I've had fantastic CouchSurfing experiences so far. It's far more interesting to tag along with your own local CouchSurfing guide than to refer to a boring guidebook."

In reference to the safety aspect, Melissa insists that while many people assume CouchSurfing to be dangerous, "as long as you can make sure that your host has good references, you should be fine. If you feel uncomfortable in your host's house, just follow your gut feeling and leave. It is good to be cautious at all times."

"The friends I've made through travelling have definitely opened my eyes up to see that the world is really made out of so many unique cultures and ways of life," she added.

If you feel more secure travelling with a friend, you can also sign up for CouchSurfing as a group rather than as a single user.

### Tips to CouchSurf

Thoroughly discuss the terms and conditions of your home-stay with your host. Important issues to discuss include:

- Length of stay
  - House rules
  - Location of the host's house and transport details around the district
  - The host's availability to give you a tour
- You should also have a back-up plan just in case you fall into the hands of an untrustworthy host. Make contact with a few other CouchSurfers within the same area so that you can turn to them for help if necessary.

Lastly, keep a list of contacts including the numbers of hotels nearby and the country's emergency numbers.

For more information about CouchSurfing or to join as a member please visit [www.couchsurfing.com](http://www.couchsurfing.com).

CouchSurfing is a revolutionary networking system that's made globe-trotting so much more affordable. Cosmopolitan urbanites who want to hop from city to city without having to spend a bomb on hotels can CouchSurf instead. CouchSurf ([www.couchsurfing.com](http://www.couchsurfing.com)) is a non-profit organisation solely run by volunteers which, according to their official website, aim "to internationally network people and places, create educational exchanges, raise collective consciousness, spread tolerance and facilitate cultural understanding".

### How Does it Work?

The first step is applying to be a member, creating your profile and interacting with some of the hundreds of members in various discussions to establish contacts and to create rapport with them.

Then choose which destination you'd like to globe-trot to and view profile pages of those who live in the city and have a "couch" available. Shortlist a few of them and narrow down the contact until you are happy with someone who speaks the same language, has similar interests as you and seems trustworthy enough to accommodate you. All you need to do is contact your fellow CouchSurfer and ask if you can bunk in for a couple of days.

### What's The Risk?

According to their official website, CouchSurf has incorporated a verification system that verifies each member's address, phone number and other details.

For those who are a tad wary about the safety aspect of CouchSurfing, you can gauge a member's experience through the references left behind by other CouchSurfers. Although most CouchSurfers do have pretty pleasant experiences, the user

# Belly Dancing Belles

While the roots of belly dancing may stem from the Middle East, the once traditional dance is now a sexy leisure activity engaging many young women. SHAHEEN AMAN checks out what's shaking our island.

If you haven't already caught onto the belly dancing fever, despite the many festivals and workshops dedicated to the art, this is the moment to hop onto the bandwagon!

The owner of local belly dance school Pyramid Dancer and belly dance extraordinaire, Samra El Said, said that this was the first year the **World Belly Dance Day** (May 12) was commemorated in Singapore. "This is the event where all the belly dancing schools in Singapore come together to work and raise funds for charity," she said.

The belly dancing scene in Singapore has gained so much popularity that large-scale competitions are being held to celebrate the best. The **National Belly Dance Competition** was held in conjunction with the **Singapore Street Festival** in June to select dancers to represent Singapore at the **Asia Global Belly Dance Competition** in Taiwan in September.

Hence, it comes without surprise that the art is luring many to join schools such as Pyramid Dancer and Belly Dance Discovery. "More and more people are signing up because there is more awareness of belly dancing," said Samra. And while the belles still outnumber the beaus, Samra said that she had one male student, Darren Ho, "who is now a big name in the local belly dance scene".

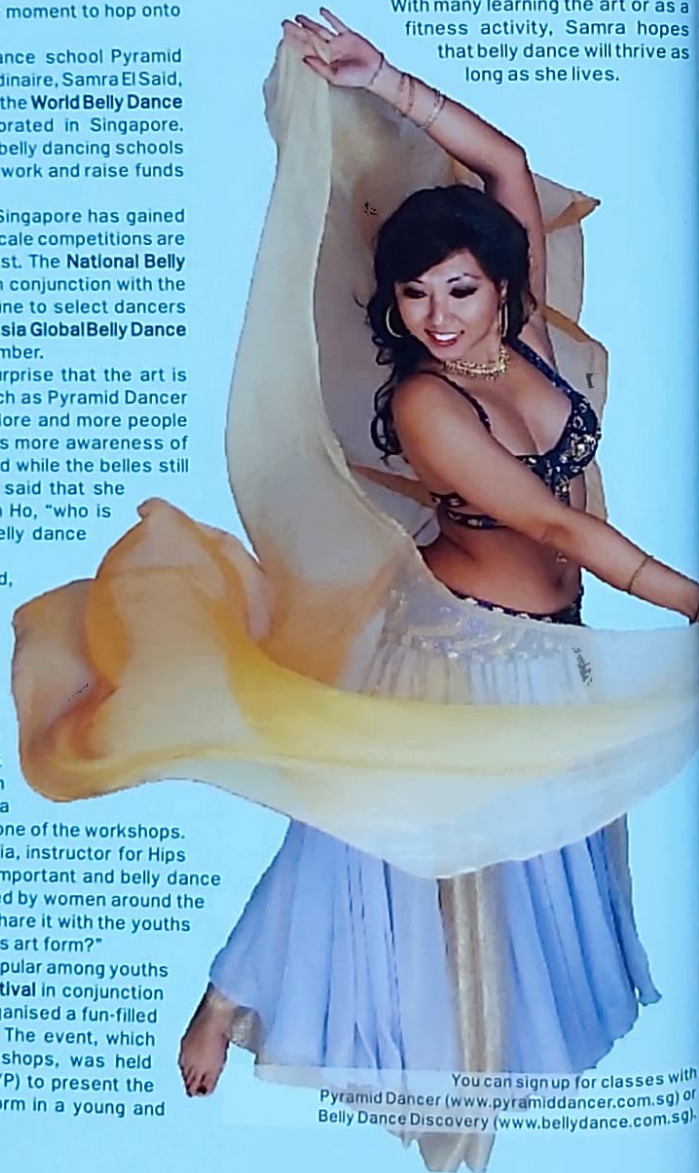
Picking up on the trend, the Esplanade took the opportunity to promote belly dancing among youths. Its **Hips Don't Lie** workshop was conducted in July to "let people know that the arts is not something to just be watched and enjoyed but rather, something people can engage in," said Amit Golbia, a percussionist who conducted one of the workshops.

Going by a pseudonym, Maia, instructor for **Hips Don't Lie**, said, "To me, art is important and belly dance is an ancient art form embraced by women around the world. So what better way to share it with the youths of today than teaching them this art form?"

In fact, belly dancing is so popular among youths that the **Singapore Street Festival** in conjunction with Belly Dance Discovery, organised a fun-filled event called **Belly Belly Good**. The event, which even had free 'Shakira' workshops, was held at the National Youth Park (NYP) to present the "ancient and cultural dance form in a young and

vibrant package," said Yuki Chua, founder of Belly Dance Discovery.

With many learning the art or as a fitness activity, Samra hopes that belly dance will thrive as long as she lives.



You can sign up for classes with Pyramid Dancer ([www.pyramiddancer.com.sg](http://www.pyramiddancer.com.sg)) or Belly Dance Discovery ([www.bellydance.com.sg](http://www.bellydance.com.sg)).

In the dark quiet sky, a kaleidoscope of colour whizzes to and fro, cutting the midnight blue like fibre-optic lasers. These brightly lit Unidentified Flying Objects (UFOs) take flight every Friday and Saturday nights at Clarke Quay, and best of all, they've got people craning their necks to watch.

To top it all off, a certain breed of these UFOs, aptly named SB42, which stands for "Singapore Birthday 42", will be making its debut at this year's **National Day Parade**.

## Identifying the Unidentified Flying Object

These UFOs are actually the brainchild of Singaporean, Mr Michael Lim, 48, owner of GoFlyKite (GFK) a community-based hobby shop located at Riverside Point. He invented the next best thing in the world after Radio Controlled (RC) aeroplanes.

These UFOs termed "RC kites" are a world's first. Unhappy with the prohibitive cost of RC aeroplanes and helicopters, as well as the fragility of such expensive models, Mr Lim decided to take things into his hands and invented something that could appeal to the masses.

## Birds of a feather flock together

Since the shop started in 2000, RC kite flying has grown significantly in popularity. Mr Lim who's often present when GFK members fly their kites explained proudly, "We're selling more than a product here, we're a community."

Mr Lim administers each of the five stages of RC kite flying. Upon reaching the Silver stage, you can start to work your way up in a completely new realm of kite-flyers called "air dancers", who learn synchronised kite flying.

While RC kites start at a costly \$650, it's considered affordable compared to RC aeroplanes that easily sets you back by more than \$1,000. Plus, you rarely have to contend with things like disastrous crash landings.

Starters also need to take a flight simulator test, where a remote control is wired to a programme to simulate the conditions of flying (the way the Republic of Singapore Air Force flies its unmanned flying vehicles), so as to test their flying proficiency.

While it does take a fair bit of money and determination to start, what probably keeps followers glued to the hobby is that RC kite flying is a lot trickier than one might expect.

In fact, it takes continuous practice for the flyer to be proficient enough to pull off tricks such as vertical drops, cool turns and swerves.

So with the advent of RC kites, kite flying, which dates back to China 3,000 years ago, looks set to soar for a new generation of tech-savvy youths.

GoFlyKite also holds performances for company functions and assists in wedding proposals. Interested parties can log on to [www.goflykite.com.sg](http://www.goflykite.com.sg) or call 636 9181 to find out more.

Nasty weather conditions and strings that snap are just some of the few difficulties you faced as a child flying a kite. Fast-forward to the present and these problems are no longer as vast as the skies, discovers RACHEL TAN.



Photos courtesy of goflykite; photos manipulated.

# NO STRINGS ATTACHED

# Farewell National Stadium

All good things must come to an end and PAMELA WOO reminisces our soon-to-be demolished National Stadium just as National Day approaches.

Photo by Pamela Woo

The Kallang Roar, National Day Parade (NDP), the Singapore Youth Festival, Rugby 7s matches, and the Malaysia Cup – so many events and experiences that have taken place at this national monument, what of this grande dame will be passed on to the younger generations to come?

## THE 2004 TIGER CUP FINALS

The **Tiger Cup**, now known as the **ASEAN Football Championship**, was particularly memorable in 2004, where Singapore beat then-favourites Indonesia, 2-1. The stadium was packed to the rafters with fans all decked in red, cheering as two great goals from Indra Stasi and Agu Casmir gave Singapore her second trophy (the first time being back in Vietnam in 1998).

The game was also remembered for its drama when Singapore captain Aide Iskandar was sent off with tears in his eyes for a second bookable offence in the dying minutes before coming back onto the field to lift the trophy.

"The team was organised and focussed, the manager took a calculated risk and it paid off. But the fans made it happen," said 23-year-old avid sports fan Morgan Tay, who was present at the match.

"The best thing about big events like the **Tiger Cup** held at the stadium is seeing the sea of red, cheering and singing Majulah Singapura even louder than what I've heard at the **National Day Parade**," he added.

