

hype

VOLUME 27
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2008
FREE

DATELESS IN BEIJING:

Why a whole
generation of
men is in limbo

SLEEPLESS IN SINGAPORE:

How the young of
Singapore are losing
their edge

FISTS OF FURY:

Inside a
gentleman's
fight club

RED, WHITE, & HOT

What makes you belong?



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CHONG LIBING [EDITOR]



photo by: he running

I remember when I was a kid, I knew my national day songs at the back of my head, and I would sing them louder than anyone else in my class. But, at the tender age of eight, the words were nothing more than just words. Ah, those innocent and naïve days.

Currently 18 turning 19, I finally understand what it means to be a Singaporean. I've lived here all my life, I know my way around here, I love the food here, and all my family and friends are here! Singapore's where I come from and where I'll stay on. More than exams, deadlines and home, above all, Singapore is where I'm strongly attached to, physically and emotionally. Nowhere in the world makes me feel safer than Singapore.

We celebrate our nation's 43rd birthday in our "We Love Singapore" special from page 4 to 15. National identity is not the only thing gripping the world as the Beijing Olympics open this month. The fastest, the biggest, the best and the most graceful feats aside, hype checks out the majesty and charm of Beijing in "Beijing Dreams" from page 16 to 21.

This sense of patriotism definitely comes with time and maturity. Hype doesn't expect you to change your likings overnight but do take some time out and ask yourself, "What has your country done for you?" And you'll be surprised how a country can develop your character and shape you into someone you never know you'd be.

Like how Tanya Chua croons to "Where I Belong" as a theme song for National Day Parade in 2001, Singapore is definitely "where I belong, where I keep my heart and soul".

GET HYPE AT:

77TH STREET

The Heeren Shops, #05-03/30
Far East Plaza, #01-31/35
Parco Bugis Junction, #03-30A

FLASH 'N' SPLASH

The Heeren Shops, #02-07/09
Citylink Mall, #B1-16/17

STUSSY

Pacific Plaza, #01-07/08

ISLAND CREAMERY

Serene Centre, #01-05

LEVI'S®

Marina Square, #02-319
Ngee Ann City, Tower B, #B1-30
Parkway Parade Shopping Centre, #01-41
Raffles City Shopping Centre, #01-32
Suntec City Mall, #01-062

DESIGNED IN SINGAPORE

25 Muhammad Sultan Road

MISS CLARITY CAFÉ

5 Purvis Street, #01-04

RICKS

Far East Plaza, #01-95

TIMBRE

45 Armenian Street

WALA WALA

Holland Village 31 Lorong
Mambong

BLU JAZZ

11 Bali Lane

NEBO

Ang Mo Kio Hub

SETTLERS CAFÉ

Central Shopping Mall

HOME CLUB

The Riverwalk, #B1-01/06 20

BOOKSACTUALLY

5 Ann Siang Road

SOON LEE

26 Haji Lane

Look out for the
SINGAPORE SPECIAL
icon!



THE hype

WE LOVE
SINGAPORE
SPECIAL

"This is home, truly, where I know I must be"

Showing patriotism is not just about sticking a stick-on Singapore flag tattoo on your face or singing National Day theme songs louder than usual on Aug 9.

Ever wondered what the Singapore Spirit means? hype found youths who shared their views and definitions towards that. Also, see how youths express their love for the nation through planning a large-scale event, just for Singapore. Don't forget to welcome new Singaporeans and listen to what they have to say about their decision in being here. Hear the people behind local comics out as they tell you how their passion keeps them going. And if you see the Little Blue Penguin walking around the Internet with a mind of its own, don't be surprised! For the literary fans, hype introduces six local works just for you.

Express your love for the nation differently this August!

What exactly is the Singapore Spirit?

hype was curious to find out what our readers have to say, so **WELLA ONG** caught up with young Singaporeans and asked them what they think is "The Singapore Spirit"



CHONG QIU PING, 20, STUDENT

"O-levels, A-levels. The studying and the rat race with everyone else to make the grades and get a job to earn the most money... and emerge at the end of the day with a bright future."



LANGER LEE, 20, NS

"Singapore Spirit is when you are busy outdoors but you still stop to help out visitors to our country willingly because we're proud of who we are and what we've become!"



PAUL CHU, 17, STUDENT

"Perhaps we are too caught up with expressing the spirit in black and white. I don't think even the supposedly rich countries do that. Singaporeans should not compare with others and complain about the lack of spirit."



VIVIAN CHIA, 20, POLY GRAD

"The Singapore Spirit can and should be as simple as extending the courtesy of smiling, which would brighten anyone's day easily. That is what Singapore really needs, especially if we want people from other countries to feel comfortable and welcomed."



TAN SIM YEE, 22, WORKING

"Singapore Spirit - united as one, just like the national anthem that says 'Together we march towards happiness, our noble aspiration, to make Singapore a success. Let us all unite, in a new spirit.'"

**TAN TOH CHEE, 23**

"I think the **Singapore Spirit** represents unity among all Singaporeans, regardless of culture, race and background. It is a spirit that embodies the elements of striving for a better tomorrow without forgetting to enjoy the fruits of our labour."

LIM XIU RU, 19

"I think that the **Singaporean Spirit** should be about the unity of its people, who share common passion and support for sportsmen. People who are willing to cheer for a common cause - not necessarily for victory, but more of.. an indication of their support and recognition of their sacrifice."

**WANG LI JUN, 17**

"The **Singapore Spirit** is a kind of racial harmony or having aspirations to be the best!"

JILLIAN GIAM, 19

"The **Singapore Spirit** is subtle but it's there, though I think it's not enough. Singaporeans need to see the need to understand and respect each other's differences."

WU LIANGYING, 28

"I guess the **Singapore Spirit** is somewhat defined by the government, and that's what makes a difference. They (the government) mould the society in terms of thinking, value and environment. The government creates the settings, like building parks, setting up the Central Business District, expand the tertiary education landscape and even building the Integrated Resorts (IRs)."

XAVIER TONG, 20

"It's the consistent drive to excel, like guys going into NS... From what I understand, NS is essential and important to our economy in Singapore."



JOINING HANDS FOR SINGAPORE

The souls that make Heartware Network beat. From left: Gao Yao Xing, Dion Lee, Lian Wei Xiong

CONNECT SINGAPORE

PHOTOS BY: YEO KAIWEN

For the past few years, parades and drills have not only celebrated Singapore's National Day. The youths at Heartware Network too, have got a great "gift" for the nation. **AARON CHONG, SHIRINDERJIT KAUR and ALEXIS LEE** find out more

Ever been to a Chingay Parade that undeniably left everyone mesmerised by the costumes and energy that filled the Singapore streets with colour and excitement? Can you recall those National Day Parades (NDP) when despite it being crowded with people, you've always been escorted to your seats in a breeze?

Kudos to the youths in Heartware Network! The chairman of the organisation, Lian Wei Xiong, 22, proudly names some of the activities the organisation has been involved in.

He says, "We take care of everything from recruitment to planning the Chingay Parade. During every NDP, we have our NDP Ambassadors who help maintain the morale of the crowd and usher them in. This is essential because the whole atmosphere and mood is dependent on them to run things smoothly."

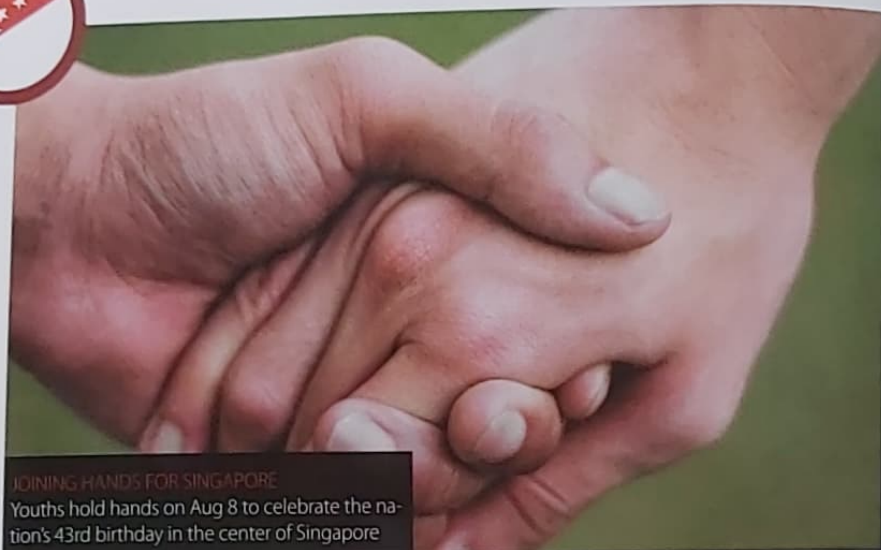
The latest activity that has been creating hype among youths is "Connect Singapore". It will in-

volve 30,000 people lining a 20km route that will form the shape of a heart in the centre of Singapore on Aug 8. At a precise moment, all participants will join hands and together with the Guest-of-Honour, President S.R. Nathan, will recite the National Pledge.

These students come from various educational institutes such as Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), Nanyang Girls' High School (NYGH) and Bishan Institute of Technical Education (ITE Bishan).

Wei Xiong explains that the schools they've approached have been very supportive of the event. "Institutes like NP have been very helpful in providing us with publicity in their campus, thanks to which we have received a fair sum of response. NYGH has also been very generous in allowing us to use their school to hold the training sessions."

Dion Lee, a second year Mass Communication student in NP, has always been interested in contributing to the society. He is currently one of the 26,000 volunteers in Heartware Network and has



JOINING HANDS FOR SINGAPORE

Youths hold hands on Aug 8 to celebrate the nation's 43rd birthday in the center of Singapore

"People think it's impossible to pull off an event which is completely planned by youths. I want to represent all the youths involved and prove them wrong."

DION LEE,
Executive Committee (EXCO)
member of Heartware Network

worked his way up to become an Executive Committee (EXCO) member.

When asked what attracted him to volunteer for such an event, Dion explains, "People think it's impossible to pull off an event which is completely planned by youths. I want to represent all the youths involved and prove them wrong."

"Planning for 'Connect Singapore' has allowed me to realise that there's capability and potential in youths of Singapore," he says.

Shuan Neo, a 23-year-old full-time National Serviceman, who deals with logistics for "Connect Singapore", says that he has gone through a "character-building process to become a better person in terms of people management".

To him, it's "heartwarming to see youths from all backgrounds coming together as one unit".

Goh Yao Xing, 21, a Republic Polytechnic student who has been volunteering at Heartware Network for five years, says, "I want to share my experience with youths so that they can see the bigger picture. Many think they're being forced to [volunteer] and youths think it's a waste of their time."

Heartware Network is one of the many organisations that have youths actively contributing to the society despite having to juggle volunteering and their personal lives. So, it's time to put to rest the notion that youths are unmindful of the world around them, and give them a pat on their back for their efforts.

Photo courtesy of: heartware network



MEET THE NEW SINGAPOREANS

As the nation celebrates its 43rd Birthday this year, **SIN PHUAY HIANG** and **NIGEL LEE** meet up with youths from different countries, to hear what they have to say about making the little red dot their home

DRAMA KING CURTIS EN CRETTON, 20

HAWAIIAN-TURNED-SINGAPOREAN
(Technical Operator @ The Singapore Flyer)

Curtis, an American-turned-Singaporean, possesses disarming charisma and a wacky sense of humour. It is no wonder that he loves the performing arts, and can be the life of a party if he wants to. He also loves local food, like any typical Singaporean.

Curtis just graduated a few months ago from Ngee Ann Polytechnic with a Diploma in Electrical and Computer Engineering.

His love and passion for the stage grew here in Singapore where he got the chance to hone his craft. "I am in the school choir and I enjoy singing," he says. Singapore gives him the opportunity to nurture his interest and offers him a platform to perform.

However, starting out wasn't pleasant, as he had to endure racist remarks because of his skin colour. Choosing to shrug it off, he quips, "Anything which doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

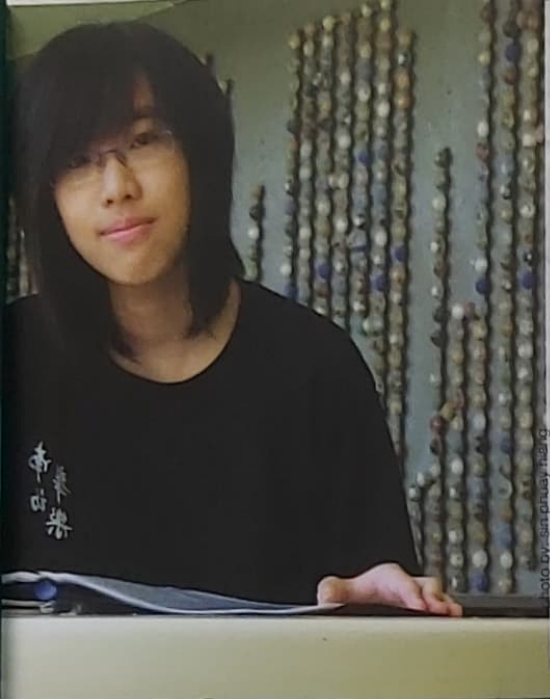
To fit in, he has even picked up *Singlish* even though he doesn't like it.

Even so, Curtis enjoys his education and life here. "I am actually looking forward to life in NS," he says.

photo by: bruno cheong



SINGAPORE FLYER
OFFICIAL OPENING
15 APRIL 01



SCHOOL GIRL **WONG SU YI, 17**
CANADIAN-TURNED-SINGAPOREAN
[Student]

Although Canadian, Su Yi looks and behaves like true-blue Singaporean. She explains, "My parents were Singaporeans before they migrated over to Canada and now, I came back with them." After 11 years in Singapore, Su Yi is even more knowledgeable about Singapore than any Singaporean born here.

"I know the places around here, how to get there, the local delights and Singlish."

Before that, Su Yi had much to get used to. She says, "I remembered crying when I first attended school here because even the kindergarten is so much harder here than in Canada."

"It is a different teaching method that I have to get used to," she says. "There are also more tests here." "My mom told me that I'm lucky to have my education here because I learn more here than any other person in my level in Canada and I'm grateful for it," she states.

Moreover, with the support of family, she has found herself finding a sense of belonging in Singapore.

THE NS MAN **ZHANG SHI YAO, 20**
CHINA NATIONAL-TURNED-SINGAPOREAN
[Student]

Shi Yao goes back to China every school holiday to see his parents. However, he won't be able to do that in around a year's time. Instead, he'll be toting a rifle and serving National Service (NS).

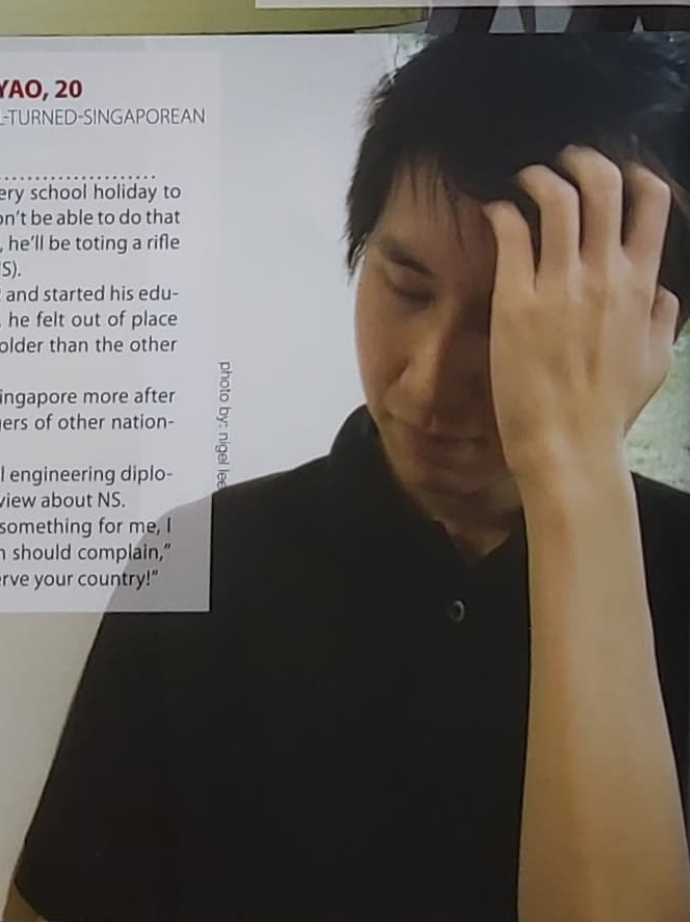
Shi Yao came here when he's 12 and started his education in Primary Four. Initially, he felt out of place and belittled, as he was much older than the other children in Primary Four.

However, he started enjoying Singapore more after finding and befriending teenagers of other nationalities in secondary school.

Currently pursuing a mechanical engineering diploma, Shi Yao has a philosophical view about NS.

"If I can serve a nation that did something for me, I don't see why Singaporean men should complain," Shi Yao laughs. "Be a man and serve your country!"

Photo by: ngai lee



WANTED!

Superheroes in living colour

AHMAD ZAKI finds out what it takes for Singapore comics to take root here

Mention titles like **Get Carter!** and **The Celestial Zone** and chances are, you'd be hard-pressed to find five people who's ever heard of, or even read, these homegrown comic books. Plagued by poor sales, obscurity and lack of support, local comic books and their creators are looking at a bleak future, especially considering the rise in popularity that foreign comic books have enjoyed in the past five years.

Says Choo Joon Kwee, one of the many people who run Comics Mart, a well-known local comic book and hobby store, "Back in the 1980s, a lot of people were buying comics to collect. They'd get variant covers and collector's editions and keep them. Then they all grew up and comics are just to read and to chuck aside when they're done with them." This attitude is the main reason for the poor sales of local comics, as readers are less likely to buy titles they're unfamiliar with.

Joon Kwee, 38, also claims that the recent spate of "comic book movies" has reversed the downward trend of sales of foreign comics. The release of a movie would almost certainly increase sales of the corresponding title by at least 50 percent. "It doesn't matter if the movie is good or bad," he adds. "We get a lot of secondary school students and such, kids who've never read comics before coming in here to find out more."

As newcomers to the scene, these younger readers will veer towards the characters that they recognise, leaving the local comic books to collect dust on the shelves.

British-born, Singapore-based comic book artist Jerry Hinds claims that it's a worldwide phenomenon and is not limited to Singapore.

"The current problem, both here and overseas, is that if you're writing or drawing a character with no history, or working with people with no track record, no one will buy your comic," he says.

"It's worse here, because there isn't much support for young talent looking to get into the comic

"The current problem, both here and overseas, is that if you're writing or drawing a character with no history, or working with people with no track record, no one is going to buy your comic."

JERRY HINDS,
Comic book artist and creator of **Get Carter!** series

world. And what support there is, puts too much pressure on them to do well financially, which kills them," Jerry adds.

Jerry, the 44-year old creator and artist of **Get Carter!** (a book that's steeped in martial arts and wuxia lore), says that all hope is not lost for the enterprising artist or writer who wants to make it big. He has been drawing since his elder brother showed him an issue of Iron Man when he was four years old.

Due to a disappointing start and an uncertainty in the future of comic books, he went on to do advertising and graphic design before plunging back into his old passion when he saw the cover art for **X-Men #1** (Drawn by the then-unknown Jim Lee, **X-Men** title was a major turning point for the future of comics.)

Jerry is the current president of the Association of Comic Artists in Singapore (ACAS), a non-profit organisation set up in 2005 with the aim of providing a platform for aspiring artists and writers to get into the international scene.

