

ENTER ACCESS CODE

LOGIN INCORRECT
« ACCESS DENIED »
PRESS ENTER

LOGIN SUCCESSFUL
« FULL ACCESS GRANTED »
« WELCOME ANONYMOUS USER »
OPENING APPLICATION : HYPER-ENTER
USER 8 II
MISSION :
RENDERED OBSOLETE
« RETRIEVING FILE »
FILE/HYPE /
ISSUE 3



hype

IV etwork Generation

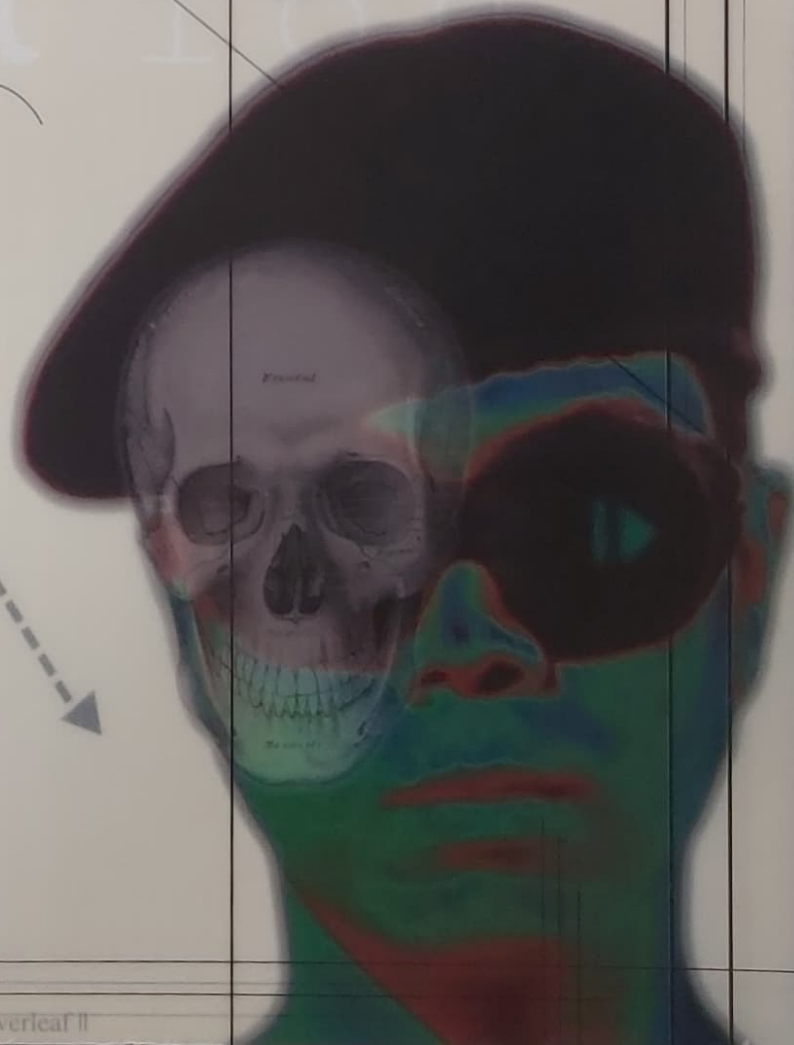
Shock [... Fashion Spread]
Interview >> DonitaRose || Robinsong || X'HO
Explosive giveaways >> hype 0.8. 8 || || || || || || ||
15% off Tower Books || Movie Premiums ||
... hype.y2k || blur and Mugs CDs

The end is near.

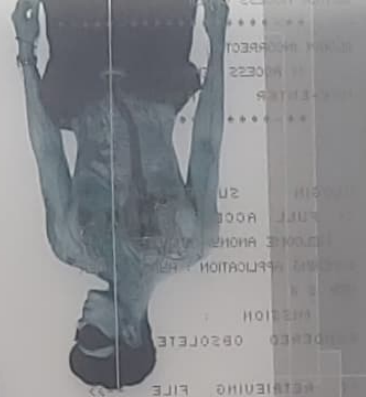
The end of the beginning.
In case you haven't noticed,
we are at the brink of an age of
t e c h n o l o g i c a l
transcendence. Or maybe
we've been too busy scurrying
about our daily lives to pay
a t t e n t i o n .

Well it's time to.

|| editorial || cont'd overleaf ||



Save



network

Generation



Special Issue

Future Shock [... + Fashion Spread]
Interview >> DonitaRose || RobinLeong || X'Ho
x plosive giveaways >> Movie Premiums ||
15% off Tower Books || blur and Rugrats CDs
<http://...hype.y2k>

SS 0.00

The end is near.

The end of the beginning

In case you haven't noticed,
we are at the brink of an age of
t e c h n o l o g i c a l
transcendence. Or maybe
we've been too busy scurrying
about our daily lives to pay
a t t e n t i o n .

Well it's time to.

|| editorial :: cont'd overleaf ||

The Digital Revolution is real. The same way farmers were forced from their fields into factories during the Industrial Revolution of the 18th and 19th centuries, if we don't sit up and take heed of the changes around us, the winds of change will sweep by us and leave us obsolete and antiquated.

We, the X-generation have become the 'N' or network generation as we are saddled with the influx of handphones, pagers, e-mail, ICQ and the like, all no doubt conspiring to connect all of us in a bizarre technological web to ensure that we will never be uncontactable.

Take a look around you. The best ranking jobs are no longer managing people but websites. You don't have to have a Masters and be 50 to be earning five-digit monthly salaries. Best of all, you don't even have to get dressed to go to work. You can be sitting in front of your computer in shorts the whole day and still make money.

The buzzword is virtual. Cyber-relationships are becoming hotter than meeting at a foam party on a cruise ship and people are idolising celebs made of polygons instead of cells. Crystal-clear breakbeats and trance music - the sound of the future - that you hear in your earphones need not be something tangible, what with the onslaught of MP3s.

But the future holds does not look all good.

The already weak economy is on the brink of plunging further into deeper, murkier depths, once secure professionals find their skills outdated and everything associated with the Industrial Age of motors falls into dysfunction at the notion of being replaced by microprocessors. Downsizing has already begun and men are being replaced by machines.

Far from being perfect however, microprocessors will soon be bitten by the millennium bug. The Y2K bug, poised to strike in a few months, is to the Digital Age what the Great Depression was to the Industrial Age. If companies are not prepared, they may lose everything once the clock strikes 12 at the end of the year and the computer thinks "Auld Lang Syne! Happy 1900!".

As the turn of the century approaches, apocalyptic images spring to mind. Maybe it's not too far-fetched to think that with all these technological changes, the end of the world is near. In the end, it's all about making the correct choice, and perhaps The Artist Formerly Known As Prince said it best when he sang "Tonight I'm going to party like it's 1999."

editorial

editors

lee amizadai
galvin soh
kenny wong

designers / layout artists

clement choo
merwyn tong aka tzang

reporters

grace chiam
marianne goh
lynda hong
dustin lim
karan low
eileen oh
charmaine suriya
tan kai ying
roy tan
tiana tay
daphanie teo

contributors

photography lee amizadai;
merwyn tong aka tzang
writing tan boon leng
layout art lee amizadai

advisors

veronica leng
robin yee

hype magazine

dept. of film & media studies
block 23, ngee ann polytechnic,
535, clementi road, singapore 599489
tel: 460-8448 fax: 462-5617
e-mail: hype8448@yahoo.com