## NATIONAL DAY PARADE

Long queues for tickets packed the stadium whenever the NDP was to be held there. For 18 times since 1976, Kallang has been the venue for the annual event.

"It's quite sad to see the stadium go. I remember attending the parades there when I was younger. Seeing the fireworks at the stadium were the most memorable. It felt like it was raining down on you," says administration assistant Sharon Cai, 19.

## THE POPE'S PASTORAL TRIP

The late Pope John Paul II came down to our little island back in 1986 on a pastoral trip, which saw him giving speeches on Catholic doctrines at the National Stadium. A large audience of mainly Catholics gathered to see the only Pope to have visited Singapore.

## THE MALAYSIA CUP & THE KALLANG ROAR

Besides the Lions being the second most successful team in the tournament's history with 24 trophies, who can forget the era of the 1970s when the Kallang roar first began? It was during the closing stages of our **Malaysia Cup** days when the Lions lost 2-0 to Kedah in the 1993 Finals. But despite the loss, football fans undoubtedly still remember the Malaysia Cup league that increased the profile of Singapore football.

## "MY COUNTRY, MY FOOD"

As we celebrate the nation's birthday, AVIE MERCADO enlists the help of a celebrity food blogger to toast three favourite culinary delights that we grew up loving and are proud to call Uniquely Singapore!

Doctor by profession and food critic by choice, Dr Leslie Tay, helps hype dish out the best of Singapore's all-time favourites. Dr Tay is also author of the famed food blog, [eatishootipost.blogspot.com](http://eatishootipost.blogspot.com).

Rating: 4.5/5



### Morning Fare

No one can get bored with Nasi Lemak, but with scores of stores claiming to be number one, the hardest part is picking the right one! According to Dr Tay, Selera Rasa's Nasi Lemak is so "shio" even the Sultan of Brunei patronises it when he comes to visit Singapore! The secret is in the rice. Unlike other shops, they use Basmati Rice which has a nutty texture and distinctive flavour. Take time to savour the sweet tangy sambal (chilli paste) and the fried seasoned chicken wings, which are crispy on the outside and juicy on the inside.

The Grub: Nasi Lemak

The Place: Selera Rasa Nasi Lemak

Adam Road Food Centre (7am - 10pm)

The Price: \$3 for the Chicken Wing Meal

Rating: 4.5/5



### Lunch

This is the best place to relish Singapore's lunch favourite. The steamed chicken is tender and Dr Tay applauds the flavourful rice which is coated with savoury chicken broth. But according to him, it's the chilli sauce that had American celebrity chef-author, Anthony Bourdain, raving when he savoured it during one of his visits. One of the stall helpers told Dr Tay that the secret ingredient is lime juice as other stalls use vinegar.

The Grub: Hainanese Chicken Rice

The Place: Tian Tian Hainanese Chicken Rice

Maxwell Food Centre (11am - 8pm)

The Price: \$2.50

Rating: 4.5/5



### Dinner

Sum up your food quest with this signature plate of fried yellow noodles and thick bee hoon. The moist dish was ordinary tasting at first, until Dr Tay mixed a spoonful of sambal chilli and bits of pork lard, which immediately caught our tastebuds. He says that while Hokkien mee can also be found in other countries but they're "never as good or as varied as the ones here".

The Grub: Fried Hokkien Mee

The Place: Singapore Fried Hokkien Mee,

Whampoa Temporary Market (4pm - 1:30am)

The Price: \$3

If you're a food addict, and you've fantasised about inventing your own dishes, you're not alone. We asked Dr Tay what's his dream dish and he said, "If I could invent a dish that's uniquely Singapore, I'll make a lobster Hokkien Mee with Sio Bak (roast pork) simmering in a claypot. That'll be 'yumiliciously' sinful!"

Photos by Stephanie Goh

# "Puhh-lease, Enough Patriotism Already!"

Is National Day and patriotism getting too big a dose for you this season? Hop aboard with DENISE TAN and go on a tantalising food tour!

Photos courtesy of Lagnaa Barefoot Dining



Rating: 4.5/5



6 Upper Dickson Road, Tel: 6296 1215

## Spice it up at Lagnaa

Everything in Lagnaa has a dash of chilli and a strong infusion of herbs. But what's unique is that patrons are required to remove their shoes at the entrance and sit on the floor behind low, wooden round tables.

The soothing yellow walls, cushions scattered around and the soft twang of Indian music heightens your North Indian dining experience.

The congenial owner, Kaesavan, fondly known as K7, attends to each customer with care. If it's your first time in an Indian restaurant, he'll explain the menu at length. What you need to know is that Lagnaa is known for its curry fondue. The pot of bubbling curry is accompanied by a basket of fresh and fragrant Naan (\$4) of your choice (there's garlic, cheese and original).

Other authentic North Indian dishes you must try are the Chicken Masala (\$8), Fish Tikka (\$10) and handmade Papadums (free flow!). If things get too spicy, douse the flames with aromatic Masala tea (\$4.50).

The numbing spiciness and heady scent of herbs are highly addictive and the small portions will leave you wishing for more.



## Sip tea at Tea Cosy by Eclectic Attic

Next to Spotlight in Plaza Singapura lies a quirky bistro that sells not only sustenance but also vintage accessories and furniture.

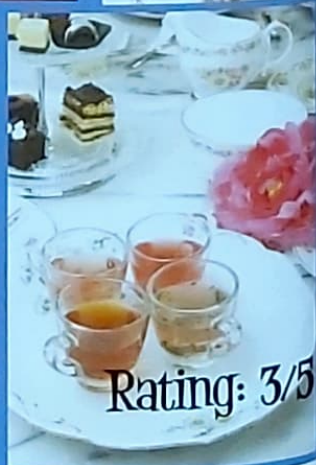
You'll find yourself extremely conscious of every spill because the furniture you're using is accompanied by a hefty price tag. Yes, you can buy the exquisite things you're sitting on, if you fancy second-hand furniture.

While the food at Tea Cosy is just fair, the lush purple curtains and pretty tables make the lukewarm fruit tea (\$4.50) and slightly dry scones taste that much better.

Tea Cosy does, however, serve up a decent set meal of Garden Salad, Chicken Pasta with Spicy Pesto Sauce and dessert for \$12.95. Their prawn cocktail (\$6.95) is surprisingly fresh with juicy, translucent prawns. If you're thinking of lunching like a royal, order the rich Foie Gras Starter.

Surrounded by elaborate drapery and intricate cake stands, you might fool yourself into thinking you're having a hoity-toity English tea with Lord so and so, right in the middle of a concrete jungle.

Plaza Singapura #05-10, Tel: 6836 9736. Prices range from \$3.95 for Good Ol' Teas to \$12.95 for a set meal.



Rating: 3/5



## DO THE SAMBA AT CARNIVORE!

Believing that you're in Brazil is easy as waiters slide and saunter around in step with the relaxing bossa nova music.

Those with weak stomachs, small appetites and little sense of fun shouldn't bother visiting Carnivore.

If that doesn't describe you, samba to your seat and prepare for a churrasco (South Brazilian barbecue) buffet of beef rump, lamb fillet, chicken drumstick with cheese and pork sausages.

Carnivore certainly caters to the adventurous meat lover with delicacies like crocodile meat, wild boar and chicken heart. The wild boar is a little tough but still delectable because of the flavourful marinade.

Begin small with the huge selection at the salad bar. Chat a little or sip a beverage in between slabs of meat, lest you fill up too soon.

The culinary experience can be a bit pricey, starting from \$25 for a buffet lunch, so make sure to go with a big appetite to get your money's worth!

Rating: 5/5



VivoCity, Tel: 63769939. Buffet lunch costs \$25+++ on weekdays and \$29+++ on weekends

# A TASTE OF EDEN'S FLOWERS

Ever wanted to step into the enchanted Garden of Eden? ADDISON WONG gets a taste of heaven on earth.

There's Adam, Eve and the infamous serpent, but what's one other thing that comes to mind when we think of the Garden of Eden? For the many who revere this enchanting place, there's the recently opened Eden's Café to tempt you with an experience of the biblical garden through its most seductive element - flowers.

The fusion of edible flowers with its menu items is one amazing aspect of Eden's Café that never fails to grab customers' attention. Every dish has a lavish floral concept behind it. Take for example the Lavender Rosemary Chicken (\$16.90) that is made up of one whole chicken mixed with juicy seedless grapes and salad, wrapped in lavender-flavoured pastry. Cut the pastry open and you'll find an absolutely gorgeous combination of tastes that will melt your heart like any lovely flower would.

The marvelous concept lies behind the floral-based teas. Besides the basic classic teas (\$6) like orange blossom and rosehip, there's a large range of fusion teas

(\$9) that combine the goodness of various flowers in one splendid glass. If you're in dire need of some peace, the Tranquility Tea, with its heavenly mix of mint and hibiscus, can provide just that. Desserts like the Hibiscus Cheese Filo and Rose Petal Brownies (\$7 each) are immaculate choices for a delectable end to your floral dining experience.

Décor-wise, the café at Club Street surprises with its stream of zen-like furnishing and a display of dried flowers in glass bottles. With the café's total capacity of only 22, patrons can experience the peace that one would associate with the heavenly garden.

Eden's Café sees different crowds at various times of the day. While the working crowd frequents during the lunch hour, the evening sees mostly couples or clubbers looking for a meal before partying across the street.

Dining at Eden's Café is an absolute joy with its endless array of intriguing elements. There's no question that this is as close as it gets for anyone who's interested in finding out how food at the beginning of time tastes like.

For a romantic dinner for two for less than \$50, **hype** recommends the delicate Saffron Salmon Crème Pasta (\$13.90) and the adventurous Honey Mustard Chicken (\$14.90). Grab a glass each of the White or Red Wine Tea (\$7.50) as well. For dessert a must-try is the Hibiscus Soft Cheesecake (\$5.90) that you can share with your date.



Opens daily, 10am to 10pm (Sunday - Thursday) and 10am to 2am (Friday - Saturday, PH/ Eve of PH)  
54 Club Street, next to Chinatown. Tel: 6536 1181

## addiction to friendster

Friendster claims over 40 million users and growing. They include sisters Celeste and Nicole Chen who were featured in *The Sunday Times* on Jun 10. The sisters have, between them, 16,000 "friends" on their Friendster account, but in reality, Celeste has only met 400 of the 6,000 "friends" on her account. What has really made them so popular isn't really their bubbly personalities, but rather photoshop-ed pictures of themselves clad in skimpy clothing. Click on "popular profiles" on Friendster's main page and the first 10 pages showcase half-naked Asian girls posing provocatively in their display pictures. These ladies too, have hundreds of pals on their account. Perhaps there is another way besides food to a man's heart.

## Three's a Sin

The seven deadly sins are so last century. FARIDAH SAAD spins an updated version of this century's top three sins.

The exact sentiment of former Hollywood actress cum model, Brooke Shields. During an interview on Oprah, she confessed to having a negative body image and self-esteem issues.

She said, "I always thought that I never looked good... I thought that, back then, I was never good enough." Shields has since gone past that stage of her life, unlike a few of her fellow actors and actresses.

From socialites to A-List actresses, Hollywood has seen more than a few women battling eating disorders. The pressure to be thin transmits to their legion of fans that are additionally engulfed by envy after flipping through pages of fashion magazines. Their Singaporean fans are not spared.