Amidst regaling hype with tales of how he could have worked with Alan Moore and Brian Bolland



Illustration by: Jerry Hinds

GET CARTER!

A locally-published comic by Singapore-based JERRY HINDS: President of the Association of Comic Artistes in Singapore (ACAS)

(writer and artist, respectively, of 2000 A.D.'s acclaimed Judge Dredd series. Moore is also famous for works like **V for Vendetta** and **The Watchmen**), Jerry explains the new direction ACAS is taking in its noble goal of making Singapore "comic-book-viable".

ACAS has recently been working to get artists and writers into their fold. Besides helping them to achieve mainstream success, they also want to provide a meeting place for like-minded people to meet and share ideas. "We want to teach them how to write and how to draw a comic and the

basics like lettering, fonts and being able to work together," Jerry enthuses.

Currently, it has workshops and classes for artists and writers of different levels of expertise and exposure, and even caters to children as young as eight years old. Classes range from \$235 to \$450, for six weekly lessons.

"As a non-profit organisation, we're able to produce comics and work on projects without any pressure to make money. I think that's the most important thing – to never lose sight of your passion for the medium," says Jerry.

the march of the little blue penguin

ILLUSTRATIONS BY: "Miss Chaobin"

Singaporeans are now jumping on the bandwagon of drawing webcomics. **VALERIE CHONG** finds out more about a Singaporean penguin's misadventures on the web



some things were just better shared.

The Little Blue Penguin is a young Singaporean webcomic and brainchild of a local Literature major, Sulynn Chuang, who prefers to be known as Miss Chaobin (Hokkien for sulky face). Known to be melancholic yet optimistic, the Little Blue Penguin has a small but loyal following who finds it to be humorous.

The Little Blue Penguin is still a very young comic, with an average of 60 unique hits and around 350 page views in recent months, says its 22-year-old creator. The numbers are on the rise, as more are getting to know of this very amiable blue blob.

The stories are to some extent autobiographical, and real life incidents that have occurred to Miss Chaobin are sometimes reflected in the comic, such as the strip "Road-kill", which was created after a bad quarrel with a friend.

Most strips are inspired by real-life incidents, and requested initially not be named as she used comics to poke fun at her lecturers.

"The comic can be as fluffy or as incisive as

you wish it to be," says Sulynn. Its existence is based on a real beanbag penguin that its creators' junior college classmates gave her for Valentine's Day.

"I used to take it around with me and take photos of it in the most incongruous scenarios I could think of, like sitting in a pine tree waiting to snipe my university professors," she says. But she decided to switch to drawing the penguin as she has always liked doodling as a child.

She says, "One thing that I've enjoyed the most out of this is that for at least one second in a busy day, someone's going to smile at the sight of a little blue penguin readying its sniper rifle or having a quiet mug of tea with a demon tyrannosaurus-rex."

"The comic is an expressive medium that combines words and art in unique ways. I'm a Literature major and for me, the comic has the capacity to contain the best of both worlds," she says.

Visit "The Little Blue Penguin" at www.got-salmon.blogspot.com.

THE WRITE STUFF

MADE IN SINGAPORE

With foreign writers being raved about all the time, it's time we bring some attention to our local writers. Be it poems or stories they've brought topics close to our hearts onto print

Romance Novel Volume 1

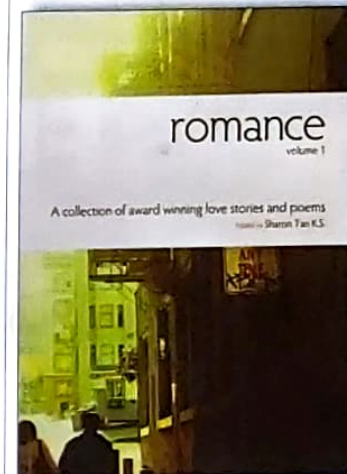
[Editor: Sharon Tan K.S.]

Publisher: Renaissance Publishing

Ever wondered what truly defines love? **Romance Volume 1** seeks for answers to this age-old question through a writing contest, devoted to love. Many aspiring young local writers allowed their literary juices flow around this theme and produced an award-winning collection of love stories and poems. Their works are what made up this book – from teenage adolescence crushes to adult relationships or even those based purely on desire and passion.

What can be learnt from this book is that real love usually involves various obstacles and challenges that require not just one person, but two people to break through the hard times. Grab a copy and embark on the journey to discover the universally accessible theme – love.

WORDS BY: JOLYNN ANG



Light is Like Water

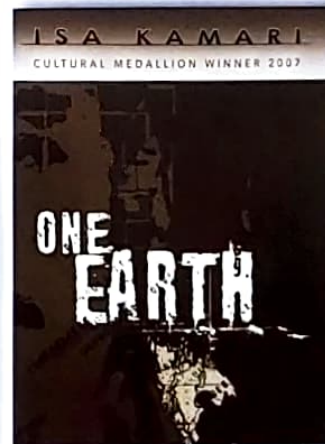
[Author: Jennifer Koh + Jasmine Seah]

Publisher: Ethos Publishing

Light is Like Water is a compilation of brief free-style poems that encapsulates the essence of Jennifer's "love for the mundane and the momentary". It's a short and visual read that's largely inspired by Jennifer's Polaroid snapshots of commonplace yet, often seen as little more than transient objects. Each page is a moving poetry in itself, often inciting the melancholic sense of déjà vu. It makes you wish that there were more to read and see, but perhaps keeping it short and sweet was the intention of the co-authors, whose self-written and individual prefaces would be just about the longest read in the work.

Light is Like Water is a good springboard to more new ideas, especially for those readers who are out to look for inspirations.

WORDS BY: WELLA ONG



One Earth

[Author: Isa Kamari]

Publisher: Ethos Publishing

Originally written in Malay by Isa Kamari, **One Earth** is the English translation provided by Isa's wife. It details the journey of a Chinese girl adopted by a Malay family and the hardships of the people living in the troubled times between the Japanese Occupation and Singapore's Independence.

One Earth is a deeply insightful piece and puts the reader into the characters' shoes, as they struggle to cope with the drastic changes in their lives. It offers an intimate look into their lives as the various characters either rise above their circumstances or fall into despondence.

Perhaps the most interesting thing about **One Earth** is its depiction of human nature. Set in such tumultuous times, both the best and the worst of humanity is shown.

WORDS BY: BRIAN LIM

Life's So Like Dat

[Author: David Leo]

Publisher: Ethos Publishing

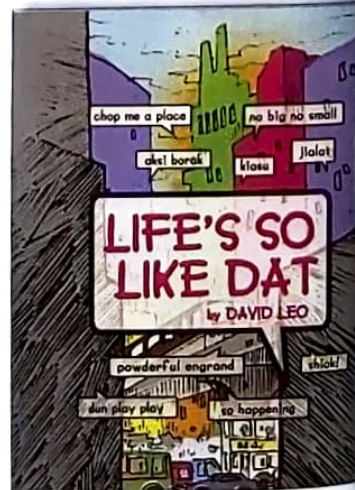
Honestly, this isn't the book you'd want to be caught reading when you are pretending to look intellectual. Yet if you drop the act, you'll find David Leo's offering speaks volumes about our life in Singapore.

Life's So Like Dat is a collection of familiar Singaporean articles ranging from the entertaining definition of an Ah Beng to the time of Singapore Idol.

Filled with authentic Singaporean terminologies, you'll become well versed in phrases such as "chinese helicopter" and "half past six". There's even a large glossary of Singlish that one can attempt to master upon finishing the book.

With National Day around the corner, this might just be what you need to whip up nostalgia and patriotism.

WORDS BY: HE RUIMING



The Lies That Build a Marriage

[Author: Suchen Christine Lim]

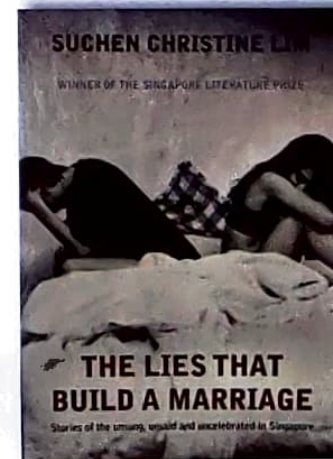
Publisher: Monsoon Publishing Pte Ltd

Don't let the cover of Suchen Christine Lim's **The Lies That Build A Marriage** fool you. This novel might seem dark and filled with angst. However, just like its theme promises, the book tackles "stories of the unsung, unsaid and uncelebrated in Singapore".

Melancholic and bittersweet, the 10 stories in this anthology start off a little rough especially with their abrupt endings, but as you progress through the book, they become smoother and better.

Though the use of *Singlish* being a tad too stilted, it's still comforting and at times, endearing to read as a Singaporean. This book evokes a sense of poignancy and will leave you with the strong need for self-reflection.

WORDS BY: SHEEREN TEO





**BEIJING
DREAMS**

ENTER THE DRAGON

PHOTOS:
JABEZ FONG

BRIAN LIM who visited Beijing in April on a study trip, discovers that China's capital has been transformed from a backward place to a sprawling metropolis with the advent of the Beijing Olympics 2008.



It was my first time stepping into China and I expected Beijing to be a place of rich cultural and historical significance as it served as China's capital since the Ming and Qing dynasties. The April chill greeted us, four lecturers and 40 students from the Ngee Ann Polytechnic School of Film & Media Studies, as we embarked on a study trip to produce a coffee-table book, a Chinese Opera website and several documentaries.

But as the plane touched down on the tarmac, I was struck by the new Terminal 3 of the Beijing Capital International Airport. It is a structure of astounding proportions, a sleek creation of glass, steel and aluminium, with skylights riding along the spine; all details that are vaguely reminiscent of a Chinese dragon.

The grandeur of Terminal 3 mirrors that of the famous Forbidden City, as its design and decoration features many traditional Chinese elements. Even the giant copper vats we saw in the Forbidden City used to store water for fire fighting made an appearance in the terminal.

Sir Norman Foster, a renowned British architect, specially designed it to handle the expected traffic for the upcoming Beijing Olympic Games in August. It is China's gargantuan gateway to the rest of the world, and it marks the start of a new era for China.

That was our entrance into Beijing as we stepped through customs (where we're now pointed to the "Foreigners" queue, not

"Aliens"). On the way to the hotel, we had our first look at Beijing. If we were expecting rickety rickshaws and dull buildings, we were sorely disappointed.

The capital is dotted with signs of a mega plan to give the city a new look. Old buildings are taken apart to make way for newer ones. In Wangfujing, a popular place for shoppers where we spent a few hundred (some even a few thousand) yuan, construction sites are promising signs of even more merchandise.

Their transport systems have also been upgraded. Since 2004, another Ring Road (their sixth so far) was added, together with a batch of major expressways to facilitate traffic movement during the Olympics. Three more subway lines are set to open by August, making it a total number of eight subway lines.

And while the Great Wall of China is a famous attraction (we visited the Badaling section, within the municipality of Beijing) winding 4.8km over rolling mountains, the subways were an equally impressive construction as 142km of tracks snake beneath the city.

Much to my amusement, I found that even people who have lived in Beijing for over two years have to consult maps. Their transport system is simply too big to navigate from memory! Our routes had to be planned before we stepped out of the hotel or we ran the risk of being lost (which is not a funny thing when you're in Beijing).



TOWERING SKYSCRAPERS

Not the traditional rural setting you see in movies - the real Beijing is home to skyscrapers.

There are other changes tourists will surely appreciate - the toilets are generally cleaner, smoking has been banned in most public places and the signs in English are less "humorous" ("No Speaking Handphones on the Great Wall" made many of us chuckle).

Perhaps the most enthralling thing about Beijing is the blend of old and new. Whether you're looking for the cultural or the contemporary, there's something to appreciate. Even with the economic burst and rapid expansion Beijing retains much of its old charm, and it's evident in almost every facet of the city.

Hou Hai, primarily a nightlife district, is an attraction for many local youths. There are so many pubs and bars to choose from that we were spoilt for choice. But within the same district, traditional *hutong* (something like our kampong) are open for public tours.

And the many cinemas that bring in blockbuster hits are a sharp contrast to the more traditional places of entertainment - Beijing has a number of theatres dedicated to Chinese Opera, and a few of us had a taste of the various opera types (together with acrobats and magic) in Lao She Cha Guan, a famous teahouse where performances are held.

I came home with a new impression of Beijing as a place of intrigue. The Olympics has spurred China to put its best foot forward, and come the grand opening of the Games in August, the whole world will see its remarkable metamorphosis into a cosmopolitan metropolis.



OUT WITH THE OLD; IN WITH THE NEW
Old *hutong* are taken apart to make way for newer infrastructure.



REACH FOR THE SKY
Beijing's infrastructure climbs steadily towards becoming a modern metropolis.

Out of Luck, Out of Love

The perfect man to date in Beijing is almost like a grain of sand on the beach. ALEXIS LEE listens to the locals as they lament the pains of courtship in Beijing's dating scene

Think of Beijing as a dating supermarket where men outnumber women by 16 to one. Women are taking their time to wait for the best man to come along while men lament their chances of snagging the girl of their dreams.

This analogy is coined by columnist Tim Harford of Financial Times in his book, "The Logic of Life". According to the idea of the marriage supermarket, if there were 20 single men and 20 single women looking for a spouse, each would pair up with another. But if there were 20 men and 19 women, one man is going to be left on the shelf. And any man fearful of being left high and dry will cut any deal to ensure he walks out of the supermarket with a mate. And because scarcity is power, the one "leftover" man spoils the bargaining position of every other man.

The scarcity of dates results in lots of men being left out of the competition.

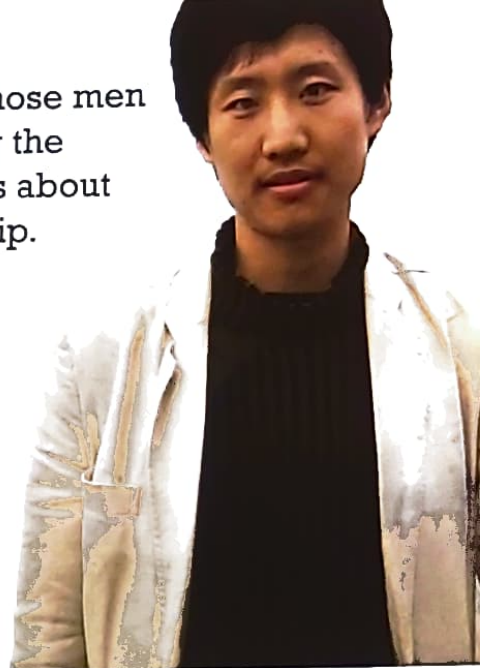
The toughest part of this "competition" for 26-year-old bartender, Guo Yao, is money, or what money could buy in the eyes of his dates.

"Ladies are complicated and demanding. They want everything that I can't give and I end up losing more than expected," he says of his previous encounters with girls. He feels outclassed by the higher-earning foreign men in his midst as he draws a humble 1,000 yuan (\$150) monthly and he barely gets by comfortably. With an income like his, a demanding girlfriend is the perfect way to empty your bank account.

However, all the ladies are asking is for their male counterparts to be able to match their expectations.

"I've always wanted a partner who's better

23-year-old Qi Yi is one of those men who have difficulties getting the girls in China. He even jokes about getting into a gay relationship.



than me, in terms of education, financial status, and understanding of love," says Fu Xue Meng, 22. Despite having only dated twice, Xue Meng knows what she wants in a man. However, she comments that most Chinese men are "highly insensitive and not chivalrous". She mentions that foreign men have held doors for her, unlike the locals. "I was charmed by this gentlemanly act as it isn't something I experience everyday," she adds.

In Xue Meng's view, Mr Right is "one who treats you exactly the way you want to be treated". Unfortunately, she notes "he hasn't come by yet".

A poll by Louise T. Higgins, a psychology professor at Chester College of Higher Education, shows 38.4 percent of Chinese women preferring a better-educated spouse and 23.5 percent of Chinese men preferring a less educated spouse. However, some would blame the given gender imbalance within China for this.

This is due to China's one-child policy that was implemented 29 years ago. An article by BBC News provided the exact numbers - there are about 164 boys for 100 girls. Traditionally, male babies have been much preferred over female babies in a patriarchal society.

It is an irony now that older men are finding it hard to find a date. Even parents are trying to secure wives for their ageing sons using ad-

vertisements in parks. An article in The China Daily identifies Zhongshan, Yuyuantan and Zizhuyuan Park as the hottest park venues for such ads. According to this article, parents are pinning their hopes on securing a wife for their sons by holding up placards and waiting at these parks. Apparently, young people are so obsessed with their careers to even consider building a family.

This steep competition within China's dating scene has come to the point where youths jokes that the alternative is homosexuality. Qi Yi, 23, and Cheng Gong, 20, both of whom are single, have had peers tease them. "My friends tease me for being single, and because of my gentle nature. People overlook this and stereotype all gentle men to be homosexuals," remarks Cheng Gong. "I really want a girlfriend to share everything with. It's just that the right one hasn't come by yet," he adds despondently.

Qi Yi is, however, optimistic about dating. He aims to get his education "all sorted out" as this would get him to places. He isn't bothered of staying single as he feels that qualifications would attract the ladies to him. He also feels that qualifications would "provide security to a girl as this means that a well-paying job would come by easily". With this, he's confident that he will have a partner eventually.

WHEN EAST MEETS WEST

Beijing's hip hangouts

CHILL OUT

If you want to chill out at local bars, visit **Back Lake (Hou Hai)** bar streets, which have prospered greatly over the past few years. Here, you can find quaint teahouses, modern pubs with streaming live music and the traditional *Hutongs* (alleys and lanes where people live), with their peculiar designer shops tucked within.

A 25-year-old student from Shandong Li Juan comments, "It's [Hou Hai] quieter and classier... the ambience is better." Her favourite pub is Blue Lotus (Lan Lian Hua). "It has nice lights with the floating lanterns, lake and great scenery," says Rebecca Lewis, 27, a teacher from London.



HOU HAI

photo by: jabez long

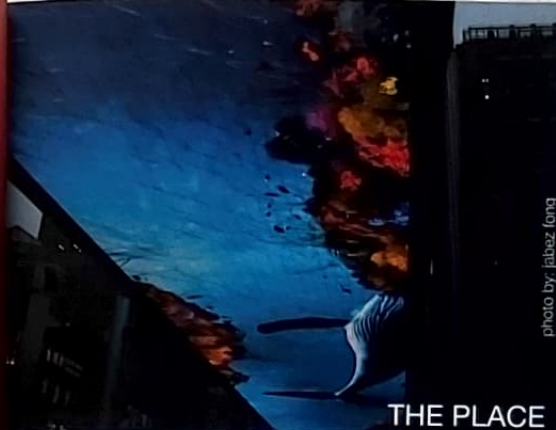


HUTONG

photo by: Benjamin Yoon

SIN PHUAY HIANG shows you when to go in Beijing for those keen on dodging the Olympic fever

photo by: jabez long



THE PLACE

photo by: jabez long



XIDAN SHOPPING

photo by: sin phuy hiang

HAPPY VALLEY AMUSEMENT PARK



photo from: picasaweb.google.com

SHOPPING

Those who are looking for good bargains in Beijing's shopping malls should head for the shopping malls in the whole district of Xidan. This is where you can buy anything from clothes to accessories at around 10 yuan. Li Wei, 25, says, "This is one of the more famous places in Beijing and the things sold are more hip."

For upmarket brands, head for **The Place (Shi Mao Tian Jie)** where Chinese celebrities Zhao Wei, Zhang Ziyi and Gong Li would go. The legendary LED skyscreen, which is 30m wide and 250m long, and cost a breathtaking 250million yuan (\$532 million), is a huge attraction here.