0 1 : 0 2

Printed by Oxford Graphic Printers Pte Ltd

#hype (+tn) OUR SAY

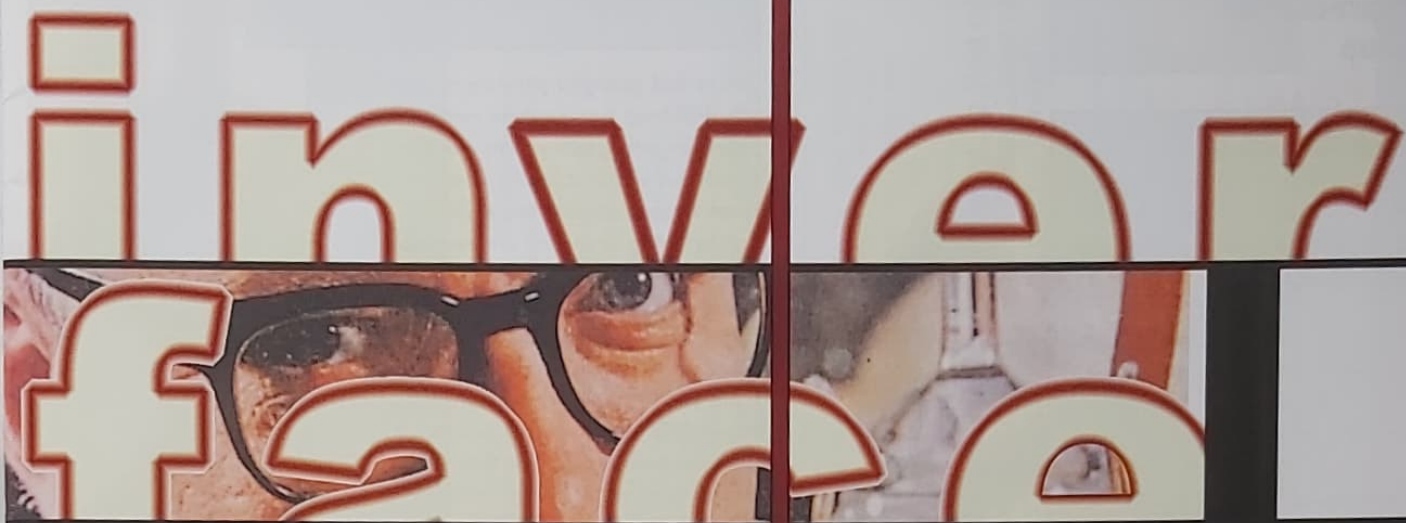
*** Amizadai has quit IRC (Quit (Automatic flushing systems should be screened for over-enthusiasm.))
*** Galvin has quit IRC (Quit (Learning without thinking is useless, thinking without learning is dangerous.))
*** Kenny has quit IRC (Quit (I finally figured out how to create folders on my computer!))
*** Clement has quit IRC (Quit (: later.REMEMBER.catch-you-soon.TO.ciao.EAT.take care.YOUR.buh-bye.VEGGIES.see-you-around,kids!))
*** tZang has quit IRC (Quit (the eyes only see what the mind is prepared to comprehend.))

where is everybody ?_

model on cover
cover design
will do the
tzang there

hype is a bi-annual
publication by final year
students of the diploma in
mass communication
programme.

S\$0.00 (inclusive of GST)
hype is y2k-compliant
hype number eight april 99



For those who've always harboured secret fantasies of manning a spacecraft, your opportunity has landed. The Singapore Science Centre is bringing the NASA World Tour to Singapore for three months beginning May 15.

The US\$10 million (S\$17.2 million) world's biggest space show comprises four parts, which have been brought together for the first time outside the U.S. The Lunar Landing presents multi-media, live-action and spectacular lighting elements in a re-enactment of the first landing on the moon and feature a simulator where visitors can "land" a shuttle on the moon. The Mars Exhibition will prepare participants who want to go on a mission to Mars and curious hands will be allowed to operate a Mars Rover over "Martian" terrain. The U.S. Space Camp exhibit simulates what NASA astronauts go through when training for missions.

▶ The star of the show is undoubtedly the full-sized, two-storey space shuttle called the

"Ambassador" which offers visitors a chance to explore astronauts' living quarters. Quash all plans of stowing away on the shuttle though, because the "Ambassador" has never been launched, unlike its more adventurous sisters "Enterpriser" and "Discovery".

Adults get to go spacey for \$25, or bring along your kid cousins for \$16 each. Goodie bags containing posters and CD-ROMS are available with every ticket purchased before May 15.

For an out-of-this-world experience that doesn't require you to pack your toothbrush or jammies, make space on your calendar for the NASA World Tour.



◀ NASA article
= LEE AMIZADAI

◀ PIE article
= TAN KAI YING

▶ PIE is set in 1989, on the morning of National Day, when the island of Singapore is rocked by the news of four tragic deaths on the Pan Island Expressway.

An investigation into the accidents reveal the circumstances to have an uncanny similarity to a script written by James, the protagonist. In fact, two of the victims were involved in the production of his play, *Pan Island Expressway*.

James, played by Loong Seng Oon (*Lao Jiu, 3 Children*), becomes the main suspect. Was the accident merely a coincidence, or is there more to James and his play?

PIE is not your usual whodunit. It revolves around the theme of life imitating art and comic relief comes in the form of Singaporean idiosyncrasies. Director Casey Lim, Associate Artistic Director of TheatreWorks, thinks that the play questions Singapore's fast moving life.

"In this interrogative play, we look at where Singapore is going. Should we be slowing down and reassessing certain things, and looking

towards our neighbours instead of heading for an overseas culture?"

Watch Michelle Chong (*Drive*) as Dawn, a character from James's play who thinks Singapore is stifling, Irene Ang (*Phua Chu Kang*) as Wan Ling, an actress from *Pan Island Expressway*, and veteran stage actress Nora Samosir (*Masters of the Sea*) as the one asking the questions in this intriguing play of freaky coincidences and life on our safety island.

For all the answers plus a night of entertainment, make a date with your friends for a drive down the PIE.

Tickets are available through TicketCharge (call 296 2929) and SISTIC (tel: 348 5555), as well as the Science Centre and the Omni Theatre. Or book at www.ticketcharge.net or www.sistic.com.sg

▶ PIE will be staged at the Black Box on May 4-8, 11-15, 18-22 and 25-29. Tickets at \$25 and \$20 (students).

inyerface

5th APB Foundation Asian Film Appreciation Workshop

GRACE CHIAM

What a treat for film buffs in Ngee Ann Polytechnic! Some of the region's best directors will be here for the 5th APB Foundation Asian Film Appreciation Workshop as part of this year's Film Festival Fringe activities.

This is the fifth consecutive year that the Asian Pacific Breweries Foundation is sponsoring the Asian Film Appreciation. These are films by some of the modern and current Indonesian directors who are moulding the Indonesian film industry into one of the few leaders in film-making in the region.

Movies that will be screened include "Revolution of Hope", "Street Children as Film Stars" and "Taxi" - a humorous film about a philosophy graduate who becomes a taxi-driver. The film swept all the major awards at the 1990 Indonesia's Citra Awards.

Discussions will also be held after each screening where the directors present will talk a little about their films. The audience will then be able to pose questions to them in a short Q & A session. Big names in the Indonesian film industry who will be present includes Garin Nugroho (*My Family, My Films and My Nation*) and Jajang C. Noer - wife of Arifin C. Noer. The young filmmakers of the film *Kuldesak* (an Indonesian T.V. programme) will also be present to talk about their experiences in producing the film.

The rare chance to watch the films and to meet with the talented people behind the screen at this event will prove to be enriching. Specially so for aspiring filmmakers who feel a personal responsibility for bringing the Asian film industry to a higher platform with their future works.

The workshop will be held from April 19 - 21 at the Film & Media Studies Department, Block 23, 535 Clementi Road. The fees are \$15 per day or \$40 for three days. Students get the concession rates of \$10 per day or \$25 for three days. To register, call 2257414.

Round-Island Canoeing Trip

KARAN LOW

You're not going to pass the compulsory NAPFA test simply with the exercise your fingers are getting from yakking with virtual friends. And instead of forking out hundreds to get a tropical paradise tan, why not do both by loading up on some wholesome fun in the sun while toning up your muscles in the annual **Round-Island Canoeing Trip**?

President of the Canoeing Club, Donald Ting, says the event is targeted to foster closer ties between different departments in Ngee Ann Polytechnic, as well as to encourage more students to build up their fitness through sporty extra-curricular activities.

The canoeing trip begins at Kallang Sports Centre on the first day. In the course of the adventurous three-day-two-night event, the expedition will make stops at East Coast Sea Sports Centre, Changi Beach, Sembawang and Tuas, before returning to Kallang.

Participants (both novices and experienced canoeists) are, however, required to attend at least four training sessions on either Saturdays or Sundays to ensure survival for the trip. Canoeists are advised to bring enough clothes, toiletries and utensils to last the three days. A torch, hammock, suntan or sunblock lotion (depending on how you define beauty) and lots of Zip-Lock bags are other essentials on the trip, the last to keep your stuff dry.

Never underestimate the power of a 1.25 litre bottle of water in protecting you from dehydration or heat exhaustion either. Meals, however, will be provided for the duration of the trip.

For a short holiday of sun, sea and sand, the Navy has nothing on the Canoeing Club.