According to a joint national survey by Beauty Brand, Dove and SGH in 2005, 84 percent of teenage girls in Singapore wished that they could change the way they look. And one in five consider having plastic surgery in the future to alter their appearance. So much for natural beauty.

never feeling good enough  
drive to beat or get beaten

Hell hath no fury like a teenager scorned. In 2001, 250 youngsters were arrested for rioting. According to the "Whack then brag" article published in *The New Paper* on Apr 30, the numbers shot up to 512 by 2005.

In December 2005, a 17-year-old boy was attacked in Jurong West by youngsters armed with parangs (long, heavy knives used as weapons). They chopped off his hand but the stump was later found and re-attached, surgically.

Fighting in self-defence or standing up for yourself is noble in a twisted sense. However, an article in *The Straits Times* on the same day reported that ex-gangsters testified that these fights are commonly over petty things such as "staring" incidents, drunken brawls or girls. No knights in shining armour here.

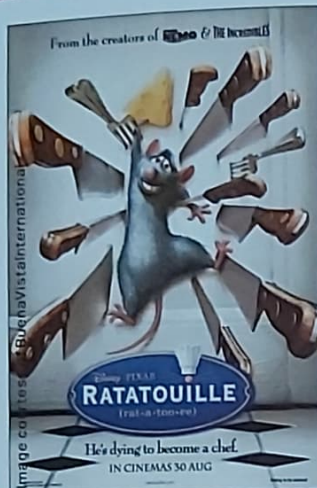


**Knocked Up** is a hilarious take on a swinging single's worst nightmare.

Katherine Heigl (Dr Izzie Stevens from *Grey's Anatomy*) plays Alison Scott, a blonde and beautiful career girl who lands herself an on-camera promotion in the glamorous E! Entertainment Network. Celebrating her success by letting her hair down and knocking back a couple of drinks with her sister, she wakes up the next morning to discover that she had a less-than-pleasant one-night stand. The overweight, hairy, dirty male contrast in the movie is party animal Ben Stiller, played by funny man Seth Rogen.

Eight period-free and mood-swings-filled weeks later, Alison realises that she is pregnant with the spawn of sloth. Through a nine-month rollercoaster ride amid fights between the unlikely couple, their love-hate relationship takes a new turn. After visits to the doctor and learning how to raise a child, it is indeed inevitable that Beauty and the Beast would eventually fall in love.

This is Judd Apatow's second big directorial triumph, his first being the 2005 comedy hit, *The 40-Year-Old Virgin*. With good scriptwriting, laugh-out-loud jokes and a kooky cast of great actors, it looks like we can expect much more from Judd Apatow in the near future. —DEONEE



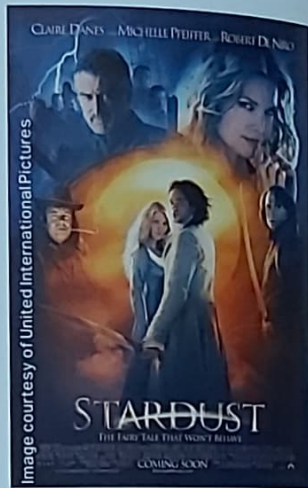
Voted as the #1 movie in the US, comes yet another Pixar film success, **Ratatouille**.

Directed by Academy Award® winner, Brad Bird (*The Incredibles*), **Ratatouille** (also the name for a French vegetable stew) brings you into the cutthroat world of the iron chef. It is about the drive to achieve one's dreams and what better way to do so than through the eyes of a Parisian rat, Remy (voiced by Patton Oswalt), who battles through the flying pots of disapproving French chefs to become a top chef.

By a twist of fate Remy meets Linguini (voiced by Lou Romano), the restaurant's garbage boy, who can't cook. The duo combine their strengths to produce some of the restaurant's best cuisines, until of course the head chef, Skinner (voiced by Ian Holm), finds out about the deal.

Despite his family's objections and of course the fact that rats are considered disease-carrying rodents not to be associated with humans – let alone food – Remy's innocent yet unyielding passion for food is sure to win your heart over.

Even if you're not one for animated productions, the light hearted humour and the feel-good vibe you'll take away from watching **Ratatouille** makes this production a truly delightful treat. —JOYCELYN LIAW

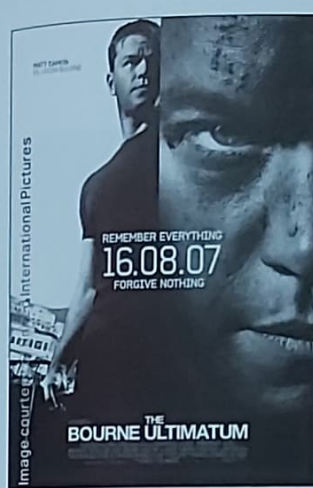


The highly anticipated fantasy movie of the year, **Stardust**, backed by a stellar cast that includes screen legends such as two-time Oscar winner Robert De Niro and three-time Oscar winner Michelle Pfeiffer.

The film follows the story of a young man named Tristan (Charlie Cox) on a quest to win the heart of the beautiful ice queen Victoria (Sienna Miller) by bringing back a fallen star to prove his love. The only obstacle is that the star has fallen on the other side of the wall that separates his village from a mysterious and forbidden land known as Stormhold.

During Tristan's love-driven adventure, he finds the fallen star, by now transformed into the mesmerising Yvaine (Claire Danes). However, Tristan is not the only one seeking the star, Lord Stormhold (Peter O'Toole)'s three living sons, as well as the ghosts of his four dead sons, all want the star as they vie for the throne. Along the way, Tristan must also overcome the evil witch Lamia (Michelle Pfeiffer), who needs the star to make her young and beautiful again.

With such an impressive cast under the excellent direction of Matthew Vaughn, Ian McKellen's brilliant narration, this is one fantasy love adventure that no one should miss. —WINNIE LEONG

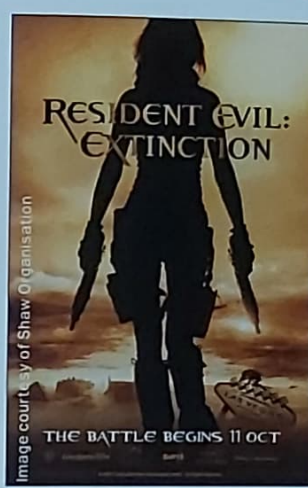


**The Bourne Ultimatum** sees Matt Damon (*Ocean's 13*) back as trained assassin Jason Bourne, in the much-anticipated final installment of the spy thriller trilogy.

Bourne finds himself being hunted again, this time by CIA agents from Treadstone (the organisation that formerly trained him to be an assassin). To uncover the secrets about his past, he befriends Simon Ross (Paddy Considine), a journalist who has information on both Bourne and Treadstone.

This does not sit well with the US government official Noah Vosen (David Strathairn) who dispatches Pamela Landy (Joan Allen) to head the search for Bourne. Paz (Edgar Ramirez), a fellow Treadstone assassin, is sent to eliminate Bourne and Ross. Loosely based on the 1980s novel series by Robert Ludlum, **The Bourne Ultimatum** reveals the final chapter of Bourne's journey to uncover his past while evading trained killers of the same calibre as him.

**The Bourne Ultimatum** is set to follow the success the 2002's **Bourne Identity** and 2004's **Bourne Supremacy** that hit the box office jackpot, raking in US\$500 (\$761) million worldwide. The movie premieres first in Singapore and Russia this year. —FARIDAH SAAD



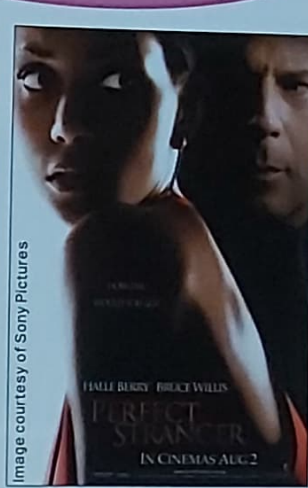
**Resident Evil: Extinction** is the third and final installment of the gory science fiction series based on the popular video game **Resident Evil**.

Directed by Russell Mulcahy (*The Curse of King Tut's Tomb*), the thrill ride brings Alice (Milla Jovovich), Carlos Olivera (Oded Fehr) and L.J. (Mike Epps) across the Nevada Desert and through a ruined Las Vegas to find a place that is uninfected by a deadly virus that has made millions of humans turn into zombies.

They find new survivors of the Raccoon City disaster, Claire Redfield (Ali Larter), K-Mart (Spencer Locke) and Betty (Ashanti), and together they fight off hordes of crows and zombies sent by the murderous Dr Sam Isaacs (Iain Glen) of the Umbrella Corporation, who is desperately trying to get hold of Alice to create a serum.

When the Corporation finally captures her, Alice is put through genetic tests and modifications that give her super-human powers essential for survival.

For anticipating fans, the thrill ride is set to hit the big screens in October. Expect more grisly visual effects to go along with even more violence and action than the previous two chapters, all of which will keep your heart thumping throughout the movie. —CHANG QIAOLIN



**Perfect Stranger** is the latest sexy psychological thriller from critically acclaimed director James Foley (*Confidence*), and starring award-winning actress Halle Berry (*X-Men: The Last Stand*) and Bruce Willis (*Die Hard 4.0*).

Halle Berry puts her stunning beauty to good use, playing Rowena Price, an investigative journalist who goes undercover to investigate the suspicious circumstances surrounding the sudden death of her childhood friend, Grace.

Under the firm belief that Harrison Hill (Bruce Willis), the owner of New York's largest advertising agency and one of Grace's flings, might be linked to her murder, Rowena joins his company in an attempt to gather information and incriminating evidence.

The plot thickens as she attempts to seduce Harrison. However, things begin to get complicated when Harrison discovers her true motive and identity, making several attempts to "fix her".

The real climax of the movie comes right at the end, when a twist reveals the true culprit behind Grace's death.

A mind-blowing and suspense-filled experience from start to end, **Perfect Stranger** is an exhilarating movie. —KENNETH YAP

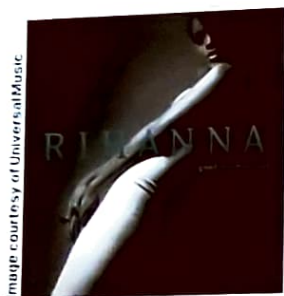


Image courtesy of Universal Music

**Good Girl Gone Bad**  
RIHANNA

Following her previous two releases, *Music of the Sun* and *A Girl Like Me*, the latest album from the bronzed teen idol, *Good Girl Gone Bad*, is the perfect blend of beats and tactics. While previous albums ferried monster dance hits that shot her to RnB stardom like "Pon Da Replay" and "SoS", they also deafened many with songs like, "If It's Lovin' That You Want" and the frighteningly demented ballad, "Unfaithful".

Gone are the mellow sounds of the Caribbean and vocal-heavy tracks. She's finally unearthed the divine secret to success and fudged together the winning formula: Little vocal ability + mediocre lyricist + dance-hit queen + silver body paint = superstar.

The raw sensuality of RnB teased with contemporary pop will most definitely be piercing through the smoggiest of dance floors with sweltering disco anthems such as "Don't Stop the Music" and "Umbrella". She even completely transformed legendary rockers, New Order's "Blue Monday", into something surprisingly decent.