ENTERTAINMENT

For those who crave a rush of adrenaline, head for the **Happy Valley (Huan Le Gu) Amusement Park** which offers stomach-churning roller coasters rides among the 120 attractions and six themed areas within the park itself. "At 160 yuan (\$532), we get to go for every ride and experience the adrenaline rush," says Kang Yan, 22, fellow student from Hunan. "So, why not?"

Karaoke-lovers can head to **Party World (Cash Box)**, Beijing's classiest and snazziest karaoke venue, complete with a state-of-the-art sound system. According to Li Wei, "The ambience is nice, especially after the renovation." She also comments on the good service and up-to-date songs. "The prices vary according to the timebelts and the amount of drinks," she adds. It can cost between 39 yuan (\$58) to over 300 yuan (\$560) at a time.

What do we know about POLITICS?

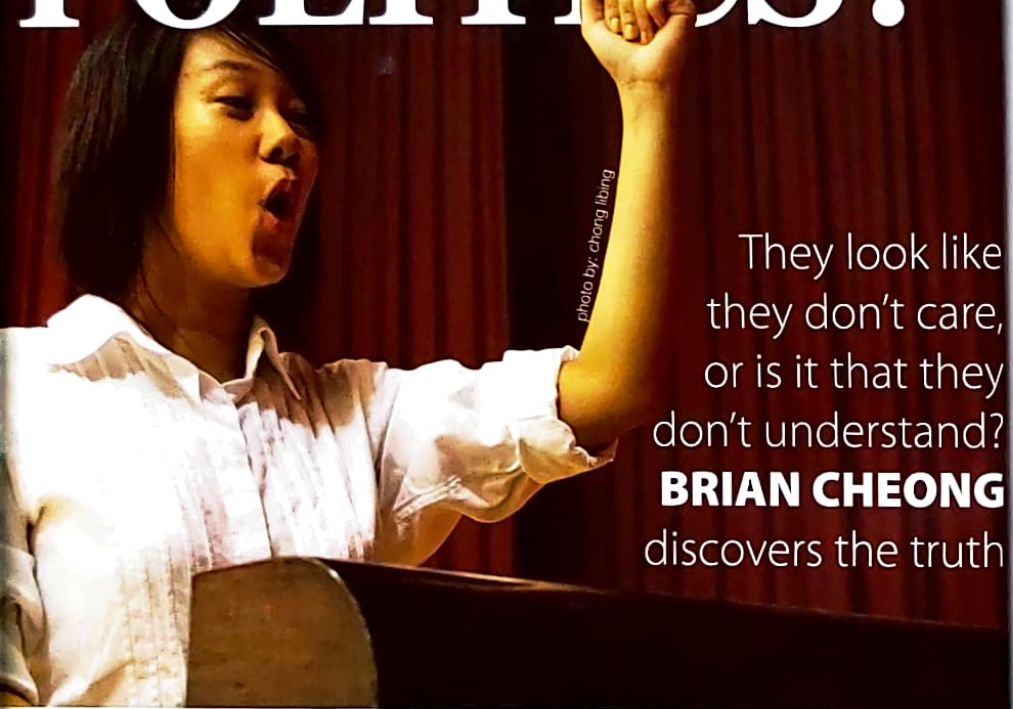


photo by: chong liang

They look like they don't care, or is it that they don't understand?
BRIAN CHEONG
 discovers the truth

It might not strike you as anything out of the ordinary when a teenager shows no interest in politics.

There seems to be a belief among the young that anything to do with politics is "uncool". Do young people feel that way because they can't vote until they're 21? Or is it that youths are disinterested in politics because election talks are always geared at adults and the increasing "grey vote" of the baby-boomers?

Based on what's going around in cyberspace, young Singaporeans do have an interest in politics. Young Singaporeans may seem apathetic but they can be more involved on the net.

On Young PAP forums (youngpap.org.sg), for instance, there are about 13,600 users who post

"I don't see any evidence that there is an increasing level of interest in politics among the youths of today."

MR CHONG CHING LIANG,
 Ngee Ann Polytechnic Lecturer

on the Young PAP forums, with 300 or so regular users. Even then, discussions on the forum can stretch from pro-government to almost anti-government. Topics such as "Why LKY should step down" and "All should support Reform Party" are a few topics that stand out.

For example, forum user "rajapisang", who started a thread titled "Why LKY should step down" posted, "LKY doesn't want to step down not because he doesn't believe the present bunch of leaders can't manage and rule Singapore but because he realises that should he step down now, he might end up like Mahathir or Suharto."

To find such "touchy" topics on a government moderated forum shows the freedom provided for youths to express their thoughts.

Apart from the forums, there are the web logs. P65.sg is an online web log for the younger members of parliament to express their thoughts to the public. Here, readers can see what their future generation of leaders are thinking. Topics posted are usually current issues that have been brought up in parliament. Issues such as rising inflation, social ethics and national security have been hot topics for the past few months. And usually, posts are written in agreement with the government.

Mr Chong Ching Liang, a lecturer from Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), says, "In the course of my work as a lecturer in NP, I don't see any evidence that there is an increasing level of interest in politics among the youths of today. However, I'm convinced there's a potential for change as there are more avenues for both accessing and broadcasting of information without censorship coming in, especially when it comes to the Internet."

As with all content on the Internet, youths should be able to discriminate given information when reading political blogs, Mr Chong warns.

For example, he notes, the tone of a critical socio-political blog such as Singabloodypore (singabloodypore.rsfblog.com), can vary vastly from what is written at P65.sg. People can fail to ascertain the veracity of these blogs and can be easily swayed by any comments made.

When it comes to educating youths on politics, Mr Chong says that the understanding of "what is politics" should be addressed first.

"Politics isn't just about the government or the political parties we have in our political structure. It's an active and critical appreciation of the society we live in and how governmental policies im-

pact our lives," he explains.

He further adds that when he brings up the issue of politics in his classes, the students seem disinterested. He does not blame the youths for not participating or even being interested in politics.

Mr Chong then poses this question, "How do we as teachers and how the society in general, show or convince youths that politics is relevant to them now and crucial for their future?"

He thinks we can't teach people to have an interest as patriotism and social consciousness are more in the realm of human emotions. Emotions have to be self-acquired and not indoctrinated.

It can be an uphill task as interest in politics can be sporadic.

"The last time I went to find out the difference between the PAP and WP was during the last election. And most recently, because of the Chee Soon Juan case in court."

ZACHARY LIM, 19
 Temasek Polytechnic student

Zachary Lim, 19, a Temasek Polytechnic student says, "The last time I went to find out the difference between the PAP and WP was during the last election. And most recently, because of the Chee Soon Juan case in court."

He adds that as much as he would like to keep up with new information on the socio-political scene, the lack of exposure and education makes him apathetic. However, he knows that as he grows older, he will have to learn to make more informed decisions. For now, Zachary is contented with reading the newspapers and going online to read about what people are saying of domestic politics.

Mr Chong says, "An interest in politics isn't something that can be forced. You have to develop a mentality where you see yourselves as stakeholders in the country you live in or for the world you live in."

"If you don't develop emotions for the society and the country you live in, why would you care enough to have an interest in politics?" he adds.

Girl Power ♀

The image of the drummer conjures up adjectives such as masculine, strong and towering. YEO KAI WEN gets a pleasant surprise in the heartlands

When Yuan Lin, 17, practises at home by hitting her bed and swivel chairs with drum sticks.

"The cushions are soft, and the chair itself is hard. I realised I could use them to practise," she says. "If you think that's weird, what about my friend who drums on microwave containers?"

Elaine Tan Sui Lin, the 29-year-old Kong Hua School administrator, drums twice weekly.

Both of them are metal drummers from the drummer community, Drum Xchange. Since last year, they have been having monthly sessions at the Jurong Green Community Club.

Drums are usually stereotyped as a guy's instrument, but female drummers have emerged within the community.

Over the past year, interest in drumming has surged. Drum Xchange has seen over 100 people joining as members. Among them, 12 are females. Some of them have even fallen in love with heavy metal.

Mr Alfe Kim, president of Drum Xchange, says, "We want to promote the exchange of drumming knowledge and nurture drummers in Singapore."

Western drumming has been increasingly popular and has influenced Singapore's music scene gradually. The drumming style requires double pedaling - the hitting of double bass drums with both feet. This requires a great amount of practice.

"People think drums require great stamina, but that isn't the case. Even the drummer for the popular Disney series Hannah Montana is female!" exclaims the CHIJ St Nicholas student, Hazel Lau.

"Don't bother about what your parents say when they claim that girls shouldn't play drums," Yuan Lin advises.

Mr Albert Louis, a drum therapist, says, "Motor



LET THE GIRLS SHINE
A female drummer cooks up a storm during a drumXchange performance

bikes were once a males' sport, but not any more. Likewise we have females in the boxing ring. Why should drums be for guys only?"

Elaine agrees, "Don't be intimidated by others. There are good female drummers around, so there shouldn't be any discrimination."

Lennat Yeo, 29, who works for Gibson Guitars, explains the surge in interest, "It's not just about the techniques or the gear. Gatherings keep us in touch with drumming, and make us want to learn more."

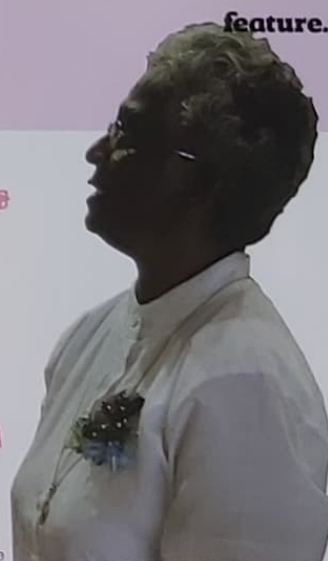
"Drum Xchange has an informal setting, and with people around to demonstrate, more of us are jumping on the bandwagon," says Elaine.

Visit soft.com.sg to join the rumming community, or email Alfe at alfekim@gmail.com for more info.

photo by: yao kaiwen

sister of love

photo by: lee xianjie



LEE XIAN JIE explores the human side of this society as Sister Victorine touches the youths with her love

With a smile on his face, the little boy said to me, "My mother jumped. My father killed her boyfriend. I come to school because I have to tell."

17 years ago the little boy's revelation shocked Sister Victorine Fernandez. She resigned from teaching and went into full-time counselling.

A Catholic nun from the Franciscan Missionaries of Mary, she says, "I knew there were problems with some of the boys in the class, but this boy shocked me into just saying I couldn't continue teaching."

"I wanted to get into another sphere where I could help students like him," she adds.

Today, she works as a counsellor at the Poverello Teen Centre in Tampines, set up nine years ago for students from Hai Sing Catholic, but is open to any youth in need.

REACHING YOUTH

"We try to enter the lives of young people", Sister Victorine says. Youths arrive in the afternoon, and attend lessons in guitar, kayaking, even Japanese drums.

Berwin Tan Wei Han, 18, a Hai Sing alumnus, says he first went to the centre in secondary two because he wanted to learn kayaking.

"The first time I met Sister," Berwin says, "I found her a very jolly person."

BEYOND SEXUALITY

Sister Victorine recalls one of many teenagers she counselled, "There was a girl who came to see me because she got pregnant. She was at first apprehensive because I'm a sister - What do I know about sexuality?"

"Somehow she didn't find me to be someone who was just spouting about God."

"In the end she gave birth to a baby boy, but later separated from her boyfriend. That was still something, because I had helped someone achieve her own sense of life. Right, wrong, isn't an issue for me."

Poverello Teen Centre is at Blk 166 Tampines St 12 #01-357 Singapore 521166. Phone: 6544 2603

THE GIFT OF TIME

PHOTOS BY: BRIAN LIM & BENJAMIN YOON

For many young people, "doing good for society" is not something they give much thought to. BRIAN LIM talks to some youths who break the norm

Ask a youth what he will be doing over the weekend and chances are he will say he's just going to catch up on sleep or, simply catch a movie. Rare is the young man or lady who sets aside time specially for volunteer work.

Bryan Tay Wee Cheng, 24, a second year Business student at Nanyang Technological University (NTU), spends his Saturdays with the elderly at the Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) Community Home in Ang Mo Kio. The coordinator of the Elders branch of the Welfare Services Club (WSC), a group in NTU, also meets up with members of Regular Service Project (RSP) - Elders.

"I chose [to be involved with the] elderly because I feel I can connect with them better," Bryan explains. "Some of these elders really need help since they're not able to work due to their age, and they still have illnesses. It would be good for us to show our care and concern and let them know they aren't alone."

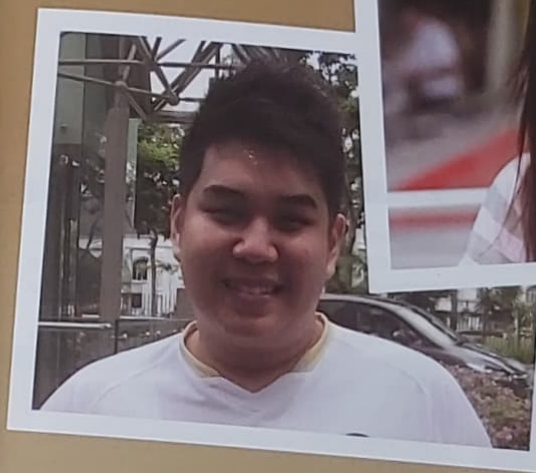
Eugene Lee Ker Hang, 22, another AWWA volunteer, says, "After I joined, I found it was very satisfying. It somehow builds up my karma," he jokes. "But on the serious side, the reason why I joined [RSP - Elders] is because I feel that most of the time the elderly are neglected and forgotten."

Volunteers don't necessarily have to belong to an organisation to be of assistance. Melissa Wong Qian Ting, 19, who is a third year Multimedia Info-



"Some of the elders really need help since they're not able to work due to their age, and they still have illnesses. It would be good for us to show our care and concern and let them know they're not alone."

BRYAN TAY WEE CHENG,
Business Student and frequent volunteer



YOUTHS ON A MISSION
Youth volunteers Eugene (left) and Melissa (top) give their time to those who need their help

comm Technology student at Nanyang Polytechnic, found her way into the volunteer field through a quick search on the Internet.

Melissa, who also volunteers at AWWA, says, "I found that doing volunteer work is a very meaningful thing."

"Plus, you don't get to see [what other people's lives are like], like the difficulties of those who need walking aids or wheelchairs, or how some are coping with the after effects of stroke, unless you do volunteer work," she adds.

For these youths, giving time to the less fortunate in society has reaped many intangible rewards.

Bryan says, "I started volunteer work because I feel that as a student, as a person, we should give something back to society."

Eugene shares his views, "I feel that I need to do some good deeds and though I'm not a very religious person, I feel that what you reap is what you sow, so I believe by [volunteering] I can return something back to the community."

Despite their busy schedules as tertiary students, these young volunteers have succeeded in juggling studies and voluntary work.

Bryan says, "Every week we only contribute two hours of our time to this, so it's not much of a problem. It's just a small sacrifice."

Melissa adds, "It's not hard to juggle school and

volunteer work because I'm only doing it part-time. I don't have to go regularly, I just visit when I'm free."

"You might think volunteering is very taxing and time-consuming, but it's not. For us [RSP - Elders], we only take one day per week. It's not much, but this small little bit actually brings a lot of joy to the beneficiaries," Eugene notes. "So we should always take some time to do some charity work."

And of course, the receivers are not the only ones who benefit from the efforts of these volunteers. "When the elders say thank you, I feel satisfied, and it makes me want to do more. It's not the thanks, but the pure satisfaction when you see them receive the gifts, and [when they realise] they have nothing to worry about," Eugene says.

Melissa adds, "I like to see the smiles on their faces. It shows they're really grateful for your help, and it's worth it. You learn a lot of meaningful things from it, and you get to put in situations that you don't normally [encounter] in life, because you step out of your comfort zone, and you get to feel what it's like to be in their world."

In the end, though, all seem to agree that it is the simplicity of human gratitude that makes it all worthwhile.

"The best thing," Bryan says, "is when I see the beneficiary smile."

GENTLEMAN'S FIGHT CLUB

Here's new way to deal with your inner Hulk. **MOHSEN OLIVER MICHAEL** puts on his gloves and finds out the truth

PHOTOS BY: Alexis Lee & Airell Ang

Anger. We all have our own ways to deal with it. Some meditate, some take deep breaths and count slowly to 10, while a few others will resort to squeezing stress balls. But will you follow the path of some and join the Society of Martial Arts Research and Science (SMARS) – a club similar to the one found in the 1999 Hollywood movie *Fight Club*?

According to Julian Tan Joo Lien, the organiser of SMARS, there's a stereotype he feels true – fight clubs are for angry people.

SMARS is the first legalised fight club where fighters of different styles can compete in a supervised environment. As Julian says, "It's a gentleman's fight club for martial artists to gather and share techniques and ideas and correct."

THE ISSUE

The issue of fight clubs in Singapore isn't a new one and was first brought to public attention on Sep 26 in 2006 in the *Electric New Paper* article "Was it a Fight Club?". According to it, a group of Anglo-Chinese Junior College students were seen fighting in a carpark, while 20 to 30 students looked on.

As a secondary school teacher, Julian discourages students from participating in fight clubs as "it can and will propagate into something far worse".

According to him, there are a few main reasons why youths participate in fight clubs (including peer pressure and ego).

"When their friends are part of such gatherings, it's hard to disassociate themselves from such activities without being ostracised by their schoolmates," writes Mr Tan in an email interview.

He also adds that ego might be a factor why youths fight. "They may join these clubs to provide a venue for them to build a level of superiority

over their peers," says Julian.

He also mentions frustration, not anger, being another driving force, which pushes youths to join fight clubs.

"Fight clubs provide a venue where individuals who share a mutual understanding of how pain and adrenaline rush can provide them a temporary relief from their stress," shares Julian.

Dyal Olagnathan, a counsellor, feels that fighting in fight clubs will inadvertently lead to disasters for the participants.

"First of all, at any given moment when you're angry and lashing out physically, you're acting on the emotion. But behind the emotion, there's a thought as well as a belief system. So when you're angry, you'll also believe that violence is acceptable," says Dyal.

"It's a cycle – anger causes fighting and fighting causes anger. That's where the danger lies. People believe if you're angry and you hit out, your anger subsides. But you're actually associating a particular emotion with an action and pairing them up very closely. So it becomes an impulsive action – every time you get angry, you are likely to lash out violently," he adds.

Dyal, who used to be a martial artist practising boxing and Taekwondo when he's younger, points out at one possible saving grace related to fight clubs – martial arts training.

A GENTLEMAN'S SPORT

"If you take these kind of impulsive youths and put them through martial arts training, be it boxing, muay thai, karate, or Taekwondo, the first thing they learn in a martial arts is rules and discipline and self-control. It's the self-control that is helpful, not the fighting," explains Dyal.

Some youths go to SMARS for another reason, one that nearly all participants give for joining the

legalised fight club.

"I think [SMARS] offers a controlled environment where youths can go there and learn," says the newcomer and reigning world super middle-weight pencak silat champion Muhammad Razif bin Moklas.

Indeed, in between and even during bouts, fighters stop fighting for short durations, sometimes even the entire bout, to discuss tactics and techniques that can be found in the arsenal of different styles. It's also a routine for fighters to discuss the level of contact before each bout.

"The most fundamental rule of SMARS: you decide the rules," says Julian, who's still healing a two-month-old black eye from a previous session of fighting.