The Round-Island Canoeing Trip will be held in the middle of May. A fee of \$25 will be collected in May. Those interested can call Donald at 9269 3697/Tay Linghui at 760 4955 or go to the Canoeing Clubhouse at NP Blk 16, #03-29 to pick up a registration form.



Tiana Tay talks to Robin Leong, the hottest selling human merchandise on the set of Triple Nine since its season, and discovers what else is for sale



ROBIN LEONG

"Bolasports as in "ball" in Malay and sports...."

} Robin's website, Bolasports, exposes the less public, entrepreneurial side of the star who returns this April as Inspector Han on Triple Nine. Up for sale are sports goods and memorabilia like soccer jerseys and autographed Michael Jordan items, enthuses Robin who loves the business more as a hobby than a money spinner..

"Michael Jordan doesn't give his chauffeur extra money, he gives them autographed items that they sell to a secondary market...I have a connection to it."

} A hardcore MJ fan himself, the 27-year-old, started the site last September, with two buddies from America. His own passion for collecting MJ's items goes back to his youth, even before he met the basketball icon face-to-face at home, in Seattle, and got an autographed picture which he won't part with for any sum of money.

As an entrepreneur, Robin's advice to those thinking of e-commerce, is to offer things unavailable at our many malls. In his case, autographed items of Michael Jordan.

"I have a fan who has a web site dedicated to me. And if it wasn't for her web site, my old good friend would have never found me... He found the web site and e-mailed Carol (the fan). Just last week she gave me the mail... I just talked with him over the weekend! That's how the Internet makes this world a small place."

} More than a window of opportunity for business, the Internet has reunited Robin with his long-lost friend, and continues to be a medium that connects him to people, no less his adoring fans who have enshrined him in cyberspace.

"You could pay me \$10 dollars and I'll still do the job, but don't tell TCS that!"

} The passion and eagerness in his eyes convince that he loves his craft. Too good to be true, perhaps? But, his quick-fire replies are delivered seriously, without hesitation or crafting. And as he sits across the table, clad in a white polo tee with a communist green Mao cap on his head, Robin looks like your average Joe instead of someone screaming, "I'm a big star, adore me!" The man-in-the-street profile may explain why no one approached him for an autograph during the 60-minute interview. Not even the waiters who have noticed his presence.

"I will like the same nice sleek things. I see the digital age as being more sleek and efficient."

} Sleek things like cars for example. While he sees technology enhancing computers, cars and even mobile phones improving until you see the person you are talking to, he wants some things to remain the same. Like cooking, he jests; you can't have a robot cooking for you!

"The human race needs to be more civilised, to find cures for diseases rather than making cars go faster. I love cars, but I'd trade it in any day to find a cure for cancer."

} He may be passionate about cars, but this is overshadowed by people. Cliché as it sounds, he sees a need for human beings to love one another. Ultimately, the dehumanising result of the digital age is one trade off he won't make to enjoy greater beauty and efficiency.

} One thing's for sure, behind that muscular, kung-fu fighting on-screen persona lies a sensitive soul who knows what's important to him.

Catch him sizzling onscreen on Thursdays, 8pm, in the new Triple Nine season. It'll be double the take on men and action with James Lye back. Xx LEONG

Win a jersey if you're the first person to e-mail Robin <http://www.bolasports.com> the names of the two women Inspector Han romanced in Triple Nine's last season.

The first 100 Ngee Ann Polytechnic students to e-mail him at his web site will also get 30 % off any order.

Ngee Ann students will be identified through their student numbers.

can't find a job? Be your own Boss!

In a tight labour market, young job-seekers are finding their luck in getting employed. There is an alternative, says Marianne G...

Top 10 Things You Don't Have to Worry About When You're the Boss

- 10 Those "throat clearing" noises the guy in the next cubicle makes every morning at 9.30 am sharp.
- 9 Ties, in general (same goes for pantyhose).
- 8 Having to jostle for seats with fellow workers and schoolchildren when you're taking the bus or MRT to work.
- 7 Having to jostle for seats with fellow workers and schoolchildren when you're taking the bus or MRT home.
- 6 Producing memos, proposals, summaries, reports to justify your existence to your boss, your boss' boss and your boss' boss' boss.
- 5 The terrifying reality that your life is beginning to mirror "Dilbert"
- 4 The terrifying reality that you look like "Dilbert"
- 3 Having to team up with B.O. Bob who always raises his arms to explain a point... and he has many.
- 2 Working through the night on a report only to realise that it was for your boss's 10-year-old son's project.

And the number one thing you never worry about as a Boss is:

- 1 Waking up to go to work on Saturday when your boss is at his country club playing golf!

"Singapore is poised to become the world's first true digital nation," says Professor Gary Chapman, a specialist on information and telecommunications policy in a recent **Los Angeles Times** article.

With many young Singaporeans being computer literate and Internet savvy, the vistas of opportunities for starting a business using Electronic Commerce (e-commerce) via the net are wide and far ranging.

In his book **The Digital Economy: Promise and Peril in the Age of Networked Intelligence**, author Don Tapscott said: "A new medium of human communications is emerging, one that may prove to surpass all previous revolutions. Interactive media and the so-called information highway, like the Internet, are enabling a new economy based on the networking of human intelligence...In the digital frontier of this economy, the players, dynamics, rules and requirements for survival and success are all changing."

With the advantage of an entrepreneurial heritage, young Singaporeans look set to replicate the success of other young computer entrepreneurs like Caroline Winata, Mike Wang, Amar Goel and Marcus Keller, unbounded by geographical restraints and high capital costs.

What are necessary are a computer, a modem, the relevant software and an Internet account. And you can even work from home if you are someone like Caroline Winata. The 22-year-old completed her secondary education in Singapore and went to San Francisco, U.S.A. where she enrolled

lack of work experience a stumbling block h... be your own boss

in a design course. While studying, she teamed up with two fellow students, also in their 20s, and started a web-designing company called Factorytwo16. Using their computers and modems as their office and the websites as their storefront, their designs were put on the Internet and attracted the attention of a local Internet Service Provider which recruited her as an in-house designer.

"They liked my work on our website, which proves that it's possible to be hired by a bigger company based on your Net presence," asserts Caroline proudly.

Mike Wang couldn't find a job when he graduated from the National University of Singapore with a Bachelor of Arts degree two years ago. Browsing through computer magazines and books, he discovered a potentially lucrative market for the supply of Japanese and Chinese comic books to Asian students studying overseas. After some Internet research, he was soon able to fulfill orders from overseas subscribers.

Now aged 26, Mike enjoys the pleasure of working from home. He said: "Not only do I choose the hours I work, I don't have to wear office outfits. If your website is professional-looking, and your service efficient, it gives the illusion that you are running a large business."

Harvard University golfer Amar Goel, an American, started the Chip Shot Golf Corp. selling custom-built and brand-name golf clubs while he was a student. Amar uses a telephone and e-mail access to handle his customers' requests and software so people can order his goods. Upon his graduation, he moved his office (his school dorm) to Sunnyvale, California. Last year he made a profit of about U.S.\$1 million (S\$1.72 million). Today, his company employs 19 people, and Amar is only 22!

The flip side to the success formula is that youthful inexperience can prove costly. Enthusiasm is one thing. Sometimes business savvy comes only after some hard knocks. It's vitally important to have a reliable company to host your website, as Marcus Keller, 23, learnt. The entrepreneur who designs and sells personalised greeting cards through the Internet relates his bad experience with a dubious web host.

"I was tight on cash, so I bought domain space with this "questionable" web hosting company. They were cheap and offered lots of webspace and other goodies. After some weeks, I never got my domain space, they didn't submit the form to register my domain name and they took ages to reply to me... It really got me to re-prioritise which aspect of my business needed more capital."

So, where should one begin? In the words of the oil baron J.P. Getty, the secret of success in business lies in "finding a need and filling it."

Through the Internet, the task of finding that need is much simpler and more effective than the traditional method of market research. And costs are significantly lower too.

So if the 100 or more resumes that you send out prove unfruitful, be comforted that being your own boss is a viable alternative.

PS. Does anybody need a ghost writer?

*For inspiring success stories, a website on the book **StrikingItRich.com** can be found at <http://www.StrikingItRich.com/>. To find out more about starting your own business in Singapore, check out <http://www.gov.sg/rcb/information/>. Useful tips on entrepreneurship can be found at <http://www.entrepreneurmag.com/bizstarts.htm>*

Time 2000

Mea Culpa

If you've made plans to go to Mohammed Sultan Road for your clubbing activities, why not make a stop at Mea Culpa, along River Valley Road for a change? You can't miss it. Within a minute's stroll the blinking yellow lights around the sign would have caught your attention.