Although the tracks are well tailored to her capabilities, the album still lacks the oomph factor. But if you don't mind the shallow, but addictive lyrics, this eye candy delivers, *Good Girl Gone Bad* is a worthwhile pick. —DIYANA ISMAIL



Image courtesy of Sony BMG

**My December**  
KELLY CLARKSON

Kelly Clarkson's latest album, *My December*, is probably her darkest album yet. In *My December*, Clarkson lays down her most personal trials and tribulations of her past few years, and turns those experiences into track after track of musical diary entries. The record will bring the listener on a rollercoaster ride through themes of suicide, betrayal, emptiness, and then, hope, love and fun.

*My December* is indeed quite different from its predecessors. Featuring more hard-rocking, guitar-driven tracks like "Never Again", "Judas" and "Hole". It definitely showcases Clarkson's raw rock-chick voice, reminding listeners of '80s female rockers like Pat Benatar and Joan Jett. They are also songs that showcase the quintessential Clarkson sound. (Think *Breakaway* single, "Since You've Been Gone".)

The album, however, does show Clarkson's softer and more vulnerable side on slower paced tracks like "Irvine" and "Sober". Each of these tracks shares something so intimate to Clarkson's heart that she admits, "I'm not even this open to my boyfriends!"

*My December* is an immensely artistic album that would add value to anyone's music collection. —EVON TAY



Image courtesy of Sony BMG

**Ms. Kelly**  
KELLY ROWLAND

*Ms. Kelly*, her second album since her 2002 debut, *Simply Deep*, shows off the soul sister's more groovy side and proves that she's more than just a one-hit wonder with "Dilemma", her Grammy award winning collaboration with rapper Nelly in 2002.

In this album, Rowland collaborates with RnB icons Eve, Snoop Dogg and Da Brat in tracks "Like This", "Ghetto" and "Gotsta Go Pt. 1" respectively, which adds a bit of flavour to the album with catchy beats. "Like This" starts the album on a high note with catchy Indian drum beats that will get you up and dancing. The addictive track, also the first single from the album, has even reached #1 on the US Billboard charts and is sure to be a staple on radio networks around the globe.

Highlights of the album include disco friendly tracks like "Put It In" and "Come Back". Thankfully, there are also slower tempo tracks with more meaning full lyrics include "Still In Love With My Ex" which adds a different dimension to the album. As its title indicates, the track speaks of her insecurities and the uncertainties of her feelings with an ex-boyfriend.

All-in-all, the album might not be one to get a full star rating, but for Rowland fans, it will not disappoint. —GERALDINE WONG

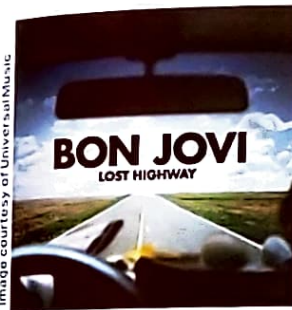


Image courtesy of Universal Music

**Lost Highway**  
BON JOVI

*Lost Highway* may surprise long-term fans of rocker legend Bon Jovi, to say the least. The whole outfit of their 10th album takes their music in a new direction with the fusion of country rock that blends in smoothly with their usual heavy rock-the-house-down sound.

But the change in direction is certainly one that has proven to be a success. According to their official website, the album made its debut as the #1 album in the US during its first week of release. And this comes without surprise as the entire album takes on a much more feel-good sound, as opposed to their previous angst-ridden albums.

Uplifting tracks like "Summertime" and "I Love This Town" can literally make listeners feel the country spirit of Nashville being brought out by the band while "(You Want To) Make a Memory" has all the hallmarks of a hit ballad that is sure to be picked up by deejays across the globe.

All in all, *Lost Highway* is certainly a good choice if you're a diehard Bon Jovi fan as it's worth listening to how they have managed to come up with a different theme yet somehow retained their original feel and style. —DANIEL NG

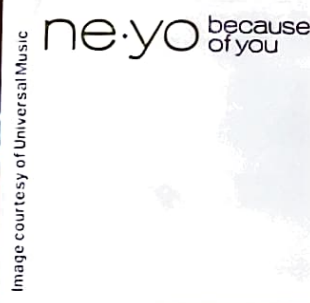


Image courtesy of Universal Music

**Because of You**  
NE-YO

Following the success of his first album, *In My Own Words* and penning chart-topping singles for Beyonce and Rihanna with "Irreplacable" and "Unfaithful" respectively, singer/songwriter Ne-Yo is back with his sophomore album, *Because of You*. His latest album has a good mix of melodic and groovy tracks, with the excessive usage of the synthesizer and strong progressive beats.

The album's title track, "Because of You" has received generous airplay as the first single off the album, for its catchy beat and feel good lyrics. The album also sees RnB heavyweight Rapper Jay-Z lending his voice to "Crazy". Another collaboration, "Leaving Tonight", is a duet featuring powerhouse vocalist Jennifer Hudson who has the uncanny ability to convey disappointment alongside her dynamic voice.

Ne-Yo's lyrical flair is evident even as he makes no effort to be subtle about sex. But the sexual innuendos in "Sex with My Ex" is taken a step further with suggestive lines that are almost too uncomfortable, like "and you... suddenly just lose control, begging me to smack it and pull yo hair".

*Because of You* has solidified the claim that Ne-Yo isn't merely a one-hit wonder. —VANESSA NG

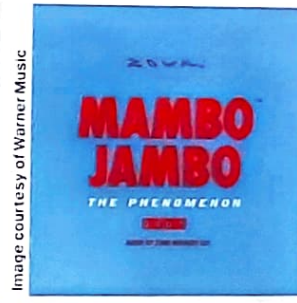


Image courtesy of Warner Music

**Mambo Jambo: The Phenomenon 2007**  
ZOUK

Warner Music Group collaborates with Zouk to present *Mambo Jambo: The Phenomenon 2007*, a compilation of 21 of the most popular Mambo hits in tribute to 15 years of Mambo Jambo nights and its unparalleled cult following.

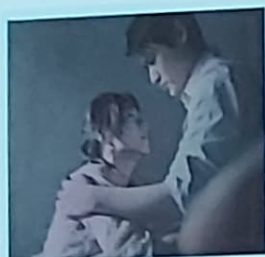
Vastly different from the 1998 offering, *Mambo Jambo - The Album*, this new release has been entirely mixed from vinyl by Zouk's resident DJs in order to reflect the true essence and energetic spirit that is Mambo Jambo.

It starts off with Timmy Thomas' "Dying Inside to Hold You" and follows through with crowd favourites like Spagna's "Call Me", New Order's "Bizarre Love Triangle" and of course, Bananarama's "Love In The First Degree" and "I Heard A Rumour".

Ending off with Lou Bega's "Mambo No. 5", the whole album is seamless from start to end, making for an interruption-free true-blue Mambo experience.

*The Phenomenon* is a thrill ride from start to end, delightfully crafted and mixed to make regular Mambo-goers dance in the privacy of their own rooms every night and day.

If you're a mambo virgin you'll love the very danceable tunes that is sure to get you hooked. —TONY THIO



## 安娜与安娜

文：许慧雯

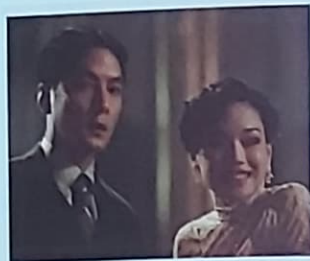
《安娜与安娜》展现了四个华人区域的人才，由中国一线演员陆毅、香港得奖影星林嘉欣、和台湾最具潜力的新人黄腾浩主演，势必擦出火花。

由林爱华执导的《安娜与安娜》，故事主轴环绕于Anna（林嘉欣饰），Anna有一段不堪回首的往事：她曾为了事业放弃一段刻骨铭心的感情。被新加坡公司派往上海后，她巧遇旧情人欧阳（陆毅饰）时，惊觉对方有个和自己长得一模一样的太太，后来发现对方就是自己的分身。Anna决定和分身交换身份一周，想和旧爱共叙旧情。

其分身落寞之下，飞往新加坡，却渐渐爱上痴情于Anna的男友Billy（黄腾浩饰）。Anna对于她又爱又恨的男人，不知该做出留下还是离去的抉择。片中欧阳对Anna说：“每个人做出抉择时都有他的原因，我们亦有我们的原因，只是生之为人，我们都希望自己有个选择，还是我们都以为自己有个选择。”

安娜的故事其实反映了人们现实生活中常见的现象，在面对选择时的不知所措。林嘉欣在剧中一人分饰两角，诠释出安娜与她分身的不同情感，考验了她的演技和情绪的收放。

这是一部引人感动的电影：生命总是逼着我们做出抉择，而每一个抉择将影响我们的一生。Anna最后的抉择会给她带来什么影响呢？那就走进电影院去看看她到底何去何从。这部由青春偶像担纲的影片瞄准暑期档，必定吸引中国与新加坡两地的年轻观众。



## 天堂口

文：廖玮珍

由吴宇森监制，新锐导演陈奕利执导的《天堂口》翻拍自吴宇森旧作《喋血街头》，该片演员阵容浩大，包括了李洪、吴彦祖、杨佑宁、张震、刘烨、李小龙等实力派偶像演员。

影片带观众重回那纸醉金迷的上世纪30年代的上海滩，讲述了上海黑帮的纷争与纠结。吴彦祖、刘烨、杨佑宁是从乡下来到上海闯世界的年轻人，在这个他们梦想中的“天堂”每个人都想干出一番事业。但自从风华正茂的舞女舒淇出现后，便带给这些原本情义深重的好兄弟们无法想象的冲击。舒淇作为老大的女人却和老大的手下张震感情暧昧，吴彦祖也无意中闯入了这段感情。对于自小在乡下长大，情同手足的穷小子们来说，上海就像是天堂，他们一直向往可以融入的繁华都市。但隐藏在这富丽迷人的城市背后，竟然是令人丧失理智的暴力与残酷。黑道之间的厮杀、男女之间的复杂关系，这些都改变了原本生活单纯的三个人。

电影不止描述体现黑帮纠葛之余，也有着重兄弟情谊和男女爱情的情节，让影片更加人性化。电影结合了“暴力美学”与“浪漫主义”精神，重现于扑朔迷离的上海滩，充满爱情情仇的氛围将带给观众不一样的上海风貌。

精心设计的多款服装造型，融入了每个角色的性格特点，将旧上海的时尚风格诠释得淋漓尽致。兄弟情、男人戏、演员的不同风格融合起来，给这部电影注入浓郁的激情和惊喜。

开创了香港黑帮电影“暴力美学”风格的吴宇森，此番决心重回华语影坛以《天堂口》“再战江湖”，众星云集的天堂口必定能擦出火花，但是“上海滩”类型的电影数不胜数，翻拍后的《天堂口》是否能独树一帜，和旧作比试甚至突破，便要留给观众去定义了。



## 导火线

文：姚若韵

影片讲述了一个英雄的故事。疾恶如仇的重案组长展马军（甄子丹饰）虽然身手不凡，但总是爱与人发生争斗。越南帮三兄弟有霸气纵横的大哥阿渣（吕良伟饰）、冷静狡猾的二哥Tony（邹兆龙饰）和打遍天下的三弟阿虎（行宇饰）黑道势力日益扩大，而三兄弟的死对头老鬼山（林国斌饰）是他们三人心想除掉的目标。