Initially, four martial arts expatriates – Chris DeWet, Daniel Romeike, Palmer Owyong and Krzysztof Kryszczuk – formed SMARS as Singapore Mar-

tial Arts Research Society in 2001. It was disbanded late last year when Krzysztof left the country.

When no one continued the activities, Julian took it upon himself to "pick up the torch", continue club activities and most importantly, register the club under the Registry of Societies, as he feels that SMARS provided the perfect opportunity for people of different styles to learn and spar with one another.

"The second thing that drove me was that I hated this perception among locals and overseas that Singaporeans can't fight. I want everybody to say, 'Yeah, Singaporeans are good in martial arts' when they think of Singapore," says Julian.

Since his reboot on Apr 12, SMARS has grown.

"Yes, some people go in there and fight to release their anger. And as a martial artist, it's up to them to find the self-discipline and humility (to control it)," says Julian.



"It's a gentleman's fight club for martial artists to gather and share techniques and ideas and spar."

MR JULIAN TAN JOO LIEN,
Organiser of SMARS

BREAK OUT OF THE BRAT TRAP

With more elderly folk dominating 'the clean scene', SHEEREEN TEO believes that it's time to start reminding one another to "clean up" after ourselves

Let's face it: We've all been on the receiving end of the tirade of dissatisfaction heaped upon us from our elders especially when it comes to cleaning up.

The phrase "You young people these days ah!" would probably sound familiar to most of us. And they probably would have every right to make such a comment. Why? Because our current generation have turned into brats who need to be reminded about the basics of helping to keep the environment clean and to clean up after themselves.

For instance, 17-year-old Marianne Chee, a first year student studying in Singapore Institute of Management University (UniSIM), has this to say: "They (cleaners) are paid to do it, so why not just let them do it?"

Young Singaporean live in a society where there will always be cleaning "aunties" and "uncles" picking up after us and for certain households. Many also have a domestic helper who does every single house chore you can possibly think of. A sense of complacency and the "I-Can't-Be-Bothered" attitude that is increasingly prevalent among our youths. A former discipline mistress of Hwa Chong Junior College, Ms Kok Wan Yee, 48, says, "Every generation of teenagers will be spoilt. They're just spoilt in different ways. For this generation, their 'It's-all-about-me' attitude is what's a major problem."

A quick check with all the local polytechnics reveals that four out of the six schools employ janitors and cleaners, a large majority who are above the age of 55 years old. The practice of returning one's cutlery and playing a part in keeping the

"Every generation of teenagers will be spoilt. They're just spoilt in different ways. For this generation, their 'It's-all-about-me' straight attitude is what's a major problem."

MS KOK WAN YEE,
Former Discipline Mistress of Hwa Chong Junior College

school clean has more or less been abandoned because of the steady supply of cleaners who keep our school's surroundings clean.

A representative of one of the cleaning companies employed by a vast majority of tertiary institutions that requested for both her identity and the company's to be withheld, explains that most people view cleaner jobs as "lowly" professions for the old or uneducated. A school janitor, 56, who only wished to be identified as Mr Tan, says, in Mandarin, that while he had no bad experiences so far, he admits that he found youths "lazy" and "inconsiderate" at times. He adds, "Cleaning up (school areas) in the morning is the most tiring. You will see all the rubbish littered everywhere."

It is a harsh and upsetting fact that these selfless "unsung heroes" are paid peanuts for the amount of work that they do. According to statistics from The Straits Times, part-time cleaners only earn \$500 a month while full-time cleaners earn \$1000 a month. Another cleaner who only wanted to be known as Mdm Kalarani, 67, says, "I take this job because I don't have any other skills and I only have primary six education."

According to Mdm Kalarani, she has "cleaned everything from vomit to used sanitary pads to bloodstains to rotting leftover food". Sadly, she has never seen an increase in her pay. In fact, she adds that with the recent inflation, she has had to scrimp and save even more.

Nur Liyana Ya'acob, 19, a final year student from Singapore Polytechnic confesses that she feels "sinful and guilty" when she sees elderly cleaners, "especially those who can barely walk straight" - struggling to perform their cleaning duties. However, she believes that some of them choose to take up such jobs out of their own free will. Some youths, like Esther Teo, 20, a first year National University of Singapore student, echoes Nur Liyana's sentiments and readily admits that today's youths

"have it much easier than our elders".

Much depends on the role models young people here, it seems.

What do parents have to say about this issue? Mrs Gladys Chong, 53, private tutor and mother of two teenage daughters, believes that her girls "learnt it the hard way" after she and her husband have discontinued the employment of domestic helpers five years ago. "In the beginning, I had to constantly keep nagging and reminding them. Now, I don't even have to tell them twice because they are much more responsible and sensible when it comes to cleaning up."

Mdm Hapifah Bte Arshad, 54, a cashier at a local convenience store, believes that parents should set good examples so that their children will learn the right things. "Manners matter. If your children see you saying 'thank you' after a cleaner has cleaned your table, they will naturally follow. It's important to remember that children mimic parents' behaviour".

Mrs Pamela Tay, 58, a nurse, hopes that youths will be more appreciative and thankful towards our cleaners. "Singapore owes its 'Clean and Green City' title to them.



photo by: alexis lee

FAST & LOOSE

The average gambler is not a middle-aged person with a PSLE cert. He is younger, bets bigger, and loses more. SHIRINDERJIT KAUR reports.

The first thing that Aloysius does when he gets out of bed is to head straight to his computer and log on to his favourite online betting site. The 23-year-old can easily spend up to 90 minutes analysing the stakes on the international sports scene.

"I'll sit in front of the computer without even brushing my teeth. And I'll start to go through all the games being played for the day, right from ice hockey to basketball and my favourite, football," he says. But the betting hasn't started.

HOW IT WORKS

After noting down the important games being played in the day, Aloysius will have a phone conference with his betting buddies. Everyone provides his feedback on his specialised area.

He says, "I've always been passionate about football. So it's never difficult for me to guess which team will win or which player might score for a particular match."

Aloysius can place just a dollar stake on 10 games and get a return of \$1,000, that is, if the team wins. "I tend to get carried away once I win," he says. "I might start betting on more matches with a larger sum of money and sometimes I even bet on matches that I barely know about," he says.

HOW IT BEGINS

According to reports in The Straits Times in May, an average gambler starts gambling even before

"I do not want to argue about the law. But I do think that with the decision to set up casinos in Singapore, laws on betting should be revised."

ALOYSIUS, 23
Avid Online Gambler

the age of 18. And Aloysius is a model example. Since a child, he has been accompanying his father to Singapore Pools and when he was 18, he started playing 4-D.

"I don't remember my father explaining to me that what I was doing was wrong. He actually helped me to place my first bet," he recalls.

Indeed, sociologists note that betting is actually taking on the form of a recreational habit. According to sociologist Paulin Straughan, who was interviewed by The Straits Times, buying 4-D and Toto is routine here. "It is increasingly seen as normal behaviour and people don't see any harm in such activities. So they're less likely to tell their loved ones not to engage in such activities," she says.

By the time he turned 21, he turned to online betting, which he calls a "cheap" thrills.

WHY BET ONLINE?

Many more people are betting online, thanks to numerous online betting websites. In addition are the online communities where newbies learn the "skills" that go into placing the right stakes.

According to AsiaOne Business website, online gamblers have the tendency to bet in larger sums thinking that they'll use the extra money that they've won to place another bet.

So, imagine Holland matching up against Wales: For Holland to win, the standard amount to start bidding is \$1.33. If a gambler bets \$100 on Holland, he wins \$133 and makes a profit of \$33. And if Holland loses, he loses \$100. The \$33 can be used for another bet.

Many are tempted to play bigger sums. If the

gambler uses a credit card, the damage tends to be worse. "And there is a risk that one has to get loans to pay up," says Aloysius.

Right now, according to Professor David Chan of the National Council on Problem Gambling, though there is no increase in gambling addiction over the past three years, he told The Straits Times, the council intends to reach out to more schools with trained counselors to tell students about the dangers of youth gambling.

Even Aloysius is feeling the heat.

He says, "I feel a little guilty after seeing how addicted my young cousin has become to online betting. It is eating into his savings. I am trying to correct his idea that betting is investing. But I just hope I can do it before he uses all his savings."



SPEED DEMONS

In recent times, the number of young drivers getting involved in serious road accidents are on the rise. AARON CHONG and HE RUI MING delve into the psychology of a youth speedster

photo by: chong libing

THE FOUR-WHEELED DEVIL

Speedy* who has been driving his family car since he was 18 years old, received his first car as a present for his 22nd birthday from his parents last year.

Since then, he has been zooming down local highways at average speeds of 160 km/h. The avid motor-racing fan has also tried his hand at "racing with anyone" whom he thinks is going fast.

Although Speedy claims that he is a good driver and knows the dangers of speeding, he says, "I only speed when the situation allows it - when the roads are clear, and most importantly, when no traffic police is patrolling."

Hui Ting, 19, one of Speedy's passengers, recounts her "hair-raising experience", in his car. A motorcycle nearly toppled over from behind when Speedy drove too quickly in the same direction.

She complains that drivers like him "don't warn others of his intentions and irresponsibly place other motorists in danger".

Speedy is one of an increasing number of young speedsters on the roads of Singapore. Fortunately

"I only speed when the roads are clear, and most importantly, when no traffic police is patrolling."

SPEEDY,
Frequent speeder

*names have been changed to protect the identity of the interviewee

for the 23-year-old, he hasn't been involved in any accidents so far. He claims, "I get a sense of adrenaline rush and love the feeling of going fast."

Not so lucky warehouse supervisor, Regan Lee Da Wen, was charged three years ago with causing the death of Angelia He Xueli due to reckless driving. Regan was driving a Mazda MX-5 convertible that flipped over along Upper Paya Lebar Road and slammed into a van.

Not all young drivers are able to cheat death.

A May 4 article in The Straits Times this year reveals that Singapore has one of the worst road-fatality records among developed countries. In 2005, there were 2.3 deaths for every 10,000 vehicles as compared with 0.8 in Japan, 1.2 in Australia and 1.8 in the United States. In 2006, Singapore's road-fatality rose to 2.4 deaths for every 10,000 vehicles.

In one AsiaOne Motoring article, statistics from the Traffic Police showed that 250 of the 1,283 drivers injured in accidents in 2006 - or nearly one in five - were below the age of 30. Regarding fatal accidents, nearly one in three was under 30 years.

Says Mr Joshua Tan, 29, counsellor and family life executive at Care Community Services, "There might be a growth spurt of hormones in their bodies that cause them to push their limits. Young adults are also in the stage of their lives where they want to find their identity and their place in the world."

Mr Tan advises, "Young adults should not assume that they can do anything." He says that they need is to "learn to take a step back, [and] weigh the pros and the cons.". More importantly, young adults should "think of how their actions will affect others".

Ultimately, promoting better road safety through campaigns, having tighter traffic controls and stiffer punishments will only achieve so much. The onus is still on the individual to be accountable to himself and the well being of those around him.

DOUBLE TROUBLE

The statistics tell a grim story - for the last five years, over 40 percent of road fatalities were motorcyclists. In 2007 alone, 103 out of 214 road-users killed were motorcyclists and their pillion riders.

As the traffic police set up the Motorcycle Task Force (MTF) in a bid to continue their quest to make the roads safer for Singapore's most vulnerable motorists, many gung-ho youths are still hopping onto motorcycles.

The Singapore Safety Driving Centre (SSDC) notes that the majority of motorcycle learners are youths. On average, 159 students turn up at the doors of SSDC to sign up each month. SSDC claims that the number has been decreasing slightly, but it is still too early to tell.

The dangers of riding a motorcycle are obvious - a rider is totally unprotected in the event of an accident. As a result, they are easily injured when compared to their car-driving brethren. When it comes to head-on collisions, they are almost guaranteed a gruesome demise.

This is made worse when taking a motorcycle's small size into account. Many accidents happen because many larger vehicles fail to notice the motorcycles due to their blind spots.

Concerned parents are quickly seeing the vehicle as a fast track to death.

Maxine Tan, 19, ceased her motorcycle lessons this year after her father decided that the life of a rider was too hazardous for his daughter.

"I was disappointed but I stopped so that he could stop worrying about me," she laments.

Parents aren't the only ones thinking twice about letting youths get on the two-wheeled, supposed machines of death.

"No seat belt, no windscreen...one hit and it's over," says Patrick Tan, a 20-year-old National Serviceman (NS man) who has been driving a car for a year. Safety is the reason behind his choice of transport.

CONTINUED >

photo by: chong libing

However, not everyone shares his sentiments. Keith Tan, a 21-year-old NS man currently getting a bike licence, says, "For someone like me who isn't working full time yet, a motorcycle is more affordable."

A brand-new Nissan March would cost around \$57,000, probably way out of league for any regular student. Yet, for a relatively low sum of \$5,000, one is granted access to a wide catalogue of motorcycles. A second-hand can cost as low as \$1,600.

Convenience is also a major factor. Scott Ng, 25, who has been riding a bike for seven years, will tell you that whether or not traffic jams exist, a bike can cut through them like a knife through butter.

In addition, a motorcycle provides you with an experience that is hard to replicate. With the wind in your hair and the sound of the engine roaring, you will find it hard to have a dull moment on a bike.

Though riding a motorcycle does have its perks, it is undeniable that riders are exposed to countless dangers. This is especially true for the young and inexperienced. More than half of motorcycle accidents often involve riders with less than five months' experience.

What makes this worse is the tendency of young riders to fall under an illusion of invulnerability. This, coupled with the fragile bodies of motorcycles, makes the possibility of death among these budding motorists all too real on Singapore's roads.

Still, this fails to dishearten some motorcyclists. Since the start of this year, 731 new motorcycles have hit the road.

Perhaps Keith speaks for them when he says, "Anyone can die anywhere. As long as I take the necessary precautions and do my part in being a responsible road-user, I have nothing to fear."

illustration by: goh wei choon

SINGAPORE DRIFT

TWO CARS FIRING UP THEIR ENGINES TO RACE ON A STRETCH OF ROAD LINED UP WITH MODIFIED CARS. SOUNDS LIKE THE MAKINGS OF A MOVIE? SHIRINDERJIT KAUR REPORTS



*names have been changed to protect the identity of the interviewee

I imagine a long stretch of road with the best of sports cars parked neatly along both sides. At one end, two cars are firing up their engines to start a race that could be worth thousands. Sounds like a scene from *The Fast and The Furious: Tokyo Drift*?

This actually happens on the long stretch of road along Lim Chu Kang. The gathering is initiated by an anonymous call or text message with details on where and what time the race is going to be.

Within 30 minutes to an hour, cars are parked along the road. The drivers could simply be bystanders, betters, or two unhappy racers who want "to settle" a dispute by racing.

There'll also be "a guy" in charge of the race. If you want to bet or "settle a problem", let him know and he'll start the bidding. He'll take down your name and bets, and collect the money.

Once a bystander at these races, BJ*, 27, says, "People can race over the silliest reasons. I've seen two guys racing over a girl. Sometimes it can be the case of who's a better racer than the other and the funniest of them can even be triggered by staring incidents."

Two cars might be racing one another or there could be a group of people placing bets when they hear the police.

Joey* recalls one incident, "I was in my friend's car and was ready to race. Next thing I knew, there were sounds of sirens getting closer to me and I

Many youths these days are easily impressed by what they see in films.

could see two police cars through the rear mirror. It got quite chaotic because everyone had no choice but to escape in one direction."

Many youths these days are easily amused by what they see in films. They believe that depicting what they see is hip and cool. Joey and BJ were very much like these youths.

After close calls to being arrested, both of them realised that it was about time that they took life seriously.

They're lucky to realise that movies are nothing like the real world. In films, the hero escapes devily. But in the real world, the police will catch up with you and there's no turning back.

KILLER FASHION

Illustrations by goh wei choon

Ever wondered how the stars of the style department would fare in the health department? **DORCAS NG** counts the cost of beauty

FROM THE STREETS

hype polled 300 readers, aged 18 – 25, to find out how much of a fashion martyr they were.

35%

I would never wear the same thing twice if it gave me trouble before.

29%

I try not to, but I usually end up in the darkside.

21%

Sore backs, blisters, and bloodied toes. That's my regular sacrifice.

15%

No pain, no gain. At least I'll die looking good!

HYPE'S ADVISORY PANEL

DR SABRINA WONG

Family Physician,
National Health Group
Polyclinics

DR TEY HONG LIANG

Dermatologist,
National Skin Centre

DR MATTHEW HERD

Podiatrist,
Osteopathic & Podiatry Centre

MR DAVID CHONG

Optician,
Mei Teck Optical House



SKIMPY UNDERWEAR

Though we don't wear granny underwear, most undies can be seen under skintight fabric. In escaping the curse of the visible panty line, thongs and g-strings have emerged as the popular choice. Similarly for men, briefs complement fitted pants.

Warning Label:

Dr Tey Hong Liang, a dermatologist with the National Skin Centre, held that as a general rule, underwear should be absorbent in order to cope with prolonged sweatiness, which can cause fungus infections. Friction from the outerwear may also result in skin rash and inflammation of the sensitive areas. As for males, the issue of decreasing fertility with tight underwear is still not proven scientifically.

Customer Advisory:

Switch back to the traditional, looser alternative whenever possible and consider your purchases more carefully.



OVERSIZED BAGS

For an industry obsessed with all things small and thin, bags seem to live in an alternate universe, illustrating how big is beautiful. Since an empty bag is forever begging to be filled, the danger of over packing a heavy load is proportionate to the carrier's dimensions.

Warning Label:

"One tends to bend over to the other side to balance the weight of the oversized bag, either bending sideways or leaning forward. This places stress on the neck, shoulder and back muscles and ligaments," says Dr Sabrina Wong, a family physician at the National Health Group Polyclinics.

Customer Advisory:

It's commonsense actually – keep the bag light, opt for short, wide straps and alternate shoulders diligently. If it's too heavy, try splitting its contents into two bags and balance each other out on both shoulders.



TIGHT CLOTHING

It's hard to avoid the "skintight" trend with virtually every retailer hawking lycra and spandex season after season. And chances are you would have to be of mannequin-build to prevent these stretchy materials from squeezing your fats at one unsightly spot while gently skimming the skin at another. Skinny jeans are a prime example of this skin-clinging obsession.

Warning Label:

Dr Sabrina Wong reveals that having clothes wrap around your skin will undoubtedly attract a whole barrage of dermatologic problems. Apart from blisters and hives caused by friction, one also becomes susceptible to the threat of fungus infections. Tight-fitting clothes from the waist down are also known to cause heartburn and worsen varicose veins in the legs. A more serious condition borne exclusively from hip-hugging bottoms is *meralgia paraesthetica*, where the sufferer experiences a burning sensation on the thighs. This is because of a prolonged pinching of a sensory nerve under the hipbone.

Customer Advisory:

Well, there's no band-aid solution for this particular menace but at least you'll be a smarter shopper from now on, and buy looser and more comfortable clothings.



"FASHION" SUNGLASSES

We often forget that shades serve a greater purpose beyond that of a fashion statement, that is, to shield our eyes from the sun's harmful ultraviolet (UV) rays. Be it a \$20 pair from Forever 21 or a \$200 pair from Christian Dior, neither price nor brand is indicative of the amount of protection offered. And no, the darkest lenses do not provide the most protection. The surest way to know whether a pair of sunglasses offers complete UV ray protection is if it is labeled so or verified by an optician.