Walk up a flight of three small steps and you're in the café bar named "My Fault" in Latin. Surrounded by metallic-silver, stainless-steel furniture and light blue walls, you inevitably feel that you're in a high tech café. The prominent metal furniture also gives the place a cold futuristic feel. Even the cover of the menu is silver. Open this to find a variety of delectable savouries. The menu is titillating, filled with not-so-subtle sexual innuendo. One dish is described thus: "Tall balls - Our (cuttlefish) balls are firm yet supple, and best of all, they stand erect when they come."

Or order a bowl of Sherbet, the in-house specialty. Each bowl comes with 3 generous scoops to satisfy your sweet tooth. The 10 flavours boast the likes the alcoholic Tequila and "Kinky Kiwi", which, like the rest of the fruit sherberts, has the taste of real fruits.

Saunter further in, the heavy metal doors slide into the walls to reveal the bar area. After 9 pm, Mea Culpa patrons get primed to dance the night away to Jazz music. Friday nights see acid jazz and swing dominating the speakers' output and on Saturday nights, customers can work up a sweat with break-beat, trip hop and house music.

Even if the music doesn't get you on the dance floor, Mea Culpa will still be a good place to have a bite and fortify yourself for your night activities down at Mohamed Sultan.

Funky Town

Admit it. Dimly-lit pubs and discos spinning retro tunes are passe. As the millenium inches forward, it's time to ditch retro and leave it where it should belong - the past. From the same management that brought you Lava Lounge, here comes Funky Town.

Described as "how a futuristic nightspot should look from the view of a 60s era hippie" by its director, Funky Town is the place to see and be seen.

From the exterior, it resembles a quaint Chinese temple that could be easily camouflaged as one of the many tourist attractions in Clarke Quay. But take a leap of faith and be awed by the contrasting interior.

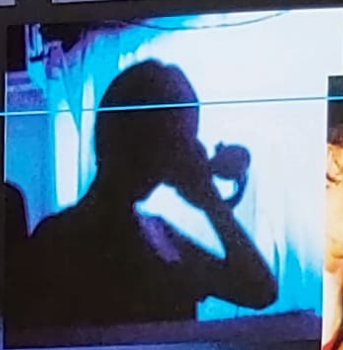
Booming 70s Chicago-style remix music greets you the moment you push open the metal doors adorned with antiquated Chinese carvings. The spacious dance floor is dominated by a platform set over a fishpond with live fish swimming in it!

An in-house café serves savoury snacks for those who've worked up an appetite with dancing. The selection of food ranges from sashimi and tequila prawns to more affordable finger-foods like chicken wings and sotong balls. When thirsty, pick any of the

Mea Culpa, located at 282 River Valley Road, is open from 3pm to 3am. Happy hours are from 3pm to 8pm. For more information, call 7333044.

15% off!

Produce your NP student card and get a 15% discount on all drinks and food. Not applicable during happy hours. Valid until June 15, 1999.



Funky Town is located at 3A River Valley Road #01-01 River House, Clarke Quay, Singapore 179024 (near Dancers The Club). Cover charges are \$20 for weekdays and \$25 for weekends, inclusive of two house pours. Age limit is 18 for ladies and 20 for guys. For inquiries, call 837 0668.

circular booths with the Austin Powers-inspired fluorescent stools to rest on and place your orders

from any of the two bars. The standard house pour comes in a mug bigger than most other pubs to make the most of your money.

The second floor holds the pool room and a glass-walled wine cellar which has an impressive selection of wines stacked up beehive style in hexagonal cells. From the second floor, you can overlook the breathtaking view of the Singapore River to the sounds of acid jazz and R&B.

For those with a clubbing blood in you, you're no party animal until you visit Funky Town.



Stop-Over Pub

There is no need to pack a bag to satisfy your yearning for Australia because just minutes away from Ngee Ann Polytechnic is The Stop-Over Pub.

The open-air bistro set amid a beautiful landscaped garden along Bukit Timah already catches the eye of the motorists, thanks to a prominent surfboard placed at the entrance to the pub.

Stepping inside, you are captivated by the wall paintings

of Aussie themes. Surfers riding a huge wave, aborigines and koala bears make the patrons feel like they've been teleported to the Australian outback.

It is, however, not the owner's aim to make the pub look too frou-frou, so a touch of homeliness hangs over the bar area making one feel right at home relaxing at this joint. Students from neighbouring schools find The Stop-over Pub ideal for a friendly game of pool or just for hanging out as it is not too crowded till the late evening.

The bistro serves succulent Australian meat-pies lovingly made to achieve the native standards. Also available are Il Piccolo's pizzas and pastas, which are reasonably priced considering the hearty helpings and generous toppings. Regulars swear by the Salami Pizza Diavola which serves two for \$16.

With nightfall, the bistro allows for wine-sipping (Australian wines at \$48-\$58++ per bottle) under the stars. Alternatively, try the Australian beer Foster's, which goes at only \$4.90++ a mug and \$18.90++ a jug during Happy Hours.

Patrons are from all walks of life, with a common disregard for the overcrowded, loud and over-hyped night spots. There are the locals, expatriates and, of course Australians, and almost everybody knows everyone else. Newcomers might find themselves making new friends easily because the crowd at The Stop-over Pub pride themselves on being one big happy family. Together with Shimmer, the unpretentious resident band who are Australians Chelsea and Nick, the overall warmth factor of the pub is why it enjoys a relatively loyal following. Shimmer's repertoire includes Rock 'n' Roll, contemporary and pop hits.

In addition to that, The Stop-over Pub has its own website (<http://www.stop-over.com>) and will be the first pub in Singapore to have its own chat-room set up and manned by the owner and the pub's regulars. With a digitally-affluent clientele, the owner has also placed several electrical outlets for laptop owners whose idea of a leisurely afternoon surf has nothing to do with the surfboard outside.

Sakae Sushi

Nowadays, everything is just a mouse-click away. The latest groundbreaking news, information for your project, the latest MP3s... but there's never been bet-

ter reason to exercise that mouse finger than when food is a forthcoming reward.

Sakae Sushi takes advantage of the fact that surfing and double-clicking has become second nature to us by installing online ordering systems in their Wheelock outlet. An unobtrusive screen at every table displays pictures of sushi and other Japanese edibles at the click of the mouse found just under it. Never mind that you can't tell the difference between *maguro* (tuna) and *tamago* (egg), descriptions take the horror out of ordering something you cannot identify. But if putting things into virtual shopping baskets is not your thing, or if you'd rather show off just how fast you can say *una kyu maki* (eel and Japanese cucumber maki), an intercom system lets you make a direct order with the chef.

Trust the Japanese to even take the labour out of self-service with the *kaiten*, a mini conveyor belt that runs past every table, gliding a colourful array of delectables past at eye level. It's impossible to ignore, and much too easy to simply reach out for instant gratification. The hot water dispenser installed just under the belt is for more self-service. To be precise, it's for making your own cup of green tea.

15% discount

Produce your NP student card and get a 15% discount off the bill. Valid until June 15 1999.

The Stop-over Pub is located at No. 557, Bukit Timah Road, #01-06, Crown Centre. It is open from 4pm to 1am all week. Shimmer performs Mondays to Saturdays from 9pm.



Sakae Sushi outlets are located at #02-13 Wheelock Place (just above Borders), #05-01 at the Heeren (both open noon to 10 pm daily) and #B1-08 OUB Centre (open 11a.m. to 8p.m. on weekdays and 11 am to 3 pm on weekends). Only the Wheelock outlet has the online ordering system.

15% discount

Present this coupon at Sakae Sushi for a 15% discount off the bill. Not valid with other offers or promotions. Valid until June 15, 1999.