成功在望的他们，却没想到自己身边的得力保镖华生（古天乐饰）竟然是马军安插的卧底。虽然华生和马军合作多年，但华生因为越来越不满马军的火爆行事，导致他们俩常常发生口角与争端。就在一次由马军展开的拘捕行动，华生的卧底身份不但被揭穿，还惨遭歹徒推下车重伤昏迷，在他醒来后成为跛子。

同时，越南帮的三弟阿虎被警方抓获。此后，大哥阿渣的行动变得更加猖狂，一夜之间将能够指证他们的证人通通消灭，最后只剩下已成为拐子的华生做证人，但华生的女友（范冰冰饰）却被劫走。为了救女友华生只好隐瞒事实，阿虎也因此无罪释放。新任上司（许晴饰）因为马军违反警方条例而将他逮捕，然而马军为了要救华生及将渣哥一党绳之于法，不顾一切与他们拼死决斗。

《导火线》是2007年年度的重头警匪动作片之一。片名除了能配合玄学之说，其合意更能贴切表现电影主题及角色的性格。由叶伟信出任导演，甄子丹担任动作导演，武打场面延续了甄子丹真打真斗的功夫特点，还融入了美国“搏击格斗”的概念。演员阵容可观，是一部不容错过的影片。



## Magic Cyndi 不太一样的王心凌

文：陈慧婷

专辑《Magic Cyndi》维持王心凌一贯的可爱作风。专辑名称代表了王心凌想把生活中的不愉快的事情统统“变”不见，只保留那些美好的事物。

主打歌《爱的天灵灵》依然包含了“卡哇伊”的元素，混合了中西文化的曲目活泼开朗，给人富有活力的感觉。歌词里的“天灵灵”是道士在呼唤天地时常说的用语，与爱情不谋而合，象征呼唤爱情，相当有新意。

《原来这才是真的你》和《那年夏天宁静的海》走的是抒情风格，但后者却能听到不太一样的王心凌。《那年夏天宁静的海》搭配了交响乐团的弦乐，王心凌的歌声更显嘹亮，使整首歌的感动度加深。王心凌在诠释这两首歌曲时情感释放成熟，表现出了除了可爱之外的另外一面。

《火车快开》给人俏皮、可爱的感觉，但有点太过“甜腻”。反观《蝴蝶》就显得更加自然和真实。充斥着电子音色的《爱上了就不得了》是专辑里较动感的歌曲。

整体上来说，《Magic Cyndi》和王心凌的上几张专辑《爱你》、《Honey Honey》一样走的是可爱路线。也许是她甜美教主称号使她无法突破现有的“可爱”框框，这张专辑的突破在于王心凌首次尝试创作。歌曲《衣柜的秘密》是个不错的开始。



## 爱爱爱 尽现“大同风格” 方大同

文：林锦霞

《爱爱爱》是香港创作新人方大同的第二张个人专辑，里面收录了10首歌曲和2首特别收录歌曲。其中12首是他的作品，只有专辑中唯一一首英文歌不是。

翻唱歌曲通常让人觉得可能会比不上原汁原味，但方大同把这首Chicago的《If You Leave Me Now》诠释得还不错，听了也别具一番风味。抒情歌曲在方大同的演绎下，散发出了“大同”风格的独特唱腔，感觉与众不同。

电影有故事大纲，《爱爱爱》有专辑大纲。《Love Overload》就是这个“大同”。它解释了这专辑的主题——爱，讲述的不只是男女恋爱而是好友之间的友爱和世界的大爱。《手牵手》走的是50年代Rock 'N' Roll的风格，唱出了方大同喜爱的R&B和Soul。这首歌也彻底地展现了方大同宽广的音域，和绯闻女友薛凯琪合唱的对唱曲，诉说了一对已有新伴侣的男女却仍眷恋从前的一段感情，和旧情人重逢的故事。《四人游》别于一般的男女之间的感情缠绵，唱出了放不下旧情的矛盾、无奈。

方大同是香港乐坛近年来富有潜力的创作歌手之一，属于像周杰伦型的创作才子，被誉为“soulman”和音乐才子。

以创作新人姿态出现的方大同，能否掀起一股热潮，令人拭目以待。



## 《王子》张栋梁释放贵族风 张栋梁

文：翟君

每个女生都希望自己是公主，并且期待着有一天自己的王子能够出现。

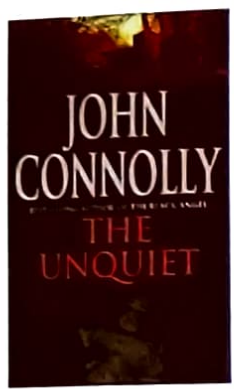
继偶像剧《微笑Pasta》在新马港台地区热播以后，由张栋梁诠释的“何群”这个角色深得人心。而栋梁的贵族气质也逐渐被发掘，从微笑男孩转型到捍卫爱情的王子！

专辑《王子》由资深制作人思聪、伟霖联手，花了1年3个月的时间，为栋梁量身打造出的全新音乐风格加上其原有的阳光般的灿烂气质，所以绝对是值得你一听再听的用心制作。

在新专辑中栋梁尝试了多种有别以前的曲风，而主打歌《王子》就是令人对他刮目相看的第一章。一向能把情歌诠释的丝丝入扣的微笑男孩，如今也可以很酷地尝试“Rap”加上摇滚曲风。而专辑中的另一首歌《游戏》，张栋梁配合“Hip-hop”和“R&B”，传达出一种对于爱情潇洒、帅气的态度。

只收录在星马专辑里的另一首歌《Heart》，也深深地打动了听者的心。值得一提的是张栋梁和好友曹格联手创作火花，联手打造出《晚安，宝贝》这首温暖甜蜜的晚安歌，让人听过之后，感受到心灵里最深处的宁静与安详。

2007最值得期待的王子张栋梁，带着他最真挚感人的声音和他敢于尝试的勇气，成功地向人们证明了他的成长和歌唱功底。《王子》就是栋梁带给听众最好的礼物。



### ◀ THE UNQUIET by John Connolly

If you, like me, have not picked up any of John Connolly's books previously, you'll be truly fascinated by how the Irish-born author has mastered the horror-thriller genre in *The Unquiet*, his latest offering to the Charlie Parker series.

Anti-hero Parker, love him or hate him, returns in what may be his deadliest operation yet. The private investigator is dragged headlong into another spine-chilling ride when his latest client, Rebecca Clay, is stalked by a professional hitman far too interested in her father.

Frank Merrick, the stalker, is driven by blind rage that his missing daughter was last seen by the child psychologist, and would stop at nothing to find him.

What follows is a gut-churning descent into the darkest parts of rural Maine, where the calm, laidback surface is just a cover for the unspoken horrors lurking beneath. Connolly's gradual building of the battle between Merrick and Parker with the supernatural is enough to make one's hair stand on end.

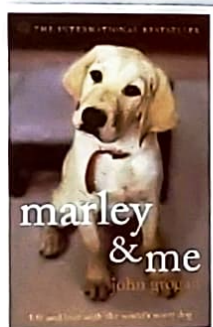
The end, when it comes, is a fittingly startling climax. Connolly's wonderfully descriptive hand in his gothic-like content will definitely keep you spellbound in a morbid sort of fashion, until the unpredictable truth is revealed. — DANIEL NG

### MARLEY & ME by John Grogan ▶

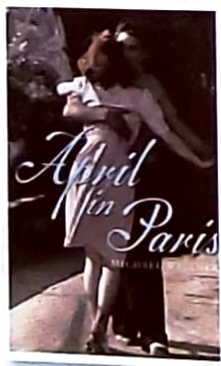
This book proves that all dogs are not made equal. In the Grogan family's case, Marley is a prime example of a hell-raiser. Taking care of a huge yellow 97-pound Labrador with neurotic tendencies and separation anxieties, the Grogans show that true willpower and undying love towards the canine deserves a whole lot of credit. A witty and entertaining read from John Grogan's point of view, you are led into the lives of the young couple who start out as plant-killers and end up as parents of two boys, one girl and a hyperactive dog.

The book is incredibly well written and you can't help but laugh out loud at the stunts the loopy Marley pulls. Tales of barging through screen doors, digging holes in concrete walls and gobbling up almost anything — whether edible or not — tug at your heartstrings as you wonder how a dog can be so nutty.

As the most embarrassing dog ever, Marley even gets banned from Dog Beach and kicked out from doggy Obedience School. But, despite his shortcomings, the Labrador's constant loyalty and commitment towards the family takes him through to the ripe age of 13 (91 in dog years). *Marley & Me* certainly takes the cake in showing how much animal lovers would compromise for their pets. — DEONEE



Images courtesy of Pansing Distribution



### ◀ APRIL IN PARIS by Michael Wallner

Set in the Nazi-occupied France of 1943, *April in Paris* tells of the passionate but utterly impossible love between a discontented German Secret Service translator and an enchanting French Resistance fighter.

The disguise, dishonesty and desperation unfold with Michael Wallner's introduction of Chantal Joffo, the daughter of a bookstore owner. Chantal's first appearance is fleeting and you find yourself pleasantly bewildered. Like the unquestioning soldier, Michael Roth, you'll be as obsessed as he is with her.

The tiny details released at an excruciatingly slow pace leaves you stumbling over cracked cobblestones in search of more. The author manages to enthrall the reader with his attention to detail. He painstakingly describes everything in a room, in the streets, right down to the click of the barber's scissors.

Similar to Anita Shreve, author of *Resistance*, Wallner sets the romance amid hideous Nazi torture sessions and ungodly cell conditions. Also mimicking Shreve's style, Wallner allows his story to unfold slowly and constantly sinks his characters into a hazy fuzz, leaving them as well as the reader slightly confused.

Translated from German by John Cullen, *April in Paris* is sprinkled with conversations held in French. If you've always been fascinated by the workings of the Nazi regime, love faced with insurmountable odds and the ever romantic arrondissements, *April in Paris* is the perfect read. — DENISE TAN

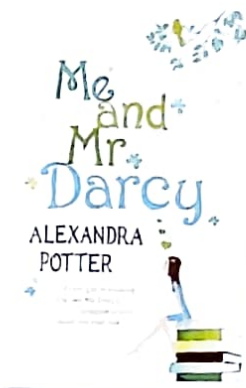
### ME AND MR DARCY by Alexandra Potter ▶

Alexandra Potter's magical touch on romance-comedy novels has once again brought us a winner. Taking off from her first novel, *Be Careful What You Wish For*, *Me and Mr Darcy* is once again based on the protagonist's deepest love fantasies.

With reference to the romance novel of all time, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Me and Mr Darcy* is based on a protagonist named Emily Albright, whose dream man is none other than Mr Darcy.

Done with dating modern men, Emily Albright's perfect man is the handsome, brooding and repressed Mr Darcy — or so she thinks. She signs herself up with a Jane Austen book tour and it seems like a vacation from hell when she's stuck with arrogant journalist Spike Hargreaves and a group of retirees. Everything seems to be going downhill until she bumps into Mr Darcy himself. Has Emily found her true love, or is it just a fantasy?