Warning Label:

The main concern about UV rays is how they can cause cataracts," says Mr David Chong, an optician from Mei Teck Optical House. Rarer consequences include *photokeratitis* – the sunburn of the eye and retina damage.

Customer Advisory:

If the shades do not provide sufficient UV protection, wearing them will only damage your eyes. The dark environment created by the lens causes pupil dilation, which allows more light to enter the eye, and this light may still contain UV rays depending on the lens' ability to filter them. So prescribe or buy a pair that guarantees complete UV protection. According to Mr Chong, grey, green or brown-coloured lenses offer better protection outdoors.



INAPPROPRIATE FOOTWEAR

When it comes to shoes, we are besotted with two extremes: the towering high-heel and the flat flip-flops. With documentation of the former's ill effects, you probably thought that Singapore's national footwear is the healthier choice.

Warning Label:

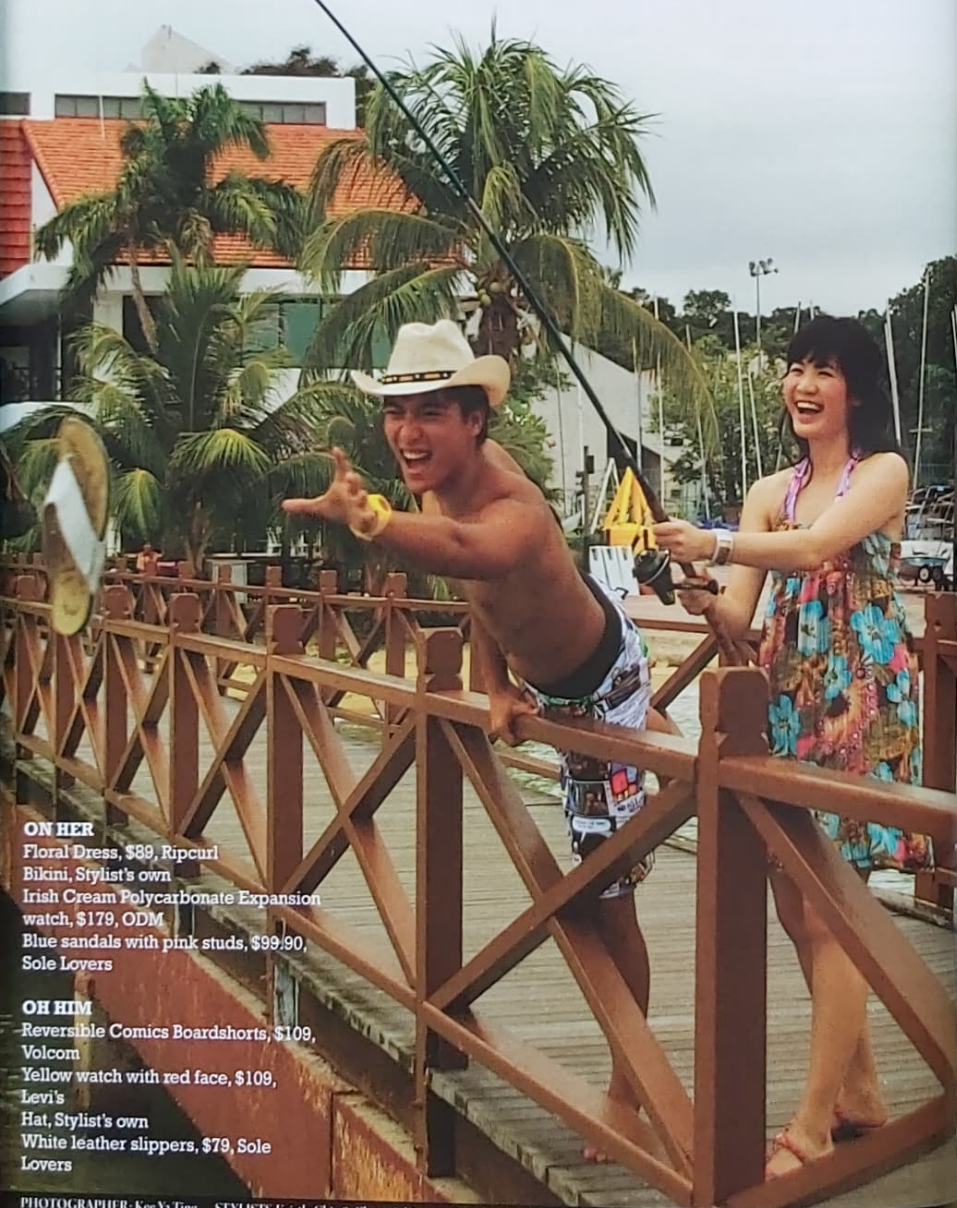
Apart from an increased chance of sprains, high-heels can cause soft tissue injuries as well. For example, walking on flat surfaces will be painful on the heels after a prolonged period. Meanwhile, muscles and ligaments work overtime to control the unsupported foot in flat shoes, thus causing unnecessary pains in the back. Dr Matthew Herd, a podiatrist from the Osteopathic & Podiatry Centre, defined unsupported as allowing the heel and forefoot to move about freely and the arch to collapse excessively. The effort to keep the flip-flops on also adds pressure on the toes. This causes deformities such as hammertoes and claw toes.

Customer Advisory:

Minimise the time spent on high heels by wearing them only on special occasions and adopting the practice of switching to sports shoes whenever transiting about settings that call for dress shoes. If you have to wear them, opt for heels lower than 2.5cm. Meanwhile, save your flip-flops for the beach.

A Day in Singapore

Look how youths, who have gone overseas to study for years and have returned, spend their day reminiscing the significant parts of Singapore



ON HER

Floral Dress, \$89, Ripcurl
Bikini, Stylist's own
Irish Cream Polycarbonate Expansion watch, \$179, ODM
Blue sandals with pink studs, \$99.90, Sole Lovers

ON HIM

Reversible Comics Boardshorts, \$109, Volcom
Yellow watch with red face, \$109, Levi's
Hat, Stylist's own
White leather slippers, \$79, Sole Lovers

PHOTOGRAPHER: Kee Ya Ting

STYLISTS: Kristle Chia & Chong Libing

MODELS: Yoe Shay Fern & Justin Kang

LOCATION: Changi Sailing Club



ON HER

Brown Ruffle Sleeve Dress, \$79, Ripcurl
Sunglass, Stylist's own
Vintage coat studs with green centre, \$45, Déjà Vu Vintage
Cream pumps, \$99.90, Sole Lovers

ON HIM

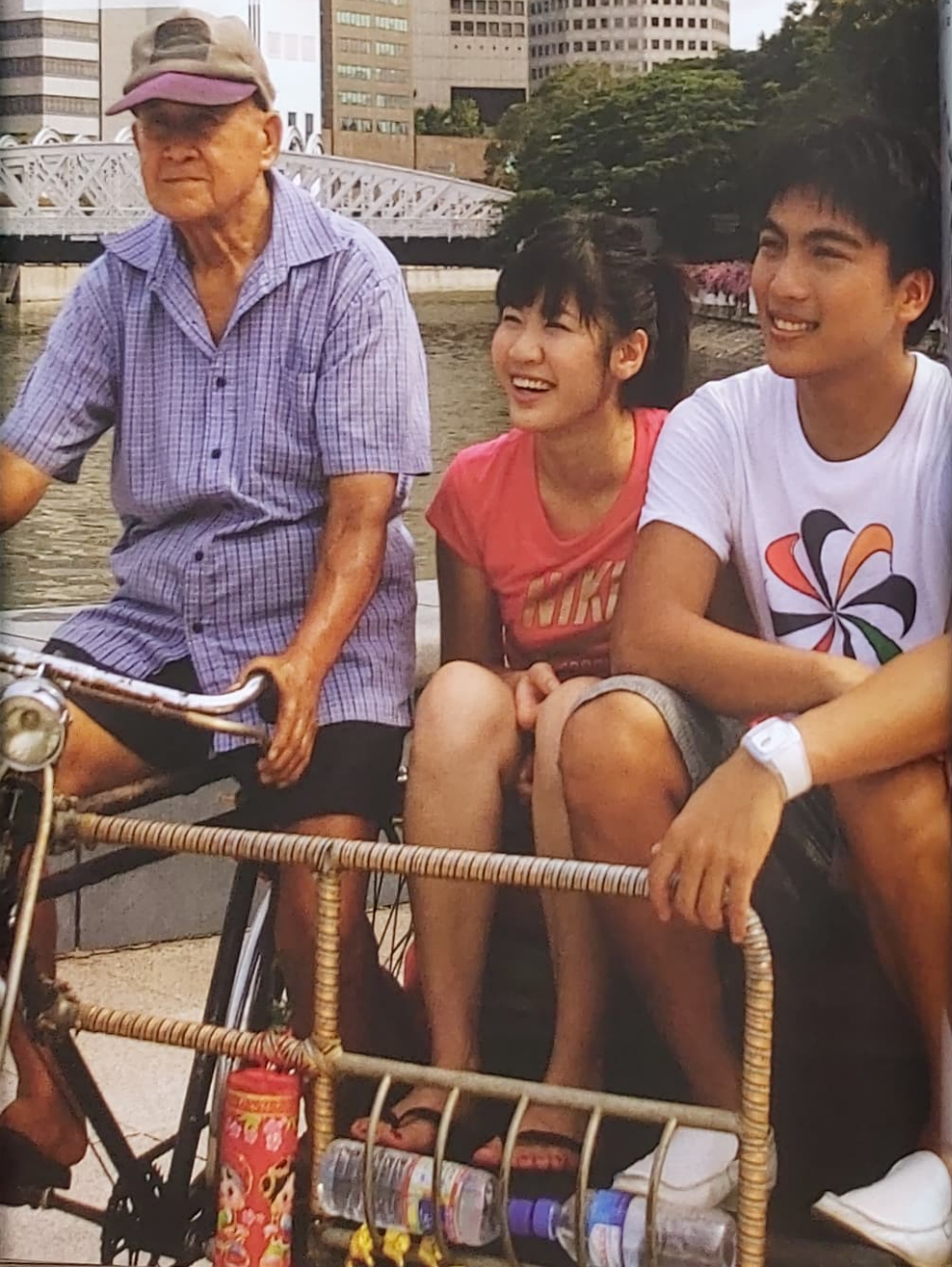
Striped Polo Tee, \$62, Nike
Bottle cap necklace, \$66, Déjà Vu Vintage
Low dunks, \$129, Nike

ON HER

Pink T-shirt, \$36, Nike;
Ladies Bermudas, \$59, Nike; Flip
flops, Model's own

ON HIM

Sunburst Olympics Inspired
White Tee, \$34, Nike; Grey
Bermudas, \$99, Stussy; White
watch, \$169, ODM;
Loafers, Model's own

**ON HER**

High-waisted skirt worn as a dress, \$149, by Stussy. Worn over mod-
el's top. Ear studs, \$45, vintage bracelet, \$89, basket bag, \$159, all by
Déjà Vu Vintage. Gold watch, \$159, Levi's. Heels, \$89.90, Sole Lovers.

ON HIM

Digital watch with red face,
\$359, Levi's. Shirt, \$139, by
Superdry, worn over Stussy
jeans, \$169. Bottle cap neck-
lace, \$86, Déjà Vu Vintage.
Shoes, model's own. Fedora
hat, photographer's own



A FEAST FOR THE EYES

If you are looking for a place to chill out or indulge in live music by local artistes and get enraptured by the visual art displays, the offer of art and food is a proven formula. SIN PHUAY HIANG reports



[1]

TIMBRE @ THE SUBSTATION
45 ARMENIAN STREET,
SINGAPORE 179936.
 OPEN EVERYDAY AFTER 6PM
www.timbre.com.sg

SETTING

This local music enclave is tucked away in the corner of the cityscape is a popular choice for those who appreciate live music and a wide variety of local and international cuisine. The quaint charm of the place shines through in its focus on wooden elements in the décor with the opportunity to get outdoors through alfresco dining.

"The fusion of art and food enhances the atmosphere and culture," says Windson Liong, 25, a local theatre artiste who is also a frequent customer at Timbre.

ARTISTIC FLAIR

Timbre is a music and bar bistro where live music bands take the main stage. Artistes and musicians from homegrown bands gather to play every night. This is part of the unique branding for Timbre, according to Co-Managing Director, Danny Loong.

"We are fortunate to be one of the first to show our support for local bands only."

FOOD

Timbre offers *tapas* (appetisers in Spanish cuisine), thin crust pizzas and cocktails. For a full course meal, try the thin crust Hawaiian pizza (\$17), kebabs (\$8.90 to \$9.90) and treat yourself to a wide variety of cocktails (\$10 to \$15).

"We are fortunate to be one of the first amongst the rest to show our support for local bands only."

DANNY LOONG
 Co-Managing Director



[2]

THE SINGAPORE ART CAFE
8 RAFFLES AVENUE,
#03-02 ESPLANADE MALL
 MONDAY TO SATURDAY:
 11AM TO 9 PM
 SUNDAY: 1PM TO 9PM
www.singaporeartcafe.com

**SETTING**

With a mixture of arts and a bountiful selection of local delights, The Singapore Art Café is a calming place for the harried souls at library@esplanade. Café owner, Jonathan How Chi Liang, 35 wants to create a cozy and artistic atmosphere where musicians and music lovers can come together to discuss music.

ARTISTIC FLAIR

The café specialises in performing arts showcases but Jonathan sometimes throws in a selection of artworks by local artists.

The session is for everyone and anyone to take the stage and dedicate songs, sing a tune or just have fun experimenting songs with other musicians, according to Jonathan.

FOOD

The café offers a double chocolate muffin (\$3) and a frothy cup of cappuccino, (\$5) for a light afternoon snack. The sliced fish soup noodles, (\$6.50) is a favourite among diners.



[3]

ARTOHOLOGIC CAFE
422 JOO CHIAT ROAD
SINGAPORE 427642
 MONDAY TO FRIDAY: 12PM TO 7PM, SATURDAY: 10AM TO 9PM
www.artoholic.sg

SETTING

Joo Chiat Road is famous for its colourful blend of coffee shops, cafes and restaurants. Artoholic Café, a retail branch of design company Nota House, adds to this interesting brew.

You'll be greeted with an alfresco-styled dining experience upon walking into the café. Furnished like an art gallery, it is full of sleek and modern furniture, some of which are designed by the company.

Devisanthi, 34, one of the co-partners of Artoholic Café, says, "We wanted something minimalistic so that it wouldn't compete with the art pieces."

ARTISTIC FLAIR

The café provides a platform for artistes from Southeast Asia to have their works exhibited and recognised. It also showcases performing arts and music events every once in a while.

"We are still exploring to have local artistes featured and have more video-art screenings," she adds.

FOOD

The café offers sandwiches such as the Zesty Chicken of the Sea sandwich (\$9), cakes (\$4) and beverages such as Mocha (\$4.20) or an Earl Grey (\$4). Come in for a quiet afternoon coffee fix or feast on a selection of light snacks, desserts and cakes selection.





RUN AWAY TO AMERICA

Longing for that holiday with sun, sea and sand? **WELLA ONG** gives you a preview of Orlando, Florida

Set in the heart of Florida, lies the city of Orlando, a true resort destination in a league of its own.

Orlando boasts a plethora of over 90 theme parks and attractions, featuring the world-famous Walt Disney World, as well as Universal Studios, Ripley's Believe It or Not! Museum and Seaworld.

One such theme park that's worth exploring would be Disney's Epcot, a futuristic theme park unique to only Orlando. It's famous for its interactive rides. Check out what it means to be an astronaut in a team at Mission: SPACE, a thrill ride that simulates real-life G-forces. Definitely unmissable for adrenaline junkies!

Follow up with a visit to the Kennedy Space Centre. Special bus tours are available for various restricted areas at the Space Centre, including the observation gantry to view the actual rocket launch pads. After your tour of the facilities, relax at the two IMAX theatres or continue on to the new ride attraction: Shuttle Launch Experience.

If you're in for a day at the beach, go surf at Cocoa Beach. If you prefer to shop, head to St George Street in downtown St Augustine. It is a walkable district with quaint shops and restaurants.

St Augustine, a quaint seaside county with a history dating all the way back to 1565, exudes a serene ambience of a European town and is famous for its historic fort, Castillo de San Marcos.

Orlando has a warm and subtropical climate that makes it a good travel destination all year round.



FactBox

September-October:

- Hot and humid with short spells of strong rain usually in the afternoons
- Evenings are relatively cooler but temperatures don't often drop below 21 degrees Celsius.
- Even though this is near the end of the hurricane season, it is still possible to encounter thunderstorms and strong gusts.

November-December:

- Temperatures range from a comfortable 15 to 21 degrees Celsius. Ideal for travelling as the region buzzes with Christmas festivities.
- Just because it's winter, it doesn't mean you have to bundle up. Bring your shorts and sandals along too! You will need them on some days.



PHOTOS BY: TIMOTHY ONG & FELICIA CHOW

FLYING SOLO

Treat yourself to a well-deserved holiday, planned entirely by yourself. **JOYCE SEE** shows the way.



More Singaporean youths are travelling independently and loving it.

Timothy Ong, 19, an Information Technology graduate from Ngee Ann Polytechnic, planned his first trip to Bangkok when he was 17.

Timothy says, "It helps to travel with people who have travelled on their own before."

Similarly, Singapore Polytechnic graduate Felicia Chow, 21, first made an independent trip with her friends to Bangkok when she was 16.

Four girls in a foreign land certainly don't paint a very safe picture. "Tourist-friendly places generally are quite safe. But when my group split up, I always make sure I've got at least one other person with me," says Felicia.

Managing your dollars and cents

For those who are planning your first trip, here are some details on how much you have to set aside.

Timothy opts for online bookings for both hotels and flight tickets. He estimates spending \$320 on a two-way plane ticket and accommodation for his week-long Bangkok trip.

Felicia spent \$560 on a two-way plane ticket and accommodation for a five-day trip to Hong Kong. She was shocked at what her backpacker's inn had

to offer. "What you pay is what you get," she says. More detailed planning is needed.

Low Lai Chow, 26, editor of Youth.SG, recently backpacked across Europe herself. "Research" and "blending in" are the two musts on a trip. "Try to get in touch with locals, of friends or virtual travel communities before you leave home. Check if they can bring you around or advise you," she suggests.

Lai Chow continues, "As long as you do your research, avoid war zones, have common sense and etiquette for the local customs and culture of wherever you're going, you should fare pretty well. It might not be as glam as touring Europe but it's intriguing nonetheless."

Go Your Own Way

More youths relish the chance to travel by themselves. **PETER KEITH RAJENDRAN** learns about their experiences

photos by: prashant ashoka

With more and more young people bent on scouring the globe, backpackers have found out a unique avenue to experience different cultures and reducing the cost of accommodation.

Take Prashant Ashoka, 19, for example, currently a third year Mass Communication student at Ngee Ann Polytechnic, he made his voyage to Europe by himself during the school break in second year.

With just \$7500, he backpacked in Europe for 42 days visiting places like London, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Berlin and Amsterdam and only stayed in a hostel for three times!

The rest of the time, he stayed with people of various nationalities and did not pay for lodging.

INTERNET HELP

According to the website, CouchSurfing International Inc is a non-profit organisation that "is not just about finding free accommodation around the world" but also about cultural exchange between like-minded travellers.

He found this website through his mother who is also an avid traveller, having visited places like Portugal, Monaco, Switzerland and Spain while living as a guest of members of couchsurfing.com.

"It's really a new experience to live in someone else's house without even knowing the person at all," says Prashant.

COSY COTTAGE > HOTEL

Prashant remembers vividly his experience living with a 65-year-old Viennese woman, Helga.