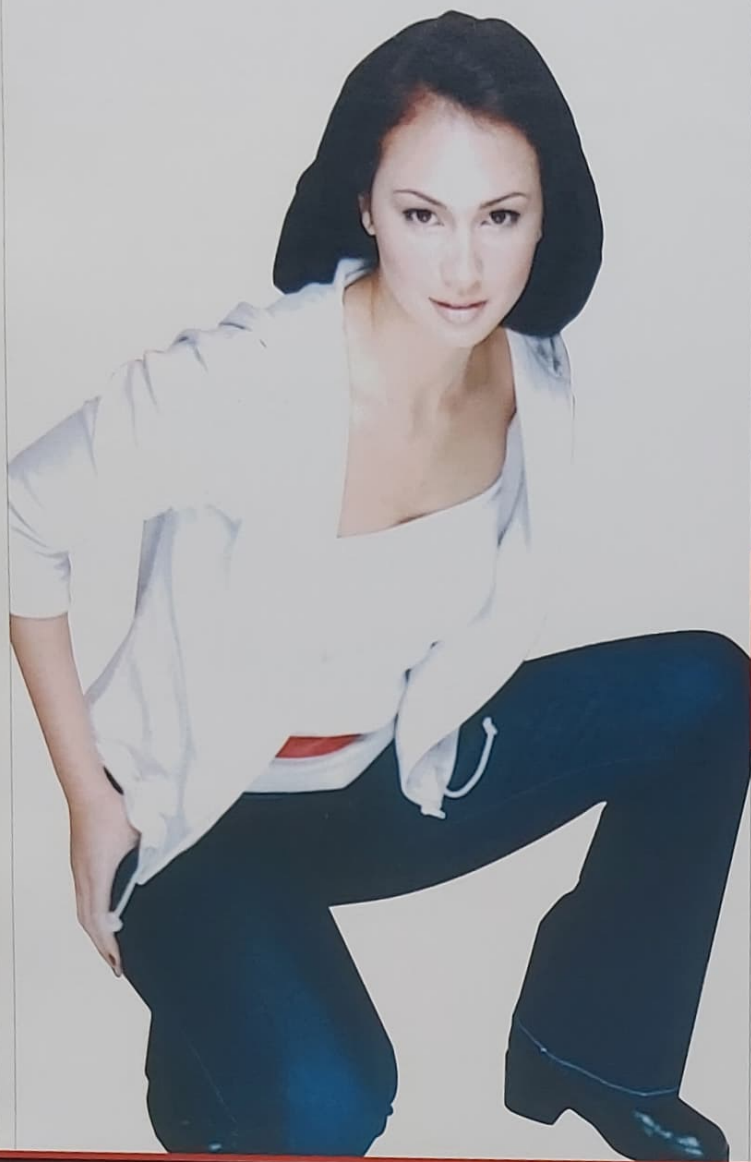
While the raw seafood dishes are nothing to shout about and will not impress true sushi connoisseurs, the cooked food is excellent. Try the potato salad sushi (\$\$1.90), a savoury blend of mashed potato, carrots and other vegetables, all wrapped in cold, sweet beancurd skin. The fried tofu (also \$S\$1.90) will set your toes curling in ecstasy with its crispy outer layer and smooth interior texture.

The small portions and reasonable prices are perfect for couples or for people who "everything also must try". Premium items (or prime quality dishes) are available at \$S\$6.50 a pop and are served on red dishes so they are easily identifiable on the *kaiten*. All other dishes on the belt cost \$1.90 each.

It may be a good idea to drop by at peak hours as the food on the belt is replenished more often and hence fresher.

There's no need to get jaded with technology... especially if it brings good food.

Photography :: Lee Amizadai
Mea Culpa :: Dustin Lim
Funky Town :: Eileen Oh
Stop-Over Pub :: Grace Chiam
Sakae Sushi :: Lee Amizadai



three covers since her arrival in Singapore five months ago. "There are a lot of people out there who want to be MTV VJs who are very talented, who can sing, and know a lot more about music than I do. Sometimes I wonder why I'm so lucky to have gotten this job."

Looking younger than her 25 years, with face clean of make-up and hair in plaits, Donita marvels at her seemingly good fortune. She seems to have forgotten that she was hailed as a major celebrity in the Philippines, and has appeared in 30 mov-

"There are a lot of people out there who want to be MTV VJs who are very talented ... Some times I wonder why I'm so lucky to have gotten this job"

ies, playing almost every conceivable role from a nun to a spoiled rich girl.

"Acting is my first love so I'm hoping that I can do a movie here in Singapore. I did one movie some people tease me about, it was with David Hasselhoff," she revealed with a somewhat sheepish grin. For the uninitiated, Hasselhoff plays Mitch in the cult TV series **Baywatch**, which he also produced.

Bonita Donita

**Bonita
Donita
Tan Kai
to burst**

Donita looks subdued in person. Could this fresh-faced gal be the same one who practically bubbles over your TV screen on MTV's *Select*,

Interactive, Hanging Out and Most Wanted?

Then her pensive mood is broken as the television in the room starts to show an interview on MTV with fellow VJ Sarah Sechan and herself, who are pretending to be a Kriss Kross style rap duo. "That girl is a nutter!" she says, bursting into laughter.

Phew. Having shaken off the early morning blues, Donita is acting more like herself.

Born Donita Rose Cavett in a military airbase in Utah, MTV's latest import has appeared in no less than five local magazines and graced

Her other passion is dance. "I like R & B, hip-hop and house, they're easy to dance to. I think that music like trance and triphop will never really be in the mainstream, it gets kind of tiring after a while because the beats are so fast and repetitive."

And although it's inconceivable that the poised girl who is retying her plaits would jump off any high place with only a rope around her legs, Donita has bungy-jumped six times. The adrenaline junkie is also a certified scuba diver and kick-boxes for fun.

Next to these, the Internet might sound kind of tame, but Donita says she surfs all the time. "I like to go online and see what are the latest updates with artistes, music, fashion, and entertainment so I know what it is I'm talking about when I'm on air."

Describing herself as family-orientated, she uses the Internet as a communication tool to chat with her elder brother and sister who are studying in the States, and the rest of her family who live in Japan. "My parents worked for the U.S. government, so I never really lived in many different parts of the world [that she's had to stay in] for any long periods of time. I've been to Alaska and around Asia, so I got to see many different cultures and [people from different] walks of life."

Being so well travelled, Donita's favourite place in the world remains a sentimental choice. "I always like to go back to the States, to go home."

Having once said in an interview with **ADAM** magazine that she has no friends in Singapore, what are Donita feel about finding love and friendship on the Internet in this age of 1-900 numbers and Internet

Relay Chat? "It's a good way of meeting people but (they) could be a totally different person on the Internet...you just have to be careful because you never know if what they're telling you is the truth."

Perhaps that is why she can barely remember the name of the guy she 'picked up' in a **You've Got Mail** contest, inspired by the movie starring Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan, in February. Together with celebrities like Benedict Goh and fellow MTV VJ Nadya Hutagulung, she chatted online with contestants to choose one with whom she clicked the best. The lucky winner got a sponsored dinner date with Donita.

means beautiful in Spanish, but Rose isn't just a pretty flower. Ying investigates the latest flora into bloom on the MTV scene.

"It's just like we're being eaten up by technology!"

Not quite the techno-geek, Donita confesses that her favourite gadgets are her phone (not hand-phone, mind you, just your ordinary telephone) and her hair dryer.

It was no big surprise, then, when the topic of the Digital Age made her rather disconcerted. While glad that technology is improving so fast, she is overwhelmed by the speed at which it is hurtling into the future.

"It's just that there are so many things going on, it's just like we're being eaten up by technology. I wonder what's going to happen in the next 10 years, especially with the millennium and the Y2K bug coming up."

Despite her apprehension with the looming of the Digital Age and all its uncertainties, she recognises the dangers of being left behind. "Don't just sit there and let technology pass you by... keep yourself informed. And be careful."

OVERHYPED / underHYPED

- GSM, PCN, CDMA ● Decent conversation
- Emoticons :-) ● Body language
- Tinky Winky's purple colour ● Barney the Dino's purple colour, which is O.K.
- which brands him as gay ● Youth Park
- South Park ● A live pet and real responsibilities
- Furbies, Tamagotchis and PostPets ● Babe: Pig in the City
- Pig virus in our city ●

When American cyberpunk writer William Gibson penned *Idoru* (see pg 24 for review), a novel casting an independent, virtual babe as protagonist, he didn't expect that the fiction he created was becoming a reality.

The product of 10 computer graphics designers and engineers, virtual personality Kyoko Date shot to stardom when her album *Love Communication* hit the top 10 charts in Japan. Fans the world over, from Italy, Malaysia, New Zealand and France set up Internet shrines proclaiming their adoration. Code-named DK-96, she epitomizes Japanese standards of beauty with her flawless skin, large, innocent eyes and slim figure.