*Me and Mr Darcy* is an entertaining and easy read that you'll find hard to put down. Throw in the mysterious Mr Darcy who seems to appear out of nowhere and the feisty and unpredictable group of lovable retirees, you've got yourself a read. — GERALDINE WONG



### ◀ JAPANESE SCHOOLGIRL INFERNO by Patrick Macias & Izumi Evers

One's strangest encounter would probably be with tweezers-wielding 'eyebrow-guru', Steven Lim. Horrifying as he is, even the Tangs ambush king wouldn't inspire the shocked step backwards. Not after you read the *Japanese Schoolgirl Inferno*, that is.

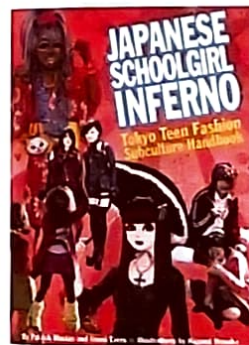
Half trashy teen magazine, half V-day reject, the busy cover attempts to blatantly blind you, but don't be put off, for there's a little more substance hidden within. Well researched, this read explores and dissects the various Japanese schoolgirl fashion profiles and backgrounds from the 1970s right up to present time.

Its pages are littered with drawings and photographs, making it almost like flipping through an animated film. A disturbing animated film.

These girls scream originality, preach individuality and breathe dedication. Interviews, must-have items, make-up tips and 'ideal boyfriend' guidelines pack this manual, rightfully inviting 14-year-old females to gush maniacally. Kawaii? Not.

Whether you're genuinely interested in the Japanese youth culture or simply leafing through for laughs, it's almost guaranteed that you won't set this cotton-candy explosion down till you've reached the very last bits.

Gwen Stefani and her Harajuku girls can 'Wind it Up' and carry on walking off a bridge. They don't have anything on these girls. — DIYANA ISMAIL

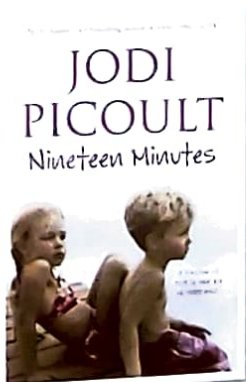


### NINETEEN MINUTES by Jodi Picoult ▶

Seasoned Jodi Picoult readers should know by now that her stories often revolve around exciting courtroom trials which hook you into the story and maim your ability to put the book down. For her latest instalment, *Nineteen Minutes*, Picoult fans will be delighted at the return of Jordan McAfee, a terribly charismatic lawyer who made appearances in *Salem Falls* and *The Pact*, and heroic detective Patrick Ducharme from *Perfect Match*.

Unlike the unbelievably addictive *Salem Falls*, wherein a man who has been wrongly accused of rape time and again stands trial to fight for his rights, *Nineteen Minutes* might not give you similar thrills. Especially when you already know that Peter Houghton, who was victimised by bullies all the way from kindergarten through high school, indeed killed 10 students and injured many others in a pre-planned shooting at Sterling High.

Chillingly reminiscent of the Virginia Tech massacre that occurred earlier this year, Picoult unravels a compelling story about life as a student in modern-day society, striking the reader with truth and emotion, and making it a must for reflection. — ADELINE YEO



**Zaka Zaka**[www.blog.zakka-zakka.com](http://www.blog.zakka-zakka.com)

The good old days of meticulously sewing and knitting are long gone, but the craft of embroidered handiwork is still appreciated even by the young. Specialising in knits and crochet, Zaka Zaka gives inspiration to the modern dresser by reinventing old styles to create unique works. Look for other posts on craft book reviews, short tutorials for making cute crafts and other cool handmade products from all over the world. If you're still adamant in believing that knitting is only for those above 60, the fact that Russell Crowe and Julia Roberts are avid fans of the balls of string should be enough to change your mind.

**LazySusan**[www.lazysusan.biz](http://www.lazysusan.biz)

Long-time best friends, Denise Tan and Sue Ann Lee, both 31, started LazySusan in February this year. Their childhood arts and craft days carried on through to adulthood when they started sewing seriously last year. But the two self-taught sewing enthusiasts also have a weak spot for all things edible. "So, we decided to put our two passions together to come up with something cute and wearable for everyone to enjoy," says Denise.

The result is a cute collection of handicrafts featuring sweet delights such as gingerbread man, cupcakes and frosted donuts. To cater to customers who appreciate the time and effort put into craftsmanship, everything in LazySusan is 100 percent designed and handmade by the duo.

Photos courtesy of LazySusan

**FARM**  
[www.farm.sg](http://www.farm.sg)

Design buffs can rejoice as FARM, one of the few comprehensive and active online art and design sources in Singapore, has created a platform for creativity. Not only can the members network through the online postings, but they can also form resource networks where they can group together to share equipment such as lightings and even rope in each other's talents. And apart from that they can also get updated on local and international design competitions. Even if you flunked art, FARM is a worthwhile visit to uncover other Singaporeans' talents in the arts.

# ONLINE SHOPAHOLICS

Looking for some inspiration? Whether you're into funky items, design, clothing or you just want something to spruce up your bedroom, DEONE EE gives you a quick guide to some of the coolest local blogs and online stores around.

**What can you splurge on?**

Gingerbread men, cupcakes, siew mai, California hand rolls and frosted donuts.

Sounds more like a buffet spread than a shopping site? Well, there aren't any calories to worry about here. Customisation is also available for all products as they are only crafted once the orders come in. Waiting time is usually a week.

**What's the damage?**

Prices for these handmade craftworks range from \$15 to \$25. Delivery is free for all local purchases.

**SkinnyMunster**  
[www.skinnymunster.com](http://www.skinnymunster.com)

SkinnyMunster was founded in 2005 by t-shirt design lovers and tech-geeks, Ardy Ismail, 28, and Nizar K C, 26. The idea of setting up an online store was birthed when they realised that the shipping charges for purchases from international online stores were emptying their pockets. When their pals expressed the same concerns, they built an online store based in Singapore that offers local and international brands at a much more affordable cost. "We wanted to showcase clothes that flaunted style and design from a store that offers variety and 24-7 accessibility," says Ardy.

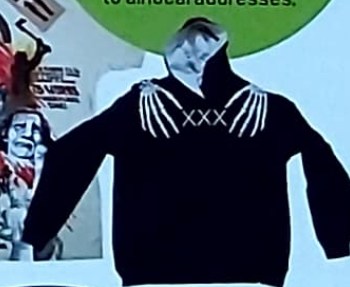
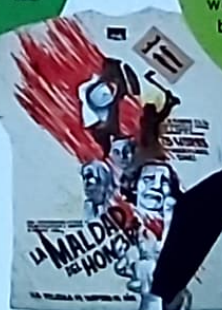
Photos courtesy of SkinnyMunster

**What can you splurge on?**

This is the place to find cult design t-shirt brands from USA like Tank Theory, Ubiquity, Nuflo and Threadless. With new stocks arriving every month, SkinnyMunster maintains its exclusivity and uniqueness, by importing only one to four pieces per design.

**What's the damage?**

Depending on the brand, most items are priced from \$30 for a t-shirt to slightly over \$80 for a sweatshirt. On the plus side, you needn't worry about shipping costs, because postage is free to all local addresses.

**ImedaGoze**  
[www.imedagoze.blogspot.com](http://www.imedagoze.blogspot.com)

Need design inspirations to revamp your boring-looking room? ImedaGoze is an interesting read for the latest scoop on home décor. Featuring hip and chic design trends from all over the globe, it's a different experience from flipping through an Ikea catalogue; with the range of posts going from space-age looking chairs to kitschy fabrics. Who knew that wall stickers could transform a space from drab to hip in less than five minutes? A note of caution though, staying at the site for too long will make you want to do re-do your room!

**Your Lifestore**  
[www.your-lifestore.com](http://www.your-lifestore.com)

Ray Juan, 25, Director of Your Lifestore, founded this fashion blog last year. Running the business as a one-man show, he frequently flies to places like Hong Kong, China, Korea and Thailand to source for the latest innovative products and ideas to fill the shelves of the store. He says, "our concept is to try to do things differently, we search high and low for things with a twist, products that are inspirational, quirky and downright fun."

**What can you splurge on?**

Given the company's mission to "Always be first with the latest hot stuff", you can often find products at Your Lifestore before they make it to the local retail shops. Given the wide array of products, you can find items ranging from wall stickers to the outrageous novelty 'Bedroom Romance' kits to spice up your nights. Other interesting items include coughing ashtrays, colour changing mood clocks and a mini USB-powered aquarium.

Photos courtesy of Your Lifestore

**What's the damage?**

Prices cover a wide spectrum. \$5.90 can get you a splattering venting ball while \$99.90 will bring you a sleek clock manufactured by London-based design firm Joseph Joseph.



## OOPS! I DID IT AGAIN

Liquids aren't quite a gadget's best friend and DEONE EE shows how to salvage the watery mess if you happen to spill a drink over one of your precious items.

The popular myth is that liquid is the killer of the gadget, but the fact is that the appliance only dies when it is switched on, causing a short circuit. Said an IT technician (who declined to be named), "The worst thing you could possibly do after you drop it into water is to switch it on. Almost all the customers I have seen who do this never manage to save their gadget."

So how do you go about resuscitating your item that's either had a drink spilt over it, fallen into a bucket of water or the toilet bowl? **hype** came up with a quick fix list, with the help of our IT technician friend, to save your gadget.

**Step 1:** Unplug all electrical points and remove the battery to prevent corrosion. Detach any other part that can be removed, such as the cover of the handphone or the external CD drive of a laptop.

**Step 2:** Dry the device. These are some ways you can do so:

- Put your sopping wet device into a bowl of uncooked rice grains or silica gel. This helps absorb all traces of liquid from the nooks and crannies.
- Place all the parts in the vent of the hood of the stove. Likewise, you can also put it near any kind of vent – like behind your television set or fridge.
- Spread out all the parts under a high wattage tungsten bulb and leave them to dry. The low heat will help to evaporate the liquid.
- Use a hair dryer on a cool or low setting to blow the rest of the water out. Be careful to not overheat the appliance as it might end up melting instead!

Most importantly, be patient. Try to resist testing out your gadget after a couple of hours of drying. It is best to leave it for at least 24 hours.

Photo by Stephanie Goh

## LAP THIS UP

Being already oh-so-fashionable in school, who would ever want to commit the crime of carrying a laptop case that is just a piece of canvas or plastic? Getting a bag that stands out is not a problem with the latest nifty, pretty carriers worth every dollar. RACHEL TAN reports.

A laptop case has become a fashion statement especially when modern executives and students alike carry their laptop around like a second skin. Thankfully, designers have rallied to the call for unique and pretty laptop carriers.

### GRAB AND GO

Local brand Fabrix, established in March 2006, is known for designing vibrant and eye-catching laptop sleeves. Each sleeve is limited in stock, which maintains exclusivity. Best of all, each case is handmade.

The sleeves are soft to touch and when you slide your laptop in, it fits snugly. The cushioning feels adequate, but it doesn't give a sense of security of your laptop remaining uncashed if it should fall.

The deluxe laptop case range is readily available for Apple Macbooks, but if you own any other laptop, Fabrix offers customisation services for an additional \$5. If purchased online, the waiting time for a readily available model takes three to four days, while a customised one takes six to eight days. Prices range from \$49.90 to \$59.90, depending on the design and size.