They talked about their lives and shared stories over steaming hot plates of kaiserschmarrn, a traditional dish, which she made for Prashant.

And in that cold weather, living in a cosy cottage would beat a hotel anytime.

INDEPENDENCE

Prashant carried a Swiss army knife throughout his journey, as he felt the need to be protected especially when moving in and out of countries.

"You never know what might happen. I feel safer if I had some form of protection," says Prashant.

However, he was not always able to secure accommodation. In Venice for example, he had to spend the night at a train station because there were no offers of housing.

"I can safely say that this journey has made so much more independent and I've learnt so much about myself."



Deepti Pathak

Age: 21

Institution: National University of Singapore (NUS)

Visited: Canada, The United States, Korea, Australia

Survived a racist outburst



Prakash Kamath

Age: 21

Institution: National Technological University (NTU)

Visited: Poland, Bratislava, Czech, Austria, London, Portugal, Belgium, Paris, Amsterdam

Scaled 10 European countries in 30 days with only S\$4,000

"You better not get married here or we'll send you back to your country!" screamed a security staff who interrogated Deepti Pathak over her Indian passport at Vancouver International Airport. She was clearly shaken, as this was her welcome in Canada where she was to meet her sister.

Now 21, and studying Communication and New Media at NUS, Deepti describes that experience as "scary for a 15-year-old".

That ordeal, however, hasn't deterred Deepti from travelling and has since been to many places around the world, such as the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. She enjoys a blend between the scenic countryside and the bustling nightlife.

"It's different from travelling with your parents as you feel very protected with them. On your own, you experience things at a different level. You definitely get a taste of freedom," says Deepti.

A few months before he finished National Service (NS), Prakash Kamath took a stab at freedom by planning a budget trip around Europe.

While in NS, he booked hostels and motels through the Internet, and calculated obsessively how many days he and his three friends would spend at a particular destination.

Then they made the journey down to their first destination - London.

Their 30-day scenic trip included places like Czech Republic, Poland, Bratislava and Austria in Western Europe and Portugal, Amsterdam, Belgium and even Paris. He spent a total of \$4,000.

Permitting themselves just S\$70 (35 Euros) everyday, money was especially tight as the temptation of shopping, accompanied by their exorbitant price tags, can prove to be hard to resist.

"All in all, it was a wonderful experience for me, with Paris, Bratislava and Portugal making the most impact. They have breathtaking views and it really was special to be there."

photo by: prakash kamath

photo by: deepti pathak

Prashant Ashoka

Age: 19

Institution: Ngee Ann Polytechnic

Visited: London, Paris, Rome, Venice, Vienna, Prague, Berlin, Amsterdam

Spent nights in strangers' homes

SIZE 0

IS NO LONGER THE WAY TO GO

Size zero looks are so yesterday. **CHAI XIU LING** finds out why

Grace Chua, 19, a business student in Singapore Polytechnic, has always been comfortable with her weight despite constant peer pressure to crash diet. Grace has a healthy Body Mass Index (BMI) of 20.1.

However, her BMI falls below the outrageous standards of society, which was deemed "undesirable" by many young women her age a year ago.

Attributing her healthy physique to a regular mix of kickboxing and aerobics exercise, the gym enthusiast is determined not to conform to the popular notion that size zero is beautiful.

"I see no reason to feel insecure about my body image when I keep my body in a tip-top condition with regular exercise. It's unrealistic to aim to be a size zero because I'd have to starve myself," she expresses firmly.

She isn't alone as many young Singaporean women are no longer looking up to stick-thin celebrities like Mary-Kate Olsen as "thinspirations". A stark difference from last year, when being a size zero was prevalent in society.

Currently, the obsession with being a size zero is gradually dying down and the trend now is to keep fit.

Tracey Sim, 20, an architecture undergrad from National University of Singapore has wanted to be a size zero badly and was "thinspired" by then anorexic socialite, Nicole Richie.

"I was motivated by the amount of weight she lost when she's anorexic. She literally went from a ball of meat to a bag of bones!" she exclaims.

Tracey battled with anorexia for two years, stopping after she suffered severe gastric pains.

"I see no reason to feel insecure about my body image when I keep my body in tip-top condition with regular exercise. It's unrealistic to aim to be a size zero because I'd have to starve myself."

GRACE CHUA, 19,
Singapore Polytechnic student

"It's a wake-up call for me. I knew I had to break out of the whole crazy size zero obsession and start living my life normally again."

Tracey shares that "toned and sporty" actress, Jessica Biel, is now her new role model.

"She works hard to achieve her lean figure, which is better than being anorexic," she says.

These days Tracey eats healthily and exercises regularly to train for the Great Eastern Women's run that she has signed up for, happening at the end of the year.

"I alternate between lifting weights at the gym and running outdoors. Both activities give me the much desired muscles on my body!" she adds.

She mentions that men nowadays "prefer sportier girls with a healthy image".

U.K. Shyam, Singapore's 100m record holder agrees. The 32-year-old points out that "beauti-

ful women in the media are no longer frail and skinny". He adds that the "masculine and powerful portrayal of women" is starting to "influence" and send out strong messages to young Singaporean women.

"It's cool to see women with a bit of build and muscles. Just look at Rihanna!" he shares cheekily. Young women in Singapore seem to be taking the hint that being skinny isn't the key to looking beautiful.

California Fitness Gym instructor, who wishes be known as Collin, reveals, "More young women are signing up for kickboxing and aerobics to help them achieve a better cut body," he shares.

It's indeed gratifying to know that more young women in Singapore are resorting to exercise and eating healthily to get into shape.

Jolyn Tang, a 20-year-old Nursing student from Nanyang Polytechnic is one of them.

She has stopped dieting and signed up for work out classes with Fitness First a year ago and now works out thrice a week.

"The gym motivates me to keep myself trim and fit when I see others battling the same challenge too," she says.

Grace Chan, a nutritionist from Theresa Beauty, reveals that young women nowadays are "setting more realistic goals for themselves".

It's now harder to find someone who's unsatisfied with her acceptable weight, unlike in the past, where I had healthy clients desperately trying to lose weight to be skinnier," she shares.

She says, "I always remind my clients that there's no logic in becoming a skinny because ultimately, it's impossible to keep up with that weight if you're not naturally skinny."

Indeed, it's high time for young women in Singapore to be wiser and snap out of the size zero obsession if they want to treat their body right.



photo by chai xiu ling



Photo by: diana kuo

“I’LL SLEEP WHEN I’M DEAD”

Teens in Singapore aren't getting enough sleep and experts say it's detrimental to the physical and mental health. TEO YIN YIN checks out what's keeping them awake

Lim Ya Yun, a third year Pharmacy student in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), gets an average of six hours of sleep on weekdays. On worse days, she survives on barely two hours of sleep. “It’s difficult to function in school with such minimal sleep and I’m unable to concentrate on simple tasks,” she says.

The Teen Sleep Survey Singapore (TSSS) 2007 reveals that “80 percent of teens are getting less than eight hours of sleep on school days, while only 2.6 percent are getting the recommended nine hours”.

In addition, a global survey conducted by ACNielsen in 2005 found that 54 percent of Singaporeans stay awake until past midnight, and they usually go to sleep between 12am to 2am.

On a typical school day, most students get up at about 6am to 7am to prepare for the day, and that’s a scant five hours after they went to bed.

It’s evident that teenagers are not getting the sleep they need.

“Insufficient sleep can be harmful, sometimes even life-threatening. When deprived of sleep, the brain functions less optimally, resulting in sleepiness,” explains Dr Lim Li Ling, medical director and consultant neurologist at the Singapore Neurology and Sleep Centre, the principle organiser of the TSSS 2007.

She explains that the lack of sleep is classified as a sleeping disorder, and it’s on the rise among all age groups simply caused by modern living.

“It’s difficult to function in school with such minimal sleep and I’m unable to concentrate on simple tasks.”

LIM YA YUN,
Third year Pharmacy student

UNCOVERING THE REASONS TO THE LACK OF SLEEP:

The TSSS 2007 also shows that 66.5 percent of the students stay up late doing homework or studying. Other late-night activities include watching television, surfing the Internet and chatting online. Ya Yun says, “Even though most lectures and tutorials end before 5pm or 6pm, I usually reach home only after 7pm.”

She adds, “By then I still have assignments to complete and the following day school starts at 9am. I have no idea how to accomplish everything without compromising on my sleep time.”

Kevin Ng, a second year NP Engineering student, recounts that on several occasions, he didn’t sleep for days because of poor time management. He

recalled that when he was a freshman, he couldn’t cope with the examinations and his football trainings. In order to accomplish both tasks, he has to sacrifice his sleep for two days.

“I’m terribly unorganised and the overloading amount of school projects simply suffocates me. I barely even have time for a proper meal,” he says.

Dr Lim mentions that it’s difficult to wind down when there are distractions like the Internet, television, and even the mobile phone. It’s easy to get carried away.

WHY SLEEP?

Dr Lim observes that many people view sleep as an indulgence rather than a vital activity to rest for good health.

“Many people are unaware of the harmful health effects of missing sleep,” she says.

According to the National Sleep Foundation (NSF), sleeping consolidates your memory and replenishes your energy so you feel refreshed and alert the following day. Sleeping also ensures that the body functions normally, such as making sure important growth hormones are secreted.

Lack of sleep has harmful effects on the body both physically and mentally. BBC reports that a chronic lack of sleep lowers your immunity and ups the risk of developing hallucinations and other mental problems.

Dr Lim adds that sleep deprivation in the long run is associated with a shorter life span and may even cause medical conditions like heart attacks, depression, diabetes, and attention deficit disorder (ADD). In extreme cases, it can even cause seizures or a stroke.

Now, here’s the big question: How much sleep do we really need?

Dr Lim advises that the ideal sleep duration is around six to eight hours, however the amount of sleep differs individually and still remains a variable entity.

NOW TO TURN THE CLOCK BACK:

Dr Lim says that one way for the body to catch up on lost sleep is by sleeping in longer during weekends whenever possible.

She adds that youths should also strive to sleep at least an hour earlier than usual. Parents should monitor their children to ensure sufficient sleep.

“It would help to have an effective time management and be organised. One good way is to get an organiser and plan your time properly.”

TIPS FOR A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP zzz

Some tips from NSF:

1) Avoid caffeine (coffee, tea, soft drinks, chocolate), nicotine (cigarettes, tobacco products) and alcohol when it’s close to bedtime

2) Exercise regularly, but complete your workout at least three hours before bedtime

3) Establish a regular relaxing, not alerting, bedtime routine (e.g. taking a bath or relaxing in a hot tub, lighting scented lavender candles)

4) Go to bed at the same time every night

5) Listen to quiet music or drink warm milk

6) Create a sleep-conducive environment that is dark, quiet and preferably cool and comfortable

Think it won't happen to youths?

Well better think again. In this issue, **WELLA ONG** looks into three health issues that you ought to be aware of, just in case you thought age isn't a factor when it comes to chronic diseases.

"I'm still young, nothing to be scared of!"

GLENN, 24,
Unemployed

"Won't die one la."

PRISCILLA, 19,
Student

"I'm going to die young, but still, not so young!"

MICHELLE, 20
Student

Do you share the same attitude as the three readers above about your own health and well-being? Their responses reflect a "Superman" mindset that we often adopt, as youths. The idea of playing Superman may be appealing, consider yourself warned. Just like the comic hero in the story, we all have our Kryptonite when it comes to our body's health and no, you're never too young to be affected.

AIDS/HIV

It isn't just going to happen to someone else. If you've had sex with more than one partner and don't practice safe sex, you could be next.

According to 2007 statistics released by the Ministry of Health (MOH), 422 Singaporeans were newly reported to have contracted HIV, bringing the number of infected Singaporeans to a stunning 3,482.

The truth is that majority of Singaporean males are infected through sexual contact with casual partners or sex workers. And sadly, many females today who thought they were safe with one partner find themselves infected with HIV through sex with their husbands or boyfriends.

Get this right: AIDS/HIV doesn't discriminate against the young, whether you are male or female, and certainly isn't just a homosexual disease.

Contrary to popular belief, most infections do occur during sexual activities between heterosexuals.

COLD (Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease)

This is a serious lung disease that reduces your ability to breathe normally, and over time, shortness of breath and other symptoms of COLD can get in the way of doing even basic tasks like changing your clothes.

The reality for all smokers is that COLD is an incurable progressive disease. On top of that, it has been reported that in 2007, smoking causes more than 90 percent of COLD cases.

Since this disease is incurable, it can only be managed through extensive and prolonged treatment.

The World Health Organisation predicts that COLD will become the fourth leading cause of death worldwide by 2030. In Singapore's statistical terms, the estimate is that more than 60,000 people will suffer from this disease.

The frightening reality is that by the time most patients are diagnosed, they may have lost at least 50 percent of their lung functions.

Especially those with symptoms such as persistent cough and/or breathlessness, smokers are encouraged to undergo spirometry testing (a breathing test used to diagnose and monitor lung problems), available in some polyclinics and general practice clinics.



TYPE 2 DIABETES

Chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes are closely linked to diet and lifestyle.

So really, the saying, "you are what you eat" is no exaggeration.

According to a recent MOH report, meals are increasingly being eaten outside the home, and the use of processed packaged food is also rising.

What and how we eat at an early age directly impacts the development of risk factors such as obesity and high blood cholesterol, which influences the onset of diseases such as Type 2 diabetes.

This can strike anyone at any age and we are definitely not spared. The risks of developing Type 2 diabetes increases if you:

- Have a BMI (body mass index) of more than 23
- Have an inactive lifestyle
- Have a parent or sibling with diabetes

(For more information, check out the new "Diabetes Be aWare" site at www.hpb.gov.sg/diabetes)

THE GOOD NEWS

While these illnesses stem from unhealthy lifestyle habits and choices that we may have developed from an early age, it isn't too late to make little changes to significantly reduce the risk of developing these long-term and chronic diseases.

Remember that your health is in your hands. You may not be Superman, but you certainly can afford to choose to steer clear from these ticking time bombs!



STOP DIABETES BEFORE IT STOPS YOU

Think you're too young for diabetes? Think again. As shown in the 1998 National Health Survey conducted in Singapore, younger people are getting Type-2 diabetes. TEO YIN YIN discovers the reason

By the time you're diagnosed with Type-2 diabetes, it's often too late to turn the clock back. Type-2 diabetes is the most common form of diabetes for accounting for about 80 percent of all cases. Though it usually strikes people above 40 years old due to increased insulin resistance with age, younger people can suffer from diabetes too.

WHAT IS DIABETES?

According to the Diabetic Society of Singapore (DSS), "diabetes is a chronic disease where the body does not make or does not use insulin properly, resulting in having too much sugar (glucose) in the blood".

Insulin controls the amount of blood sugar present in the body.

Type-2 diabetes occurs when the pancreas produces inadequate or no insulin to maintain the normal blood sugar level and the latter builds up in the body. Patients will need insulin injections to control their blood sugar level.

This is also known as "lifestyle diabetes as it's usually caused by leading an unhealthy lifestyle. It can be controlled by making adjustments in your lifestyle".

COMPENSATING YOUR HEALTH FOR WORK

"Due to the fast pace of our modern lifestyle, we compromise on our health and end up eating takeaways and fast food," says Dr Leong Choon

Kit, a medical practitioner and dietitian.

He says that usually fast food is high in fat and salt but low in dietary fibre. If consumed over a long period of time, many health problems such as obesity, diabetes and heart disease can surface.

Dr Leong also points out that soft drinks and junk food are two other major culprits affecting young people's health.

A can (330ml) of Coca-Cola contains about 40.5g of sugar, which is equivalent to 10 teaspoons of sugar.

A recent report by BBC found that there is about 15 spoons of sugar and 9.3g saturated fat in a typical Chinese 'takeaway' consisting of 350g meat dish and 200g rice. It also found that a thick-crust pizza with 300g cheese and tomato contains 8.2g sugar and 22.5g saturated fat.

Dr Leong advises, "Keep sugar intake to less than 10 percent of total energy intake and fat intake should be reduced, especially that of saturated fats."

He continues, "Given the high sugar content and calories in soft drinks, it's not recommended that anyone should take more than one can (330ml) per day. In fact, it has no nutritional value."

Nigel Lee, a first year Accountancy student in Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP), says that he drinks an average of three cans of soft drinks daily.

Li Huimin, a second year IT student from NP, says that she frequents the bubble tea stall at Canteen One almost everyday during her lunch break.

According to Nutrition.com.sg, each 500ml cup of bubble tea with tapioca pearls contains about

460 calories, 13g of fat, and 28g of sugar.

"That figure can differ variably on the type of bubble tea you order. However it is clear that bubble teas are fairly unhealthy, especially if consumed on a regular basis," Dr Leong says.

OTHER FACTORS THAT CAUSE DIABETES

A study by researchers from Harvard University shows that over-nutrition affects the secretion of insulin from the pancreas, which in turn controls the blood sugar level.

It never occurred to Kayden Tan, 22, a student, that he would be diagnosed with Type-2 diabetes two years ago. He started smoking since he was 14, had a diet high in saturated fat and was not exercising regularly. At 178 cm and 91 kg, he was severely overweight.

A recent 2007 study conducted by University of Lausanne found that smokers had a significant 44 percent higher risk of developing Type-2 diabetes compared with non-smokers.

"I knew I was leading a very unhealthy lifestyle, but I just didn't think I was at risk," he says.

He continues, "It was until I came across an article in a magazine and saw that I've a couple of the symptoms listed for diabetes for quite some time, such as experiencing excessive thirst and frequent urination. I decided to go for a checkup and that's when reality smacked me hard in the face."

"Start making changes to your lifestyle if you know you're leading an unhealthy lifestyle," Kayden says.

Today, Kayden stands at a healthy weight of 74kg. He spends his time playing basketball regularly and he has quit smoking completely.

He says, "Start simple, such as eating lesser French fries, or spending lesser time on your computer and more time working out."

Dr Leong advises that everyone should strike to lead an active and healthy lifestyle with a proper combination of diet and exercise.

He adds, "Eat all foods in moderation. Occasional indulgences are fine but be mindful of how much you eat."

DIABETES



The international symbol for Diabetes

HOW TO TELL THEM APART

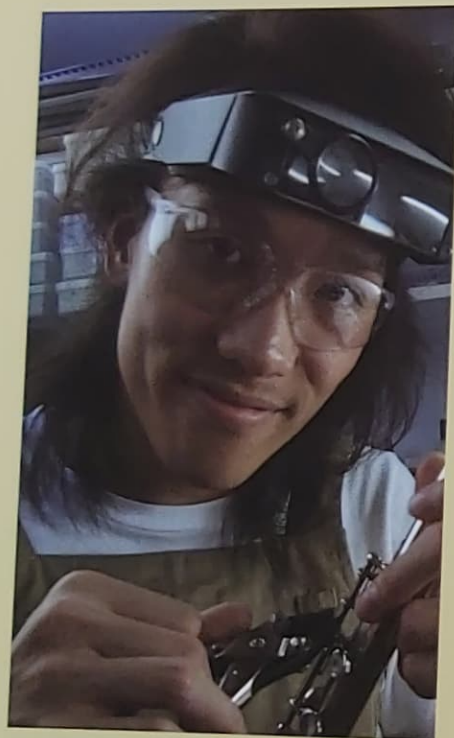
- **Type-1 Diabetes:** Body produces inadequate or no insulin
- **Type-2 Diabetes:** Body doesn't use insulin properly, resulting in having too much blood sugar in the body

OTHER SYMPTOMS OF DIABETES:

- Increased urination
- Blurred vision
- Fatigue or drowsiness
- Poorly healing cuts or bruises
- Increased hunger and thirst
- Rapid weight loss
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dry, itchy skin

JOB FOR KICKS

If you are tired of your boring job, but still need your weekly dosage of movies, music and... wholesome textbooks, don't worry! **HE RUIMING** sheds light on the more interesting ways to earn your keep



"I always feel an immense sense of pride when I test a fixed flute that sounds right."