The technology that created realistic looking humans, however, has rarely been used for anything more than creating substitutes for real actors in movies, like the digital stuntmen who leapt off rockets in *Batman & Robin* or who chased through the skies on airborne motorcycles in *Judge Dredd*.

But more and more wholly computer-generated characters are appearing, from Disney's *A Bug's Life* and *Toy Story*, and DreamWorks' *Antz*, to the 3-D, walking corpse in the remake of the movie *The Mummy* (due for US release in May), which director Scott Sommers claims is "really like a human."

For a more realistic personality that fans can better relate to, creators of these cyber celebs often attach humanistic features to them. Birth dates, height, weight and blood type are basic facts fans can expect to know of their virtual idols. On top of biological statistics, these "synthespians" are packaged with life histories and endearing traits. Kyoko Date has been kitted with a family, quirky memories of her first love, even defective eyesight! In the April issue of *CLEO* magazine, a pseudo-interview with Lara Croft had her asserting her personality, saying "When you've had goons ogling at you through your cross-hairs, any other kind of attention becomes irrelevant." The interview also revealed her fear of her aunt's dog and if she'll go nude in future *Tomb Raider* games.

Kyoko Date has music videos of her walking through the streets of Tokyo and she's been slated to appear in commercials. With an unknown woman doing her voiceover, fans even get to hear her over radio during late nights.

David Brooks, director of international product strategy for Microsoft comments on Kyoko's star appeal. "She has transcended the boundaries between virtual and real, and people respond to her as if she were an actual human being."

Indeed, these virtual celebrities appeal to a broad audience which doesn't mind worshipping idols controlled with a mouse. Type the words "Lara Croft" or "Kyoko Date" in any search engine and hundreds virtual shrines are found. Not as many as a Gwyneth Paltrow search would throw up, but hey, at least she's got a pulse.

The future of entertainment may just be taken over by virtual beings. Actor Tom Cruise reportedly said he finds the prospect "terrifying", and with good reason. After all, "synthespians" cost next-to-nothing to maintain (after their creation), and directors need not contend with tantrums and demands for bigger paychecks and more luxurious trailers.

Ironically, success has started "fleshing out" these virtual stars. Bob Fisher, UK General Manager of R&S Records predicts that if Kyoko Date is such a success, "they (her creators) will have to find a live artiste to represent the virtual one." Lara Croft has already had actress Rhona Mitra stand-in for her in a computer game exhibition in the U.S. And in a twisted case of life imitating art, Rhona has even enlarged her bust from a 34A to a Lara-sized 34DD. She's also taken courses to emulate Lara's confidence for press interviews. Plans for a Lara Croft movie have also attracted Demi Moore and the amply-endowed Pamela Anderson to vie for the role.

The success of Lara and Kyoko opens up other opportunities like product marketing and advertising, not to mention virtual dating or sex services. Lara Croft already has ardent fans hosting galleries of her nude pictures on the Internet.

Virtual stars can only shine brighter, with new technology giving them artificial intelligence and allowing interaction with real counterparts on live television.

A multimedia company in California, aided by Geneva computer science Professor Magnenat Thalmann, has created a virtual Marilyn Monroe 37 years after her suicide for a documentary called "Life After Death". The photorealistic Marilyn not only walks and talks like the real McCoy, but is wired to neural networks (computers that work like brains) so she can work her way out of a maze and say simple lines. Other roles and a series of interactive CD-ROM games are in the pipeline too. Professor Magnenat Thalmann even suggests that virtual Monroe serve as an interface for computers. After all, Marilyn is more attractive than DOS, she says.

But the same way people were skeptical about phones improving communications when they were first invented, virtual actors have their detractors. Director James Cameron, whose epic movie *Titanic* used computer effects liberally, was quoted in *Premiere's* February 1999 issue saying he is not keen on having cyber-celebrities on his set. "You can take it to a higher order with computer graphics, because it looks exactly like them, but it won't act the way (they) act... That's the indefinable magic that makes a person a star in the first place. So what you'll have is an erosion of star magic."

Others argue that it is precisely the failings of our human idols that erode their magic. At least fans of the digital Marilyn Monroe don't fear her committing suicide. Besides, what a fan said of Kyoko on his fansite applies to all "synthespians": "She never gets sick, never snubs her fans, never complains and never gains weight."

The existence of idols in cyberspace raises another question- is it normal of us to treat a cyber being as a celebrity as we would a human being?

Dr. N. Sriram, Professor of Social Psychology at the National University of Singapore (NUS) think so. "...whether they're real or not is beside the point... if I ask you how you feel about Michael Jackson or some actor like Tom Cruise or Schwarzenegger, you'd probably think of the person on-screen, not how they are in real life."

Japanese sociologist Tatsuo

Inamasu agrees. "Young people today are in the 'computer game' generation," he explains to the **Associated Press**. "For them, virtual idols are just one of these things. Kids have no problem accepting them."

By their reasoning, there seems no reason why cyber-celebs will not outstrip real ones in popularity. Yet, it is the Vice President of Hori Production, creator of Kyoko Date, who is less optimistic. "We can play games, but virtual idols are merely a substitute for real people. The virtual idols will never replace humans," he tells **CNN Interactive**.

Star Wars: the Emergence of Digital Stars

Dr. Frankenstein could have saved himself the grave robbing and lightning chasing. Years after his clumsy creation lumbered from his lab, Lynda Hong and Lee Amizadai are discovering that the latest computer lab-rendered stars are giving real celebrities a run for their money.

0000 0000 000
00000000 0
000 000
000 0



000
0 00000000
00000000
00
0
0

1 1 : 2



Hair :
Sculptured to defy Newton's
laws of gravity.

Accessorisation :
Back-pack with reflective
surface



future shock 000

by tzang merwyn

H Y F E

commentary + pictorial +

fashion spread

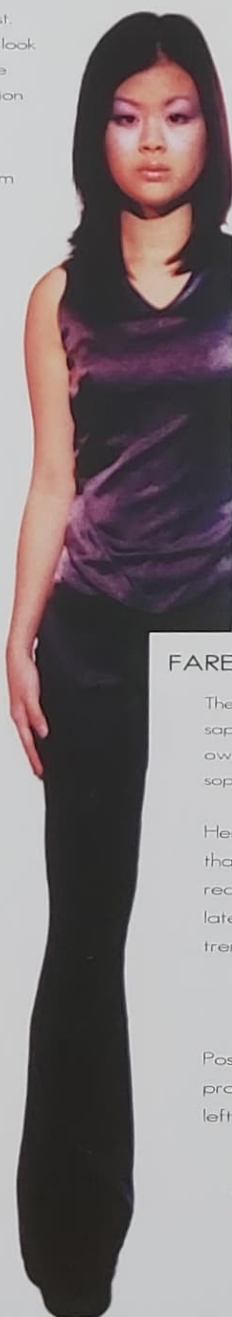
VINYL

Post-post-modernist feminist.
One who is not afraid to look
beautiful and to fit into the
idealistic mould of perfection.

Re-programmed to
annihilate advances from
any masculine form.

Vestial Suit :
UV Reflective ::
worn over her digitally
rendered skin.

Uniformed Hipster :
structured to mould
posterior's curvatures.



31 December 1999.
As humanity waits
to enter the 3rd
millennium of the
Anno Domini calendar
a VOID awaits us
Planetary charts display
a wealth of directions
which point to all things
technological and
futuristic

Our Planet, the
ecological time
bomb, will wit-
ness a new
aftertime.

>> Enter a future
where elements of
humanity will
fluctuate in the
face of chaos.

>> Enter a time
where personali-
ties are labelled
by occupations,
stereotypes and
dress codes.

>> Enter an age
where beauty is
synthetically
polymerised, re-
constructed and
re-produced.

>> Enter a revo-
lution where
man's triumph
against nature,
evolves to become
a war of man
against Himself.