[www.fabrixcases.com](http://www.fabrixcases.com) - Visit this website for pictures.

### LOOK NO HANDS!

Local brand Flake marries minimalist and utilitarian design in one great package. Their bags come in messenger and tote variations, which can be comfortably slung over your shoulder. All bags come in a combination of two colours – a main colour and another for the trimming.

The sling is made from a single strip of fabric that wraps the bag completely, giving it a clean contemporary look. Not only is the sling comfortable on the shoulder, but the case is sturdy and is padded. A protruding trimming around the bag allows it to stand upright, preventing the laptop from any possible impact.

Flake bags are made for Apple Macbooks only, but they are considering producing bags that fit other laptops too. Prices range from \$85 to \$95, depending on model and size. [www.flakeflake.com](http://www.flakeflake.com) - Visit this website for pictures.

### SOPHISTICATION

Acme Made is a trendy brand from the United States that started in 2002. Using quality materials such as Italian leather, coupled with European designs varying from contemporary to retro, the laptop cases are great for the working individual. Among the designs available here, the "Designer Slim" series is the most popular and it's easy to see why. Colourful yet understated, each case is tastefully made to get you noticed the right way.

The briefcases in this series are boxy in nature, due to the protective materials used. Protection-wise, the case offers high protection as the cases are hard. However, besides the laptop and some loose sheets of paper, nothing else could fit in.

Although the briefcases are designed for Apple Macbooks, they fit other brands pretty well too. Prices range from \$129 to \$519, depending on design and size. [www.acmemade.com](http://www.acmemade.com) - Visit this website for pictures.

Fabrix cases can be found at iShop by Club 21 at Orchard Cineleisure, AppleCentre@Funan and MacShop at Funan Digitalife Mall. Flake is only available at Macshop at Funan Digitalife Mall. Acme Made is available at Anthropology at Holland Village and Raffles City, iShop by Club 21 at Orchard Cineleisure and Sony Square at North Bridge Road.

Photo used for reference courtesy of Acme Made

# SURVIVING AN IT SHOW

You may know where and what the good buys are and even know which booth has the hottest sales girls, but are you aware of the pitfalls at an IT show? Goh Ying Min fills you in.

Last year, The PC Show lured 700,000 visitors and generated a jaw-dropping \$18 million in sales. While the exhibitors enjoy their huge profits, consumers too should be aware of where they're putting their money.

1

**Model Switch:** Many consumers discover that they receive a lower-end model when they had paid for a higher-end one. It may be an honest mix-up of models by the sales staff, but in any case, do check the model number on the product stickers to see if you've got what you've paid for.

**Old Trick:** The prices at IT shows seem like a bargain, but first find out whether the model you are buying is a current one – you wouldn't want to pay for old technology. Ms Lam Sze Wei, manager of PC Connect Pte Ltd, says that when "there is an over-supply of products and stock in the market, many brands and vendors use IT

2

**Cash Is King:** Many consumers are unaware that there is a transaction charge of 3 percent from the bank to the resellers and for that reason they do not accept credit card payment. Ms Lam said, "There is a drop in margin on the products and thus, we resellers can no longer bear the charges." So, it's good to bring along some cash with you to IT shows.

**Stock Check:** Check stock availability before placing your order, because when resellers oversell and there is no ready stock that can be shipped to the customers after the show, stocks take weeks to arrive in Singapore and another few more weeks to reach the customer from vendors.

4

**Proof of Purchase:** Always ask for the promoter's name and keep your receipt in case of discrepancies. Resellers will need to know who made the commitment so that they can verify with him or her. You will also need your receipt as proof of purchase.

5

## IT SHOW LINEUP

There are four IT shows in a year (IT Show, The PC Show, Comex and Sitex).

If you have missed out on the hot deals from the IT Show and The PC Show, there's still Comex and Sitex where you can snap up some pretty good deals.

**Comex,** Suntec City Exhibition Centre, Levels 3, 4 and 6, Aug 30 to Sep 2 from 12pm to 9pm

**Sitex,** Singapore Expo Halls 4, 5 and 6, Nov 29 to Dec 2 from 11am to 9pm

## TECH SPECS FOR DUMMIES

GHz is the measurement unit of the processor speed. The average processor speed for laptops today is 1.8GHz. The higher the processor speed, the faster the laptop runs.

RAM refers to the memory a laptop has and is usually measured in terms of MB or GB. 1024MB is equivalent to 1GB. For a laptop running on Windows Vista, 1GB of RAM is needed for it to operate smoothly but resellers recommend 2GB of RAM for faster performance.

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# Samsung SGH-E840

BY TONY THIO



## The epitome of style

Samsung's SGH-E840 is what the company calls the slimmest slider phone in the world (at time of print). Compared to Samsung's last ultra-thin slider, the U600, at 10.9mm, the E840 is just 10.6mm, making it truly a gem for the fashion conscious. But apart from its slickness and ultra chic silver casing the SGH-E840 also has excellent features.

### Features

This quad-band GSM/EDGE phone features a 262K QVGA TFT-LCD screen, an MP3/WMA/AAC+/AAC music player, and a 2 mega-pixel camera, all in its elegantly slim form. Leave the phone on standby, and the screen becomes a mirror that you can check your reflection with.

The screen also serves as a touch keypad for where the usual right and left soft keys would be, as well as the call, and hang-up buttons. Hidden beneath the slider is an encased, metallic touch keypad that is sleek to the touch and very easy to press.

The SGH-E840 also comes with 70MB of internal storage, along with a microSD memory expansion slot that can be used to add up to 2GB of additional storage. Bluetooth 2.0 and USB 2.0 connectivity are available on the phone for moving music, images, and other files around efficiently.

With the battery rated as providing 3.5 hours of talktime, and 270 hours of stand-by time, **hype** has gone three days on normal usage (100+ text messages, a couple of phone calls, playing the games) before having to recharge the phone battery.

### Flaws

The keypad does take getting used to, especially while text messaging as initially, you might feel hampered by the sides of the phone. The supposedly intuitive T9 English dictionary also takes getting used to, and it does slow down your text messaging speed considerably.

The 2.0 mega-pixel camera that's included in the phone is certainly not as powerful as the 3.2 mega-pixel cameras that most phones of today have. It also takes quite a few seconds too long to activate the camera function, and in today's world of "blink and you miss it" photography opportunities, you'll find yourself cursing and swearing.

### The Verdict

Overall, it is a beautiful phone, and while it does not boast a powerful camera, still has a form-factor and stylish design that exudes flash and substance.

## The Sims Pet Stories

by Geraldine Wong



There's a new addition to the Sim's family – **The Sims Pet Stories**. But while The Sims traditionally followed a non-linear gameplay where you're unrestricted, when it comes to molding your own world, Pet Stories follows a more structured gameplay.

In the game, users get two storylines to choose from: Alice or Stephen. Alice is entering her Dalmatian in a local contest hoping to win a prize while Stephen is a successful chef having to deal with a poorly trained cat.

With 12 chapters in each story, each chapter focuses on your pet's training and achieving goals which, of course, leads to rewards. But fret not, there's no penalty invoked if you fail to complete a chapter.

However, if you would much rather stick to the

traditional way of playing Sims, there's still the sandbox mode where you can create your own Pet's world with a variety of 70 breeds of dogs and 30 feline types to choose from.

Pet Stories remains similar to the Sims formula with its good music and resolution. Plus, the great thing about the game is that it doesn't require high visual specifications or processing power, which means even though you may have several programmes running at once, it doesn't slow down the system.

In a nutshell, although Pet Stories might be considered mild compared to some of the other Sims series like Hot Date, it still has enough in the sandbox to engage you nonetheless.

Price: \$51.90



## Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix

by Benjamin Tay

Enter the magical world of Hogwarts once more, with landscapes and surroundings lively animated. What fans will have no complaints about is the feeling of really being at Hogwarts and being able to explore every nook and cranny. Spellcasting effects are highly detailed and well-animated as well, though it'll take some time remembering the casting methods of the dozen spells available at your disposal; all of which are available for casting anytime during the game.

What the graphics in this game delivers, the audio does one notch better, with all 22 characters reprised by the original voices of Daniel Radcliffe, Emma Watson and company. Thankfully with the sound effects and dialogue crystal clear, it does make up for the game's mediocre gameplay.

As much as exploring the castle is great fun, having to repeat the mindless task of finding each of the 28 students scattered all over for Dumbledore's Army can become quite boring. Also, the heavily featured use of the Marauder's Map just doesn't quite cut it. After all, who likes to keep staring at a map while moving around? Oh, and you may find that the obscure camera views often hinder your line of vision.

While the gameplay is severely tested for its inadequacies, the game is saved, thankfully, by its richly animated and surreal environment. If you're not a fan of Harry Potter games to begin with, and would rather watch the movie instead, it'd be better if you give this game a miss. But if you intend to play this game, remember that patience is a virtue.

Price: \$58.80

# Games for Dames

Is WoW (World of Warcraft) a mere exclamation to you? Are you bored with surfing celebrity gossip blogs and Friendster profiles? ADELIN YEO adds a new dimension to your world with two websites designed especially for gaming virgins.

## Featured games:

If you find downloading games too much of a hassle, or if you don't know how to (hush, we won't tell), these websites are perfect for you! And you won't have to worry about complicated instructions – just click and play.

Wrigley's will take you to the Candy Shop

Wrigley's Candystand has a wide variety of games ranging from arcade to puzzles and to sports games. Every game is adorned with colourful sweets, a treat for candy lovers. Do not expect to burn any calories from figure skating through – the only movement you're going to make is with your mouse.



hole-in-one. You can also choose the two-player mode by clicking on the "Challenge A Friend" button. However, you must first have a Candystand user account. Registration is free!

## Miniature Golf

Golf courses have never looked tastier. The objective is to complete the 18-hole game with the highest score possible, which is not as easy as it sounds. Do be aware of protected Lifesaver candies that get in the way of making that



## Billiards

Thank goodness for virtual game play! Choose the 'High Score' mode for a simple, shoot and score game. Save yourself from being surrounded by Ah Bengs and cheesy Chinese techno music. Feel like a pro as you execute smooth shots with a simple click and drag of the mouse. That's all you have to do to try and put as many balls in the pockets.

Hit this: [www.candystand.com](http://www.candystand.com)

## Original is Original

Arguably one of the best flash game websites, Original probably will be one of your favourite sites. The only setback is that the games are not labelled, so randomly clicking on each (adorably illustrated) thumbnail is the only way to find out what the game is about – think of it as a surprise.

## Featured games:



## Winterbells

It might be winter, there might be bells, but really, the main character of the game is the white ball of fluff – a bunny that ventures through the sky with bells. Don't panic when your furry little critter drops, he never dies.



## Hungry Spiders

If you hate spiders and hitting these eight-legged freaks gives you immense satisfaction, this game

is just for you. You get to smack spiders with a device, which looks like a magnifying glass. This is also recommended when your boyfriend is too occupied with his own gaming and refuses to go out. Pretend that he is a spider for better game play.

Hit this: [www.orisinal.com](http://www.orisinal.com)



## Pocketful of Stars

A cute little girl squeaks as she attempts to reach for the stars. The game is almost too simple, and too addictive. The tell-tale high scores which seem virtually impossible to reach tell us that there are people who spend hours on this.