TIMOTHY TAN, 20
Flute Technician

Timothy Tan E-wen, 20 FLUTE TECHNICIAN

@ **WINDWORKS**
PTE LTD

The censors can claim to be able to keep our airwaves squeaky clean and void of harsh language, but there is no way that they are able to fix music – literally. That's why musicians are grateful for the likes of Timothy Tan E-wen, 20, a flute technician.

The Ngee Ann Polytechnic Mass Communication student is instrumental (no pun intended) in the restoration of damaged flutes, making them good as new using an astounding array of tools, machinery, spare parts and chemicals. To Timothy, the long and intense process is what makes the job rewarding.

Brute strength will get you nowhere in this line. To excel, you need finesse and precision. As Timothy puts it, "Flutes are very sensitive instruments, and repairing them is a form of art."

Some arrive in rather dismal conditions, but whether misshapened, rusty, dented or crushed (slightly), Timothy fixes them all! After hours of soaking, washing, drying and buffering, the flute will play beautifully again.

If that is not enough, Timothy will pick up his intimidating gas torch to start melting glue pellets to stick on spare parts, or use a fairly odd combination of a cold cathode and a toothpick to uncover the leaks in your instrument.

It sounds like hard work, but at the end of it all, one gets to see (or hear) their fruits of labour.

"I always feel an immense sense of pride when I test a fixed flute that sounds right," Timothy says.

Nai Wee Long, 19 BARBACK

@ **THE SCREENING ROOM**

Behind every great cocktail is a great bartender. Yet behind every great bartender is an even greater barback.

Nai Wee Long, 19, a Republic Polytechnic student, is the unsung hero who slogs it out at the bar while the bartender looks pretty at the counter for his three months. The job isn't for the slothful and unmotivated. He was a barback for three months before he became a bartender.

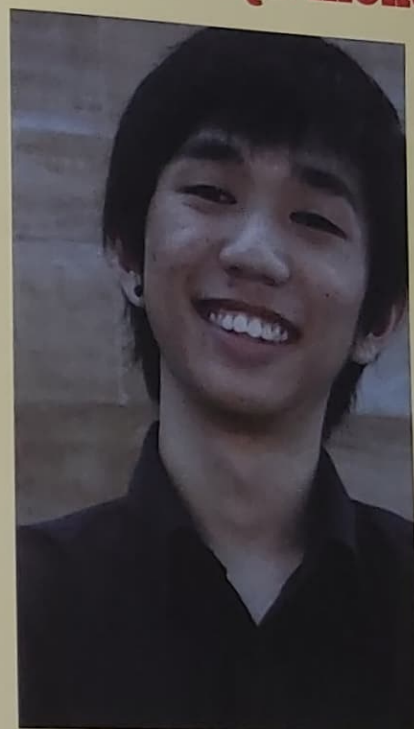
"I had to refill ice, drinks and wash the dishes," Wee Long says. He describes himself as a "sai-kang warrior", a colloquial term for a person who does a huge amount of undesirable work.

"Fortunately it's not all that bad. I also get to observe what the bartender does so that I can learn from him," he adds.

After becoming a bartender, he now wields wine bottles with supreme skill and pours drinks into glasses with military precision.

Through many trials and tribulations, he has finally earned his place in bartending.

"No more *sai-kang* for me," he beams.



Li Ching Sze, 22 ASSISTANT DOG HANDLER

@ **K9 KAMPUS**

Having a dog's life is not something to lament about, especially when the dog's under the care of Li Ching Sze, 22. The second year student from Ngee Ann Polytechnic is an assistant dog-handler at K9 Kampus, a day-care centre for pet dogs.

Ching Sze's main role is to facilitate events such as birthday parties and gatherings for both owners and their pooches. While she serves food and refreshments, Ching Sze also manages often-playful dogs, making sure they don't cause mayhem.

Occasionally, Ching Sze has to manage "problem dogs" that disrupt the balance of fun and discipline in the centre. Despite being a dog lover, she has learnt how to deliver tough love and resist their doe-eyed looks.

That said, she still says that going to work always gives her a warm, fuzzy feeling.



SPORT ON

PETER KEITH RAJENDREN unravels the rewards that come in various forms from playing the sport you live and breathe

Football is just a waste of time and won't get you anything!" This familiar statement, usually from the mouth of concerned mothers, would be the last thing an aspiring kid would want to hear.

Now, things are very much different. Playing the sport you love can actually bring you a whole load of rewards coming in various forms.

At 19, Fabian Kwok, a student at Temasek Polytechnic, earns \$400 a month on top of the usual school hours doing a Business Process and Systems Engineering course. He earns that much from his day job - A Geylang United football player.

With Geylang United playing in the Prime League, a class just below Singapore's Professional S-League, Fabian is considered a semi-professional footballer and therefore warrants a "salary" of \$400 a month.

That's not all. Drafted into the National U21 Team at the beginning of the year, he devotes himself to football training on Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

With a "steady income", he managed to buy a new motorbike to get him to school and training in some fashion.

"My parents helped me pay for the bike but with the money I get from soccer, I cover the cost of maintenance and petrol quite easily," Fabian confesses.

Juggling sports and studies is a constant struggle for anyone.

Yong Zi Long, 20, a fresh graduate from Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP) has been playing football for his club, Woodlands Wellington, for two seasons and also with the National U21 Team, he earns a total of \$350 a month.

However, earning that much on top of school

"It's about how bad you want it. Sacrifice is very important. Ultimately fitting school and soccer together takes a lot of discipline."

YONG ZI LONG, 20,
Woodlands Wellington
FC Player

comes with good time management and lots of sacrifice.

With training starting at 6pm from Monday to Friday and matches occurring on Saturday afternoons, he hardly has anytime for himself. Sunday is his only rest day.

"It's about how bad you want it. Sacrifice is very important. Ultimately fitting school and soccer together takes a lot of discipline," says Zi Long.

Passion for contact rugby has driven Annabel Woo, 20, straight into the Women's National Rugby Team.

One of the youngest players there, she's been to overseas competitions such as the Hong Kong Sevens in Hong Kong and ARFU Women's Championship in Kazakhstan.

Although rugby doesn't offer the same monetary incentives like football, the trips overseas are fully covered by the Singapore Rugby Union.

Annabel has played amongst the best overseas. "It's such a new thing to me, the exposure, playing at a higher level and also experiencing and

meeting different people from different countries is really exciting," she says enthusiastically.

Playing rugby for both Catholic Junior College and the National Academy U19 squad, Mark Vincent, 18, feels the constant need to improve his game.

"Rugby helps me work on my speed, agility and strength and getting a nice six pack at the end is a bonus!" laughs Mark.

Despite not getting paid a cent, Mark feels that the opportunity to work with coaches who are ex-national players is rewarding in itself.

"It's great to train at such a high level. I'm actually pretty lucky."

Aside from monetary rewards, Haikal Eiman, 20, a graduate from NP's Accountancy course told hype that his reward comes in a different form.

Having played hockey at club level since he was 17, he recently joined the National Men's team in his final year. With training starting at 7pm on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, he has limited time for study and friends.

However, what keeps him going at the end of the day is the support from his family members when he comes back after a tired day.

"My mum helps me with the laundry, both my parents come down for my matches and are supportive of my hockey."

"To me, that's a reward in itself," says Haikal.



EVERY CENT COUNTS



When it comes to saving money, a little bit goes a long way. However, it takes a lot of patience. KARTINI BTE SALIM tells you how

THE EXTRAVAGANT

Dressed in brand name products from head to toe is the 20-year-old Elanor – her top is from River Island, black pipe jeans from Bebe, bag from Raoul, and shoes from Nine West. But when a young lady approached her, asking for donations to help the recent earthquake in Sichuan, China, Elanor brushes her off saying, "Sorry. No money."

"There are so many people who's going to help anyway. Why should I bother?" she explains.

Elanor comes from a well-to-do family. Her father is a businessman, while her mother is a full-time housewife. She only has a brother, who's currently pursuing his studies overseas. According to Elanor, she receives \$100 a week, transport money aside, as her allowance, but to her it wasn't enough.

THE THRIFTY

Noor Azimah Salleh, 20, a student, is one such person. Her father works as a dispatch clerk, while her mother is a full-time housewife.

Though she gets about \$50 allowance weekly, Azimah saves \$20 of her allowance. Every end of the month, Azimah deposits her savings into her bank account. To date, she has more than \$2,000 sitting in her savings account, ever since she's started in late 2006.

She emphasises, "It's important to start your own savings. You never know what can happen and you might need the extra cash. And if I let my money stay in the bank, I can also collect on the interest."

SAVING IT THE RIGHT WAY

Shaun Lau Jianhe, a 25-year-old financial planner from one of the reputable financial planning companies, feels that taking up financial plans is just

"Taking the initiative to start a financial plan early in life inculcates the habit of regular savings, not just in banks where money could be easily withdrawn and spent, but in savings policy where money are 'locked up' in the short period but gives a potentially higher reward at maturity."

SHAUN LAU, 25,
Financial Planner

as mandatory as the simple type of savings that Azimah has done.

"Taking the initiative to start a financial plan early in life inculcates the habit of regular savings, not just in banks where money could be easily withdrawn and spent, but in savings policy where money are 'locked up' in the short period but gives a potentially higher reward at maturity," Shaun explains.

However, youths considering taking up policies have to learn to be patient. Unlike basic savings account with the local banks, financial policies begin reaping only over time.

Shaun says, "Youths thinking of starting policies early in life should be realistic and have a clear idea of what amount that they can commit to. It's impossible to turn \$100 into \$10,000 overnight."

COLONIAL FUSION

REVIEW AND PHOTOS BY:
CHARMAINE CHOO

KARMA KETTLE & RHAPSODY

Address:

26B Dempsey Road
Singapore

Tel:

64720221



KATHI ROLLS



LAVENDER CHICKEN

Tucked away in a secluded corner of Dempsey Road, Karma Kettle & Rhapsody is run by newlyweds Dhiraj and Priti. Having dabbled in the F&B line before in India, the couple decided to set up a colonial-Asian fusion restaurant in Singapore.

All the dishes at Karma Kettle & Rhapsody are original creations of the bosses. As their focus is on creating healthy colonial dishes with Asian influences, it's no wonder you won't find anything deep-fried on the menu.

Drinks choices, however, are aplenty. With more than 50 types tea and three pages full of French liquor selections, customers will be spoiled for choice. "Iced Rambutan" (\$6.50) is great for hot sweaty afternoons. This pale-pink drink is full of finely blended ice and rambutan pulp, likely to cool off customers who feel hot.

Try the popular "Kathi Rolls" (\$11.90) as a starter. It's an Indian wrap with chicken, peppers and red onion. The tender chicken contrasts well with the crunchy onions and customers can try dipping the rolls into the garlic chili sauce mixed with mint leaves for a refreshing taste.

The restaurant's signature dish, "Lavender Chicken" (\$17.00), is a must-try. The pan-fried chicken, topped with lavender flower sauce, has a hint of lavender scent. The fragrance seeps into the garnishing, which consists of asparagus and carrots.

Pasta or mushroom fans will love "Across The English Channel" (\$16.00), a cheese-dusted linguine with four types of fragrant mushrooms in a fricassee sauce. The sauce is placed next to the pasta so customers can choose to enjoy the flavours separately.

The best thing on the menu has to be the restaurant's "Royal Belgium Truffle Cake" (\$7.00). With thick layers of pure Belgium chocolate in between moist chocolate cake, drizzled with chocolate sauce, it's definitely hard to resist. The cake isn't too heavy or too light, and it melts in your mouth.

While the restaurant can get a little cramped, the staff and owners make up for it with a cheerful and enthusiastic service.

Karma Kettle & Rhapsody is definitely the place to bring your dates, family and friends. The only drawback is that larger groups will have to make reservations to ensure sufficient seats.

PUTTING THE "OOMPH" BACK IN FOOD

REVIEW AND PHOTOS BY:
RAEWYN KOH

OOMPHATICO'S

Address:
163 Tanglin Road
Tanglin Mall #01-03 &
#01-35/36
Tel:
67339088



PANCAKE
LASAGNE



KHAO PHAD
SUPPAROD



JOY JUICE



MIGHTY
MEAT PIZZA

Oomphatico's serves a whole range of food from all over the world – all the recipes of which were concocted by Lara "Jay" Hequet, the cafe's manager and creator, when she travelled around the world.

Most of the ingredients used are organic, as Jay believes that "organic is good for you [and your] body". Her food also has gluten and dairy-free options for those with allergies.

Try the two signature drinks at Oomphatico's – the "Joy Juice" (\$7.50) and "Macabanana" (\$8.50). The "Joy Juice" is made of shaved ice topped with jelly and sweet syrup. It's very sweet and flavourful. Definitely a "pick-me-up" after a long day at work! If it's too sweet for you, you can mix the drink thoroughly with the ice.

The "Macabanana" was a beautiful surprise. Macadamia nuts are pulverised with bananas to make a thick and creamy smoothie. For those who prefer a not-so-sweet drink, this is definitely your beverage. The macadamia nuts give an interesting kick to the smoothie.

The "Khao Phad Supparod" (\$18.50) is essentially just pineapple rice. Pineapple rice usually has

a strong sour taste due to the pineapples. This dish, however, has a milder taste, which is a pleasant surprise and definitely pleasing to the palate. Other than pineapple, the rice is chock-full of flavour from the raisins, cashew nuts, fresh prawns, chicken chunks and chicken floss.

Oomphatico's pizzas are much better than those you find in fast-food chains. The "Mighty Meat Pizza" (\$16.50) has an extremely thin crust that's topped with beautifully smoked pork sausages, mozzarella cheese and chopped mint leaves for that extra "oomph".

Recommended by Jay and fellow diners is the "Pancake Lasagne" (\$14.50). The lasagne noodles are made round and they sandwich a meat sauce that is topped with pesto and sour cream. It's relatively light so you don't feel bloated after eating an entire serving by yourself.

Overall, eating at Oomphatico's is delightful – the ambience is great and the place is beautifully furnished with whimsical pieces of furniture. However, it can be difficult to get the waiter and even more challenging to ensure that they follow up on your requests.

12 LOTUS

DIRECTOR: ROYSTON TAN

Following previous box-office hit, 881, Royston Tan is back with his second 'getai' offering, **12 LOTUS**.

12 LOTUS is a prequel to 881. Previous stars from 881, such as Mindee Ong, Qi Yuwu and Liu Ling Ling, star here as well. This upcoming musical is co-produced by MediaCorp Raintree Pictures, Scorpio East Pictures and Infinite Frameworks.

Talented singer Lian Hua (Mindee Ong), faces abuse and betrayal from heartless men. Her perservance inspires and dazzles as she struggles to bounce back from her fall. Boasting a talented cast and locally-acclaimed director, this heartfelt tale of love and betrayal is set to touch hearts, especially if you loved 881.

WORDS BY: TEO YIN YIN



image courtesy of shenma.com

THE HOUSE BUNNY

DIRECTOR: FRED WOLF

The House Bunny, a comedy written by Kirsten Smith and Karen McCullah Lutz (the same duo who brought you *Legally Blonde*), focuses on identity, friendship and love. Set to be released on Aug 22, it revolves around playboy bunny Shelly Derrington (Anna Faris from the *Scary Movie* series), getting kicked from the Playboy Mansion and ending up as a babysitter to socially awkward teenage girls. Eventually, she teaches them how to be popular and learns a few things from them too – like other heartwarming "comedies" that turn out eventually to be and predictable. While the lame name and lacklustre trailer provide little reason to watch it, if you're into chick flicks, this movie is worth a go.

WORDS BY: MOHSEN OLIVER MICHAEL



image courtesy of shenma.com

PROM NIGHT

DIRECTOR: NELSON MCCORMICK

Donna Keppel (Brittany Snow) is all set for a senior prom with best friends and boyfriend Bobby (Scott Porter) in tow, but things start going sour when a murderous figure (Johnathon Schaech) from her past returns to haunt her.

Prom Night is not a remake of the 1980 slasher movie with the same name, but holds a completely different plot and is director Nelson McCormick's first attempt at the silver screen. Plagued by a predictable script, numerous continuity errors and less than stellar acting, **Prom Night** isn't the most impressive debut for a director.

So if you're a fan of the genre, **Prom Night** is worth watching, if only for the gore, the violence and that deliciously bad, yet good, B-movie vibe.

WORDS BY: AHMAD ZAKI



image courtesy of slasherfilm.com

STEP BROTHERS

DIRECTOR: ADAM MCKAY

Producers Jimmy Miller (Hot Rod, 2007) and Judd Apatow (Knocked Up, 2007) are behind **Step Brothers**, starring Will Ferrell (Blades of Glory) as Brennan and John C. Reilly (Year of the Dog) as Dale. Other than being two middle-aged losers, they're about to share something else: parents.

Havoc ensues between the two overgrown boys, and the only solution is for both to get a job and move out. However, that's easier said than done for a pair of dimwits.

As tension mounts and cracks appear in their parents' new marriage, what initially was a hilariously bumpy start to Brennan and Dale's step-brotherhood eventually becomes an outrageous team effort to right the damage done.

WORDS BY: WELLA ONG



STRANGE WILDERNESS

DIRECTOR: FRED WOLF

Expect mayhem when production company Happy Madison is involved. In this good-natured comedy, Peter Gaulke (Steve Zahn) hosts a failing wildlife television series. Paired with fellow co-presenter Fred Wolf (Allen Covert), they travel to South America, and recruit a gang of washed-out documentarians to film one of nature's greatest mysteries—Bigfoot, in the hope of saving the show.

Director Fred Wolf, who has directed other similar films such as "Without a Paddle" and "Joe Dirt", makes it seem like an offbeat roadtrip instead of a wildlife documentary through all the slapstick.

For all its dope-induced nonsense, **Strange Wilderness** can make for a good laugh if you suddenly decide to go wild!

WORDS BY: BRIAN CHEONG



WALL-E

DIRECTOR: ANDREW STANTON

Set to hit the screens on August 28, **WALL-E** is a joint venture between Disney and Pixar Animation Studio. This movie is a blend of comedy and science-fiction sprinkled with a little romance. It centres on WALL-E (short for Waste-Allocation-Load-Lifter-Earth-Class and voiced by Ben Burtt), the last robot left on Earth, as he develops a personality. WALL-E is brought out of isolation when EVE (Extraterrestrial Vegetation Evaluator) voiced by Elissa Knight, a robot sent to Earth to find plant life, meets him. He finds new purpose in life and falls in love, having learnt what emotions are.

An exciting chase follows when EVE returns to her makers, as a hilarious bunch of friends, that includes a pet cockroach and a team of malfunctioning robots, join WALL-E.

WORDS BY: PETER KEITH RAJENDRAN



A THOUSAND SHARK'S TEETH

MY BRIGHTEST DIAMOND

Shara Worden is the songwriter and singer in My Brightest Diamond, a band with an interesting mixture of indie and classical elements in their music.

A Thousand Shark's Teeth contains 11 tracks heavily influenced by indie and classical music, performed by 20 other people who perform small pieces of the music.