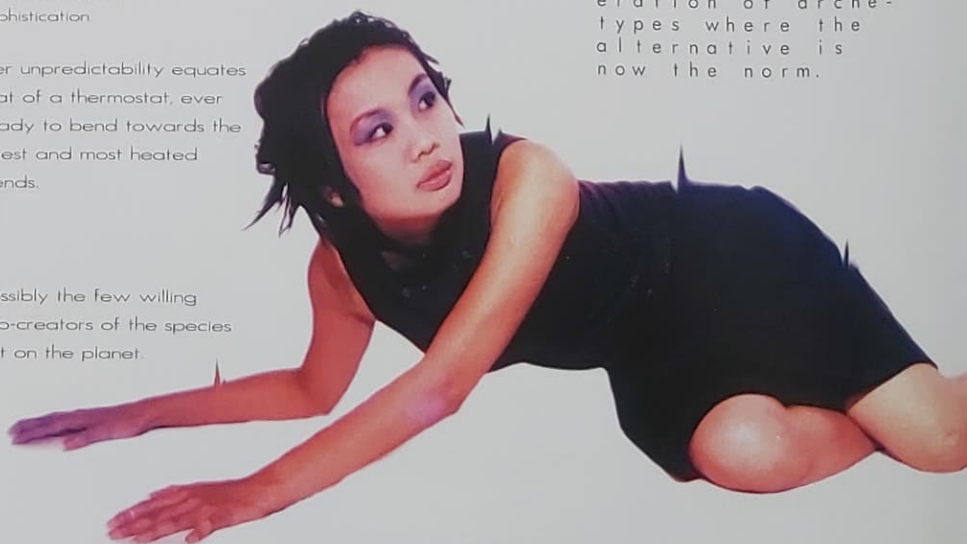
>> Enter a gen-
eration of arche-
types where the
alternative is
now the norm.

FARENHEIT

The Fashion victim / Homo
sapien female encased in her
own ideology of
sophistication

Her unpredictability equates
that of a thermostat, ever
ready to bend towards the
latest and most heated
trends.

Possibly the few willing
pro-creators of the species
left on the planet.



OMELIA :

the unplugged female, who goes for woolen comfort rather than futuristic cut and style.

Tuning herself into an anti-Fashion frequency of the techno/cyber age.



Cotton skirt; tempered with excessive boudoir material.

NIVEK :

the disaffected boy-human. Resolute to his utopian beliefs. Oblivious to the discord around him.

Gear :

Fitting Jacket with "detachable sleeves. Shorts riding above knees to expose the ugliness of humanity.



ART DIRECTION AND PHOTOGRAPHY

by Izang merwyn & lee amzadai

MODELS

Kevin Lim, MCM Yr 1

Timothy ng, ECE Yr 2

Jesse ng BS Yr 3

Ian suranna, MCM Yr 3

STYLING AND MAKEUP

Iris Koh

SPECIAL THANKS

Karen Low



Adm's Wear : Le Future

#01-49 Queensway Shopping Centre Singapore 49053 tel: 4738969

Eve's Apparel : #1 connection

14 Scotts Road 03-132, 04-137 Far East Plaza Singapore 228213 tel: 7364913

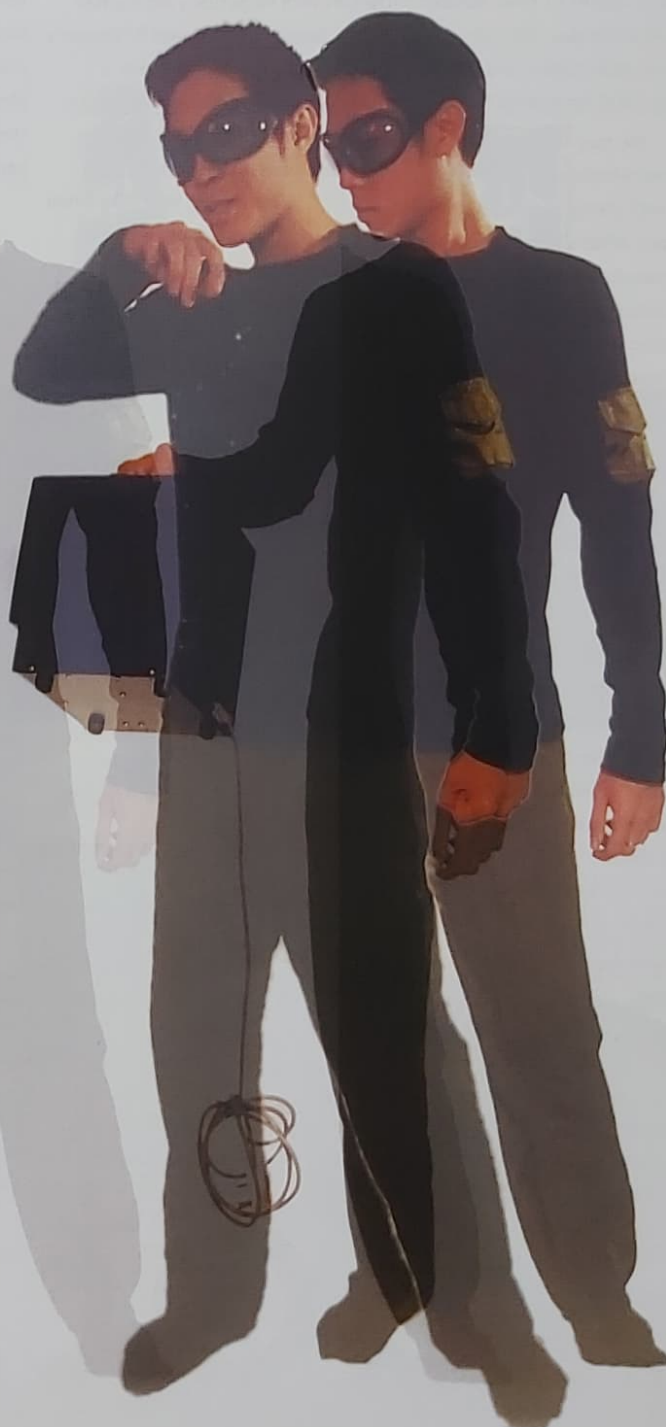
prices of clothes range from \$ 39 to \$ 6990

DOMMINIQUE :

the Quantum Physique of Masculinity trying his damnest to fit into the world of fast dominating feminine class. Reverse epitome of the 80s women, in the decade of Y2K, slipping on militia silhouettes rather than power jackets.



Irreverent Pockets : to store ammo - beepers, batteries, condoms.



01.02.03.04.

Watch Out World! Here Comes
Year 3000! \ The Boy With Immo-
vable Hair \ Live and Amplified!
Internet Time Capsule

01 + by MARIANNE GOH

THE

mother of all spoof websites regarding the year 2000, Y3K.com provides comic relief for those who wish to throttle the Millennium Clock.

Although you're spared the agonising countdown to year 2000, Time is still an important feature in this website. Time pieces serve as links to the other sections. Green headings appear when your pointer rests on a number on the clock face. Click on a number and exploration of Y3K.com begins. Its philosophy also relates to Time. Advice like "Don't seize the day, seize time... it's time to set our goals higher, and that's what the year 3000 represents!"

You may find the amount of text overwhelming if you prefer sites with plenty of downloads and graphics. What's worst, the content is paradoxical. For example, the webmaster claims that this site is "devoted to researching and developing new ideas dedicated to long term responsibility, human enlightenment, and technological innovation for the betterment of all mankind." This coming from a guy who built a machine that poured a can of soda in 35 steps! How is that human enlightenment?!

This anti-year 2000 site invites you to have your thoughts immortalised in a book. Y3K productions is asking anyone to e-mail them as this book "will be an anthology of hundreds of people's views and philosophies on the current state of mankind."

>>> For those who subscribe to the belief that there is life after the year 2000, definitely bookmark <http://www.y3k.com>.

02 + by DAPHANIE TED

NEED

breathtaking 3-D digital visuals, and sophisticated cucumber-sandwiches-and-Darjeeling tea humour? Then look no further, as Rob Weiner's comic strip *The Boy With Immovable Hair* demonstrates that the world isn't all high tech and high tea.

For adventure and a moral at the end of every story, read Enid Blyton. For plain senseless fun, join Robert Weiner's Lamborghini-loving digital art creation and his motley of friends. Meet *The Girl With Perpetually Moving Hair* (briefly famous when Sinéad O' Connor's barehead ruled), Mike, (who has a perfectly normal buzz cut) and Nancy!, (whose absence forces Mike to don a

dress and masquerade as her). Cry with Mike when he realises that he is a (gasp!) cartoon character, and thus becomes a self-denying emotional wreck. And cheer when *The Boy With Immovable Hair* shoots Mike with "A Really Really Big Gun" and proving "Why it's Great to be a Cartoon Character" (you don't die). That is probably why it's okay to drop-kick someone in the head if you warn them first.