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# GAMING GALORE

Imagine Dwarves and Elves wielding weapons. British colonists engaging in crushing combat and real-life players thinking up scheming strategies to outwit, outplay and outlast their opponents. Delve deep into virtual reality as DIYANA ISMAIL brings you 'Beyond the Game' to the World Cyber Games.

Photos courtesy of Rapture Gaming

Singapore will yet again play host to the most prestigious e-sporting event in the world – the **World Cyber Games (WCG) Asian Championship**.

This is the third year Singapore is playing host, the first being in 2005. The WCG held its inaugural **Asian Championship** in 2006, and the 2007 edition will be held from Aug 2-5.

Gamers from 12 countries from across Asia and Oceania (Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Hong Kong, South Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam) will be competing for the coveted title of Asian Champion.

And not long after the sweet dust of victory settles, the Asian Champions will be battling on an international level in the hope of winning the Grand Finals in Seattle later this year.

Games set to determine the fates of the contenders this year are: **FIFA 07, Warcraft III: The Frozen Throne, Age of Empires III: The War Chiefs, Defence of the Ancients (DotA) All Stars and Dead or Alive 4.**

Strangely enough, the highly popular real-time strategy game, **Starcraft: Broodwar** was not selected for this year's Asian competition – especially since global gaming website ([www.ggl.com](http://www.ggl.com)) conducted an online poll asking gamers which games they thought should be chosen for the world tour. Gamers' choices included **Warcraft III, Counter-Strike: Source and Dead or Alive 4.** But of the 4,533 votes cast, the highest percentage of votes (29 percent) went to **Starcraft: Broodwar** while **Dead or Alive 4** garnered only one percent.

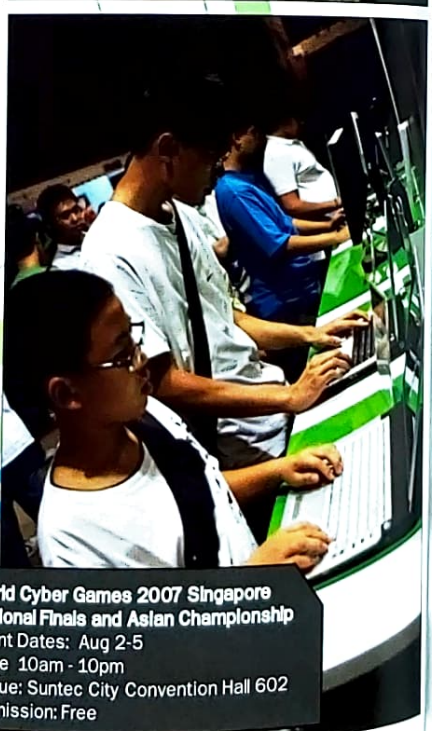
The WCG, according to its official website, calls itself the "world's first Cyber Games Festival" and hopes to "lead the development of the digital entertainment culture by promoting harmony of humankind through e-sports and its embodiment in the Cyber Culture Festival".

With its slogan, "Beyond the Game", the WCG also hopes to strip away cultural barriers through a healthy gaming culture.

Just seven years ago, the first WCG had 17 participating countries before swelling to its current number of 70. South Korea paved the way for Asians, sweeping the Grand Finals last year. And perhaps this time around, Singapore which is ranked 23rd in the world will have a shot at the World Title.

After all, it's not "Beyond the Game" for Singapore to win right?

For more information, log onto [www.sg.worldcybergames.com](http://www.sg.worldcybergames.com)



**World Cyber Games 2007 Singapore National Finals and Asian Championship**  
Event Dates: Aug 2-5  
Time: 10am - 10pm  
Venue: Suntec City Convention Hall 602  
Admission: Free

Spoilt for choice on what to do? VANESSA NG shows you some events worth making time for.

## ARTSingapore

Be one of the first to watch young artists set the art trends for the next few years here at **ARTSingapore**. Since 2001, this annual contemporary visual art fair is a platform for art aficionados and artists to view and share their works. The fair focuses on Asian art to encourage participation of artists from around the region. This event is a great opportunity if you are looking to hone an eye for contemporary art pieces.

Oct 2-8, Suntec Convention Centre, Adults: \$10, Students and children under 16: Free Season Pass (4 days): \$20 per adult.

## Burn the Floor presents Floorplay

Since 1998, **Burn the Floor** has been setting fire to stages across the globe with sensational dance moves. Floorplay has received critical acclaim and the **New York Daily News** describes the performance as "a sexy, steamy, sophisticated dance extravaganza". The talented international cast include award-winning dancers who will perform different styles of dance with arresting chemistry and sleek techniques.

Aug 29 - Sep 2, Esplanade Theatre. \*

## Perform Performing

John Roller, a Berlin choreographer, presents this German three-part story that explores the practicality of being an artist by profession. The first part, 'No Money, No Love' explains how dance doesn't put food on the table. The second part, 'Art Gigolo', acknowledges that when viewed in monetary terms, art is not worth it. The final part, 'The Way I Like It' questions the value of dance as a profession especially as state funding continues to decline.

Aug 10-11, Esplanade Theatre Studio. \*

## da:ns Festival

Following up after last year's success, the **da:ns** festival is back again this year with a swirl of dance genres from hip-hop to ballet to contemporary dances. Catch spectacular performances by international productions like **Telophaza** from Israel and be wowed by acclaimed French choreographer **Jerome Bel**. Learn how to use your body to express your deepest emotions and get your feet and pulse moving to the beat at this festival! Oct 12-21, The Esplanade. \*

**Rebirth:** **Shirlyn's Newfound Jealousy**  
Veteran local singer Shirlyn Tan, who has been singing for a decade, will be belting out her self-composed songs from her debut album, **Newfound Jealousy** which she wrote to find peace at a point when she "was struggling to maintain some semblance of normality". Check out her powerhouse vocals as she croons at this intimate music session.  
Sep 25, Esplanade Concert Hall, Free.  
Visit [www.esplanade.com](http://www.esplanade.com) for more details.

## NDP at the Bay

For the first time, the National Day Parade will be held at Marina Bay and an intricately designed floating platform has been built exclusively for the event. The site began construction from as early as January this year and will accommodate an audience of 27,000. This year's NDP promises to be more exciting and spectacular, especially with the iconic backdrop of the Esplanade.  
Aug 9, Marina Bay Floating Platform, Free, Admission by ticket only, visit [www.ndp.org.sg](http://www.ndp.org.sg) for more details.

\* Tickets at SISTIC ([www.sistic.com.sg](http://www.sistic.com.sg)) or call the hotline at 6319 3292. Prices vary for different events, student concessions available.

You can't sit through a movie without having at least one device on your body beep or buzz.

You sign off all your messages by putting ":-)" next to your name

## WHEN TECHNOLOGY HAS GONE TOO FAR

The 21st century brings with it a digital lifestyle that our forefathers would never have dreamed of. AVIE MERCADO lists 10 signs that tell you technology has got the better of you.

Illustration by Stephanie Goh

You wake up at 3am to go to the toilet and stop and check your email on the way back to bed.



You've never played solitaire with a real deck of cards.

Your dog has its own home page.



Instead of calling you to come back for dinner, your mum sends you an email invitation.

When your teacher asks what sound a mouse makes, you answer "click, ma'am!" instead of "squeak".

You tell your friends that you broke off with your boyfriend/girlfriend, because you upgraded to a new one.

You try entering your password on the microwave.

You remember all your friends by their MSN nicknames.

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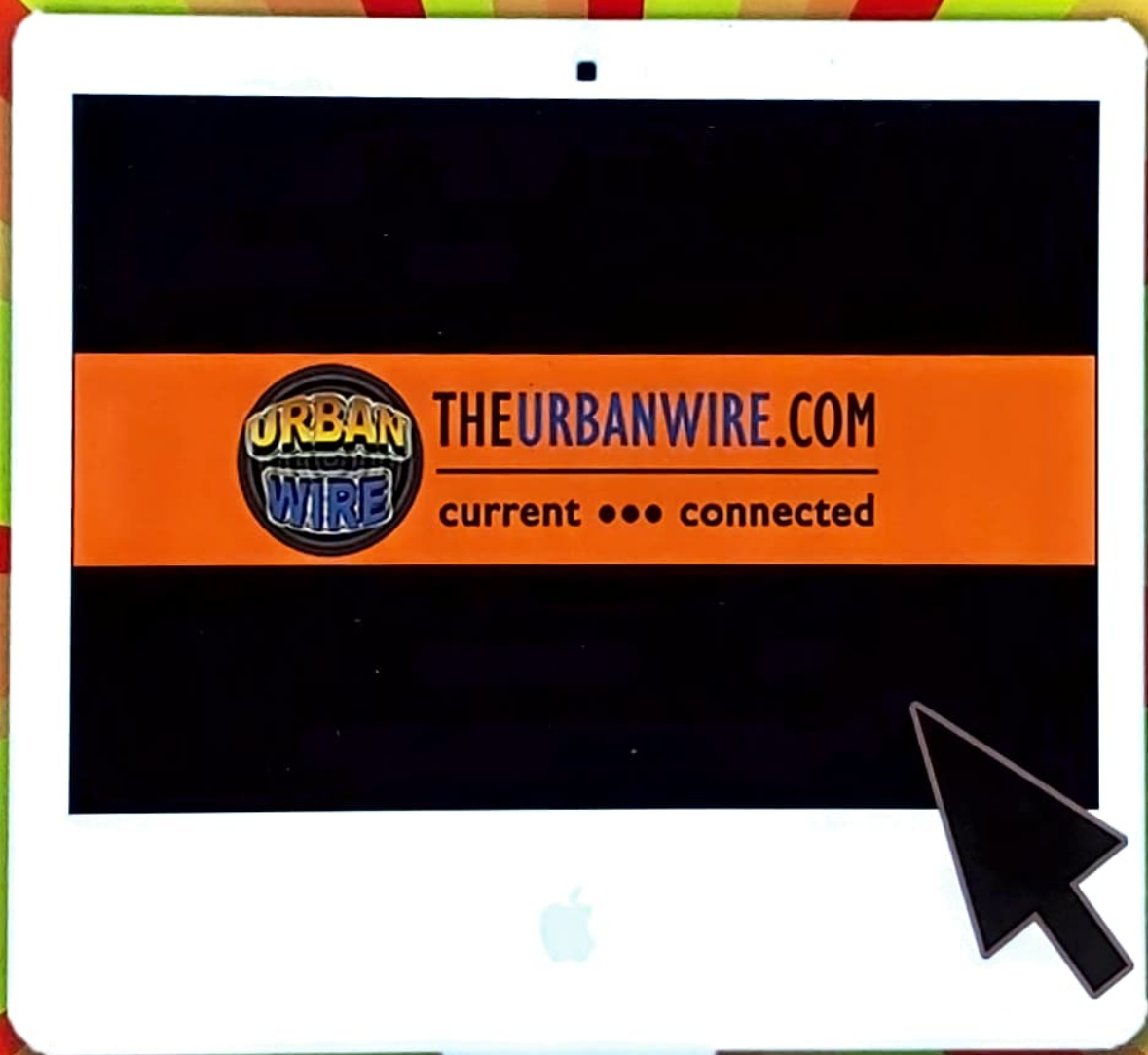
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