The album's name is derived from the lyrics of the ninth track in the album, "Goodbye Forever". According to Worden in an interview with a New York radio station, the song investigates how someone feels the distance between herself and someone who has passed on.

"Goodbye Forever" starts off like trickling water and quickly, but steadily morphs into a depressing song. Other songs, such as "From the Top of the World" and "Apples" take on a lighter tone, but Worden's high-pitched voice can sometimes make the lyrics hard to follow.

My Brightest Diamond makes a conscious effort to make **A Thousand Shark's Teeth** differ from every other album that it almost makes the band seem like they're in a genre of their own. It's worth a listen but is an acquired taste.

WORDS BY: JULIET TAN



YOU CROSS MY PATH

THE CHARLATANS

After being together for 18 years and having 10 albums to their name, British rock band The Charlatans looks set to get the indie kids grooving to their new album, **You Cross My Path**.

The album was first released as a free download for all XFM (a UK based alternative radio station) listeners and has received a whopping 60,000 clicks. Much to their dismay, they were beaten to it by Radiohead, who thwarted their plans to take the world of free downloads by storm by doing the same.

Frontman Tim Burgess' signature drawl is unmistakable as the band chugs out metronomic beats accompanied by power chord riffs on the guitars.

Album opener "Oh! Vanity" kicks off the party with its steady beats and electro additions. It introduces a tinge of modernity to the classic Charlatans-styled music. The up-tempo beats were kept throughout "Bad Days", sending listeners into a foot-tapping frenzy.

Despite the heavy content, The Charlatans' famous groovy beats will make it all up in the long run. **You Cross My Path** is definitely an album not to be missed for all indie rock fans out there.

WORDS BY: VALERIE CHONG

THE CHARLATANS



• You Cross My Path •

THIS IS NOT THE WORLD THE FUTUREHEADS

This indie punk-rock band from Sunderland releases their third album **This Is Not The World**. However, noise seems to be the only word that's synonymous with their music. In contrast to The Futureheads' blaring guitar and banging drums, bands like Kaiser Chiefs and The Kooks ultimately offer a more mellowed experience. Despite that, their hit single, "The Beginning of The Twist" has made number 20 in the UK Singles Chart List in 2008. The band also attracts a healthy fan base as seen on their MySpace and Facebooks accounts. But the competition with mainstream rock bands might prove to be a tall order. If the band plans not to be part of mainstream music, then they're on the right track.

WORDS BY: PETER KEITH RAJENDRAN



album cover from: indie pop music singapore

PLAINSUNSET PLAIN SUNSET

After the release of four albums by Plain Sunset, the fifth simply makes you wonder why the band has been nominated for the Singapore Music Awards. The opening number, "Johari Window", is monotonous, but will touch those who have lost their loved ones. Unfortunately, the guitar and drumbeats soon seem to get repetitive and might eventually bore you. However, kudos to Jonathan Chan for the lyrics that keeps all listeners belted. Simple words shooting straight from the heart: a definite connection with listeners. The album is still worth a buy as the rest of the tracks will make up for the disappointing opening number.

WORDS BY: SHIRINDERJIT KAUR



album cover from: indie pop music singapore

SONGS IN A & E SPIRITUALIZED

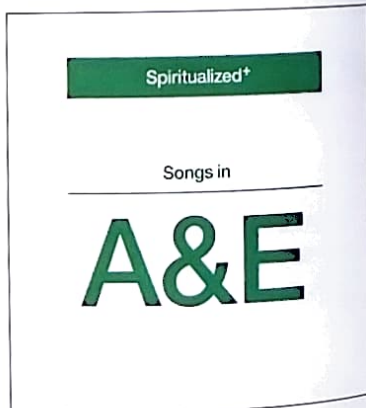
Formed in 1990, Jason Pierce is the only member from the founding group of UK based group, Spiritualized. He sings, writes and composes all of the band's materials.

The sixth studio album's title, **Songs in A & E**, was conceived during Jason's stay in an Accident and Emergency ward in a UK hospital. After five long years as a work-in-progress, followers largely agree that this album is Spiritualized's best in the last decade.

The arrangement of the tracks is interesting. Each track has an entirely different feel - from laid-back Sunday melodies to gospel choir and even haunting, near-death pieces.

"Sweet Talk" and "Death Take Your Fiddle" are two of the more distinctively different tunes. Highly recommended.

WORDS BY: JOYCE SEE



album cover from: indie pop music singapore

Different faces of a USB port

All laptops come with USB ports these days, and a portable flash drive is considered essential for students. Many companies have caught on, igniting an explosion of USB gadgets. MOK TECK CHING looks at five of the wackier ideas in recent memory



USB Rocket Launcher

Each palm-sized launcher comes with three sponge missiles and software that controls it. However, with low accuracy and a six-metre range, you can only wage a classroom war on your seating partner. Mac users are left out of the fun though, as the software is Windows-only.

PRICE: US\$29.90 (around S\$40.83)

AVAILABLE AT: <http://www.thinkgeek.com/geektoys/warfare/8a0f/>



USB Drink Warmer / Alarm Clock / Hub

This is a miracle of modernisation and convergence. Not only does it warm your cup of Milo, it also wakes you up in the morning and allows up to four more USB devices to be plugged in at the back. Multi-taskers will love this.

PRICE: S\$16.95

AVAILABLE AT: Digimall beside food court at #B1-08, Sim Lim Square



USB Eye Massager

This nifty gadget is shaped like a "V for Victory" finger sign. Simply rest it on your bottom eyelid and flick the switch to enjoy a soothing, vibrating eye massage. Yes, it vibrates, but please, just keep it for the sake of a massage.

PRICE: S\$7.50

AVAILABLE AT: Action City shops island-wide



USB-Powered Toothbrush

Fancy a quick brush after every meal? Too lazy to run to the toilet? If you are, then this is the perfect gadget for you. This fully functional electric toothbrush comes with an extra brush head and a USB cable.

PRICE: US\$11 (around S\$15)

AVAILABLE AT: http://www.watch.impress.co.jp/akiba/hotline/20030222/etc_habrashi.html



USB Fish Tank

The people behind the CubeUSB believe that the aquarium will "relax and de-stress [one]self watching the two life-like tropical fish swimming in their most natural way". Of course, it's not stressful at all, knowing that water and electricity are linked to your computer while you're using it.

PRICE: S\$15 (excluding shipping fees)

AVAILABLE AT: http://www.cubeusb.com/sg/lifestyles/usb-mini-aquarium-with-light/prod_12.html

SONIC BOOM

\$180

AT CREATIVE STORES

THIS SLEEK anodised aluminum sheath for the latest iPod nano holds within it an ultra-compact speaker with an unbelievable volume. About the size of the iPhone, the TravelSound i80 fits comfortably into your pocket.

Slot in your iPod nano, and it belts out tunes loud enough to share with 20 friends, provided that you don't mind the metallic sound. The treble is strong, and songs with strong acoustics turn out decent. But if you play bassy stuff like Justin Timberlake's Sexy Back, you'll see your friends cringe.

Using it is a breeze and there's no need for the manual. There's just a switch, a volume control knob, and a standard mini-USB port for charging the device. The TravelSound i80 charges itself and your iPod nano at the same time.

According to the packaging, the TravelSound i80 is for the third-generation iPod nano, but it also works for a first or second generation iPod nano. However, the lack of an audio input jack means that there's no way you can use the TravelSound as a booster for your laptop speakers.

The design of the box is typically Creative, being visually chocked with too many words for its own good, a total stranger from the clean lines and solid build that the TravelSound i80 is.

Creative claims its built-in battery lasts 15 hours, but who would blast music for that long?

One thing is for sure: dancers will love it. But other than being in a dance studio, there aren't many places it can go. Well, except maybe the occasional picnic.

Be creative and start thinking where this portable speaker could go because its loudness will just stun your friends. **LEE XIAN JIE** tells you more



photo by: yao keal wen

The speaker is loud enough, provided you don't mind the metallic sound

AUG-OCT

EVENT
LISTING

RAEWYN KOH & JOLYNN ANG check out what's musical and nostalgic in Singapore in the coming weeks

AUGUST 5-10

HIGH SCHOOL MUSICAL: THE ICE TOUR

Don't miss High School Musical on ice as world-class skaters re-enact your favourite awesome hits and dance moves in High School Musical 1 and 2.

Ticket prices: \$29.50 - \$59.50

AUGUST 8

F.I.R WORLD TOUR 2008

Taiwanese band F.I.R will be on their debut world tour here in Singapore, bringing its fans numerous successful hits with its four studio albums.

Ticket prices: \$66 - \$148

AUGUST 11-13 NATIONAL A CAPPELLA CHAMPIONSHIPS

The annual a cappella competition, National A Cappella Championships (The ACA Champs) brings together local talented new pop, jazz and a cappella singers from all over the island.

Ticket price: \$20

AUGUST 12

DEATH CAB FOR CUTIE

Death Cab For Cutie will be performing in Singapore for one night only on Aug 12 at the Esplanade for the first time!

Ticket prices: \$68 - \$148

SEPTEMBER 18 - 28 BOOM

Catch Jean Tay's latest work, BOOM, as she brings Singapore's property scene onto the stage. Expect this exciting play coming your way this September!

Ticket prices: \$40 - \$45

SEPTEMBER 22

PAUL ANKA

Don't miss the chance to watch Paul Anka sing his Number One singles and even covers at his one night only performance this September.

Ticket prices: \$78 - \$168

OCTOBER 4 - 5

ABBA MANIA

Performed by ABBA MANIA, ABBA's classic hits, such as Dancing Queen and Mamma Mia, will definitely keep you entertained for the two hours.

Ticket prices: \$35 - \$95

**OCTOBER 30 -
NOVEMBER 9**

AVENUE Q - THE MUSICAL

If you've enjoyed Sesame Street, don't miss Avenue Q - The Musical, the grown-up version of Sesame Street, where Princeton and friends gain fame in New York City.

Ticket prices: \$40 - \$140

Tickets available at SISTIC
(www.sistic.com.sg) or call 63485555

All prices exclusive of \$3 SISTIC booking fee

EVENT PREVIEWS

SINGAPORE BEER FESTIVAL:

02/08/2008 - 05/08/2008

FORT CANNING PARK

TICKETS @ \$30, \$43 (EXCLUDING \$3 SISTIC FEE)

PREVIEWED BY: AHMAD ZAKI

Beer lovers, rejoice!

The Formula 1 Grand Prix races into Singapore this year with the Singapore Beer Festival hot on its heels.

Held in conjunction with the Grand Prix race, the Singapore Beer Festival boasts an impressive array of breweries from Hong Kong, United States and Europe.

If that's not enough, the four days promises round-the-clock entertainment from stand-up comedians, such as Australia's Jonathan Atherton, to local music acts. The festival also features a yet-to-be-announced Headline Artist, who will be playing on the first night.

If you're into copious amounts of beer, put the Singapore Beer Festival on your social calendar. Anyhow, it's an excellent excuse to spend a fun weekend with your friends under the open sky.

Early bird promotions are available at Brewerkz, Paulaner Brahaus, Pump Room, Beer Station and all O'Brien's sandwich outlets. For more information, log on to

www.singaporebeerfestival.com.

LOVE'S LABOUR'S LOST

10/09/2008 - 14/09/2008

DBS ARTS CENTRE - HOME OF SRT

TICKETS @ \$25

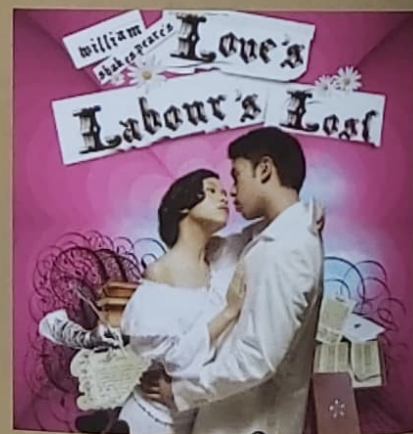
PREVIEWED BY: BRIAN LIM

William Shakespeare's Love's Labour's Lost is a tale of comedy and love. The King of Navarre, together with three of his companions, vow to devote themselves to three years of study and abstinence from the company of women for that period.

But the visitation of the Princess of France and three of her ladies puts their mettle to the test. What ensues is a hilarious display as the King and his companions struggle to keep their vow and conceal their true feelings.

Presenting the play is The Young Company, a division of the Singapore Repertory Theatre made up of 17 to 25 year olds whose members are selected through annual open auditions for a two-year educational programme. Don't miss this chance to witness Singapore's budding stage talents this September!

From three nights of local indie music at the Esplanade to a world wide marathon, hype has chosen four events that you can't miss out from AUGUST to OCTOBER



BAYBEATS 2008:

29/08/2008 - 31/08/2008

ESPLANADE

FREE!

PREVIEWED BY: KARTINI BTE SALIM

Esplanade Presents

baybeats

29 • 30 • 31 AUG

2008

This year sees a rise in the number of performers vying for a spot. Instead of showcasing 10 bands to perform, 11 were shortlisted during an audition held earlier this year. Hot favourites such as Cardinal Avenue and Silhouette are amongst the 11 that will be wowing the crowd.

The Chillout Stage, which is at the Concourse of the Esplanade, is hosting an indoor party that includes "experimental and electronic" music. Concert goers can also expect up-close-and-personal forum sessions with their favourite band artistes on the Observation Deck of the library@esplanade.

After going through renovations for the past couple of months, the outdoor theatre, Nokia Arena,

is ready and will be used as a stage for bands to perform outdoor. Booths will also be set up during the event for concertgoers to purchase artistes' and bands' merchandises such as CDs, magazines and even T-shirts.

Don't miss the Nokia Powerhouse where bands perform live. In case you're wondering, seats are not provided over here unlike the Nokia Arena.

So what are you waiting for?

Be sure to mark your calendars for Baybeats 2008. You don't even need to save for the event (except if you intend to show support for your favourite bands and buy their CDs) because Baybeats is completely free!

NIKE 10K RUN:

31/08/2008

ESPLANADE

PARTICIPATION FEE \$25, \$45

PREVIEWED BY: MOHSEN OLIVER MICHAEL

If you think that this is just another marathon, think again, as Nike makes history by organising a 10km race simultaneously in 25 cities - Singapore included.

While there are two main categories to compete in - Men & Women under 25 years and Men & Women Open, gung-ho students can choose to represent their respective schools in the school team challenge.

Expect live performances from bands, like Sleeq, The Great Spy Experiment, and Zul Mystroe as runners pass mini-concerts located along the route, culminating in a music festival at the end of the race.

A portion of your participation fees also goes to one of three international charity organisations that is supported by the race: Livestrong - the Lance Armstrong Foundation, ninemillion.org and the World Wide Fund for Nature.

Register at www.nikeplus.nike.com, grab your track shoes and hit the road!

THE HUMAN RACE 10K 31.08.08



REPLIES BY: CHAI XIU LING

Q.
A.

KEAIRAN

I'm having problems in my studies, as I'm a bit of a slow learner. But so far, I can manage my school work.

I wish to have a part time job to support myself, but if I work, I wouldn't have much time to do my homework. What should I do now?

It's common for students to face problems with their studies from time to time. If you are facing difficulties, feel free to approach your lecturers/tutors or trusted friends for help. They would be more than happy to help you out. You also mentioned getting a part-time job to support yourself. Is your family facing difficulties in supporting your studies at the moment? If so, you should approach your school or institution for various financial schemes that might be available for students who are struggling with school fees.

Q.

ALLEN

I've just broken up with my boyfriend. He says that we aren't compatible, that I'm childish and too dependent. We have an eight years age difference. During our relationship, I've always been relying on him. I know that he's been putting up with me for a while and I really regret it. I'm so broken down and I don't know what to do now. I want to show him that I've grown up and hopefully get him back. However, he's having his exams now and everything I do seems to irritate him so much. Please help me!

A.

It must be a difficult period for you. However, the loss has nonetheless provided you with time for reflection. Perhaps you could tell him how you feel and what you would be willing to do to make the relationship work. You will also understand from him what you are lacking in the relationship and how you could together, if he is willing, make things work better. As he is busy preparing for the exams, it would be wise to call him after that so he would not be irritated. It may be hard to go through this period of loss by yourself, so you may wish to share this with your parents, friends or a counsellor, who might be able to help you see things in a another perspective.

Q.

MADE

I am currently on an overseas internship programme. A colleague at work abuses me verbally through emails and words. I've tried to stand up for my own work and rights, but I've failed. He has even criticised my family. I think putting my family down is a tad too much to bear. He doesn't believe in confronting each other to clear things up, as he said in his emails to me. I think I have been trying my best to accommodate to his wishes, which even I find ridiculous, hoping to find some peace. There's still one month left, what should I do?

A.

You have every right to stand up against your workplace bully if he's mistreating you at work. Your colleague's age and seniority in the company does not justify his action to put you through any form of verbal abuse. You may wish to speak with someone of a higher position in the company or your supervisor in charge of the placement.

EDITED BY: TAY PUI FUN & LEONG WAI MUN
Student counsellors at Ngee Ann Polytechnic

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TIMOTHY TAY

He's young, he's sporty, and he's very eligible. And he's got glory on his mind. **AARON CHONG** hears him out.

PROFILE:

- Former National Water Polo player who currently plays for the Ngee Ann Polytechnic waterpolo team
- Comes from a single parent family.
- Part time model
- Family owns and runs the Sincere Fine Watches Company.



WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO STUDY ACCOUNTANCY?

I chose accountancy because I was brought up in a very business environment, whereby my dad, uncles, aunts were all in the business and finance sector, so much of their talk were about business and finance related.

TELL ME MORE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES IN THE NATIONAL WATER POLO TEAM

It was a very good experience. It helped me to keep my mind and body active, and training with teammates helped develop my teamwork skills.

HOW DID THE PASSING OF YOUR FATHER TRANSFORM YOU?

The passing of my dad transformed me as it help me realise that there is more to life than just this life on earth. I am happy as I knew that he went to a better place in Heaven. Most importantly the best thing that my dad has given me all my life is the knowledge of Christianity and grooming me in my walk with God and also accepting Jesus as my Saviour.

WHAT DRIVES YOU TO WORK HARD KNOWING YOUR FUTURE IS ALREADY LAID OUT FOR YOU?

The knowing that I am doing it not for myself but for God.

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE?

My immediate plans are to graduate from poly go into NS and into a good university and also to live a Christ like life, always bringing glory to God in whatever I do.



YOU
can save
our world

practise these 5 tips to conserve energy and fight climate change



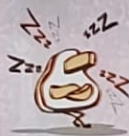
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TIP 1: Switch off the air-con, turn on the fan. You'll save about \$50 in just a month. A fan uses less than 10% of the electricity used by an air-con.



SET YOUR AIR-CON AT 25°C OR HIGHER.

TIP 2: The lower the temperature setting, the more energy is used by the air-con. Set your air-con at 25°C or higher. Every degree raised saves about \$20 a year.



GET TO THE 'SOURCE' OF WASTE.

TIP 3: Standby power adds up to 10% to your electricity bill. Switch off electrical appliances at the power socket when not in use and save about \$50 a year.



A BRIGHTER IDEA.

TIP 4: Switch to energy efficient compact fluorescent lamps. They last up to 10 times longer than standard bulbs and use up to 80% less electricity or about \$15 per bulb a year.



READ THE LABEL. CHECK THE TICKS.

TIP 5: Pick appliances with more ticks on their energy labels. A refrigerator with 4 ticks saves about \$100 worth of electricity a year compared to a 1-tick model and a 4-tick air-con saves you about \$350 per year over a 1-tick model.

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