It's hard not to applaud Nancy! for deciding to holiday and not appear in this silly comic strip.

>>> Log on to <http://members.aol.com/tbwih> for a crazy joyride of (really, really) big guns, senseless shootings, gore and hapless hair happenings.

03 + by GRACE CHIAM

TO

answer the prayers of lovers of live and amplified acts here, Liveconcert, is the source of some of the great performance of our time.

The catch is that we are teased with the aural but not visual aspects of the shower. Our only consolation is that without the distraction of images, we can better appreciate the voice.

The site basically streams concerts over the Internet using the now commonly used RealPlayer. Register with Liveconcerts at their members' page and your listening pleasure can be your guide to either live or archived performances of various music genres.

With the likes of Marilyn Manson, David Bowie and Radiohead rocking the site, Another Level, Tina Turner and Sugarhill Gang building the R&B scene while Blur, Erasure and No Doubt make their pop mark, there are exhilarating acts to please some of the most snobbish music pedants.

Artists are listed alphabetically and by genre, allowing you to scroll through over 100 live and archived performances and interviews.

>>> The tub-thumping from your computer can't replace the hysteria among thousands of unruly fans at live concerts but <http://www.liveconcerts.com> will ease the pain of our lack of amplified international music.

04 + by CHARMAINE SURIYA

CATCH UP

with the most significant happenings until early 1999, even if you've lived underground for the last six months.

You won't find the answers buried in some vault, but trust the world's leading school of technology, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to come up with a digital time capsule, which they sealed on February 4. Filled with interesting products, places and events, it was conceived to offer the future a taste of the past when it is reopened in 2004.

The virtual time capsule features one of the most significant men in the political arena in 1999, President Bill Clinton. An audio clip of the Senate impeachment trial is one of the content highlights.

Famous people like Microsoft's Bill Gates and Martha Stewart have contributed their predictions about the future of the Internet. United Nations Secretary, Kofi Annan believes that the

Internet "holds the greatest promise humanity has known for long distance learning".

Fancy you have just as much foresight? Then contribute your own predictions, but limit this to 25 words. According to the web-site, your predictions will be posted through the year.

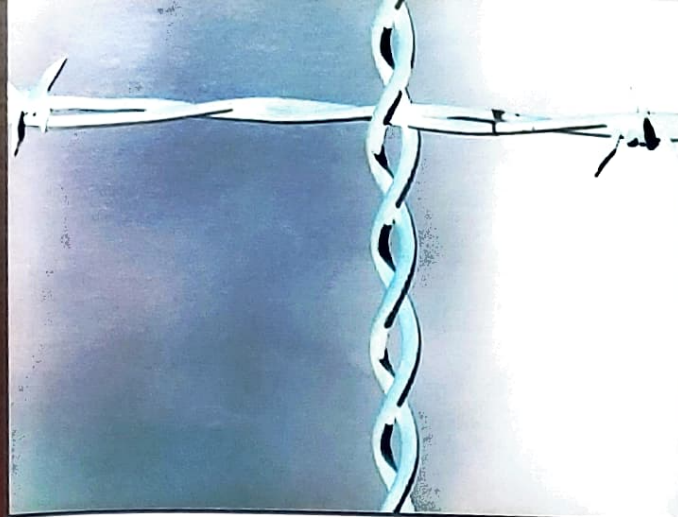
As expected, the easy-to-read site also posts links to other Internet-technology related sites where you can delve further into the fascinating trivia, latest developments and statistical information about the Internet.

>>> So if you want to catch up with major world developments until early 1999 surf on down to <http://mitsloan.mit.edu/timecapsule/main.html>.

SURF THE SPACE

dot.com





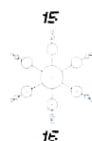
one\ fashion.
two\ food.
three\ language.
four\ television.
five\ love.
six\ music.
seven\ computers & technology.
eight\ literature.



THE DIGITAL AGE IS UPON US AND IF YOU STILL CAN'T TELL AN ARCHIE FROM AN ARCHIE (ONE'S A FRECKLED REDHEAD IN A COMIC BOOK CHARACTER, THE OTHER A TOOL TO LOCATE FILES ON THE INTERNET), DON'T ASPIRE TO BE A COMPUTER GEEK OVERNIGHT. TAKE THE EASY WAY OUT AND READ UP AS DAPHANIE TEO DOES ALL THE WORK FOR YOU AND TRIES TO REASSESS WHAT THE DIGITAL AGE MEANS TO OUR LIVES.

DIGITAL AGE DITHERS

by Daphanie Teo



one\ Forget about traipsing around in shiny aluminum dresses come the 21st century, says one of **Go Magazine's** fashion stylists, Janet Lim. "Apart from experimental haute couture collections, which aren't representative of what the masses would want to wear," she snorts derisively, "the aluminum predictions have certainly not fallen through. What you see in the stores are still clothes made from the usual fabrics, except perhaps now with technology, the fabrics are improved."

According to her, the 'millennia' trends tend to be leaning toward functional, ergonomic and multi-purpose pieces. "What's really indicative of this trend, is that even big design houses like Chanel are following this, what with their sleek, discreet and functional 2005 'Millennia' Bag and all..."

Lesser known designer labels like Dries Van Noten and Costume Nationale are all the rage, as opposed to "big brand-names with obscene logos flashing all about". Case-in-

point: Chanel's 2005 bag which has its logo on the side.

Fashion in the 90s has shifted from minimalist and celebrating Calvin Klein and Donna Karan to the 'come-back' phase (recalling the 60s to the 80s), according to her. "Very recently, it was the revival of the ethnic influence, starting with Oriental, then Indian and now Japanese."

So what way doth fashion pundits sway? "I can't really say, but minimalism is still big, as is emphasis on good tailoring and cut, which is more important than fantastic designs. Whatever it is," she rolls her eyes, "we sure won't be walking around in tons of foil and looking like barbecued sweet potatoes!"

FOOD

two You don't even have to think of the future for images of tasteless, aluminum-foiled, quick frozen and microwave-heated mush. Instead of meals, dieters today pop a quick pill that supposedly provides them with all their day's nutritional needs; and with a profusion of ready-made everything (from sauces, to porridge and even scalloped potatoes) lining the shelves in the supermarkets, who has time to fiddle around with start-from-scratch sauces and other foods?

What is the next step? Will NASA take over the world like Starbucks and flood us with dehydrated flakes of whatever they're eating in space shuttles? ("Ostrich balls sir? Will that be a tall or grande?") Will we never see another home-cooked bowl of laksa?

The Straits Times gastronome Wong Ah Yoke is less pessimistic of local tastes: "it looks like we're following global trends again, which is to go back to basics. That is, simple natural cooking, food that tastes and looks like it should, without being over-garnished and over-experimented. What matters most is the taste. He predicts that "no one cuisine will dominate, but in each cuisine, the chef who will be celebrated will be the one who can do a great steak or a great steamed fish, for example".

"At the end of the day", he states emphatically, "taste is still the most important thing."



FOOD

three If you think mastering all that weird Shakespearean prose in Literature class was torture, think again. At least back then they could spell. Now with the IRC springing up in almost everyone's home, we seem to be spouting netspeak like: "FOO? FWIW, IMHO, that newbies spam had me ROTFL :) ... oh yeah b4 i c u 2moro..." (Translated, the acronyms mean: Are You there? For Whatever It's Worth, In My Honourable Opinion... Rolling On The Floor Laughing) If you've not been in IRCland the past few months, you won't even begin to understand half of what's going on.

If that isn't bad enough, what's with the trend of using one-word addresses like www.culinarypleasures.com? Are we all lazy, saving space or is it easier to remember? Duanna Pang, editor of local e-zine, **Station Control** at www.urbancolony.com comes to its defense. "to separate a word", she explains, "you can either use a space or a hyphen. A space can easily be missed... but typing a hyphen slows you down." Also, since we have to pay to log on, webmasters know the importance of getting to a site as quickly as possible.

What is worrying about this tendency is the fear that it will spell the death of the word as we know it. Will our kids never learn 2 spell properly and will all our sentences look like this? Pang does her best to calm the hysteria: "No," she says, "This is purely for the Web. It's actually kind of cool, if you ask me," she smiles. "It's different from the normal printed word; and the fact that it is on a web page means it's a different medium anyway."

TELEVISION

four If George Gilder gets his way, the age of television is coming to an end. And the man can't stop cheering in his 1992 book **Life After Television - The Coming Transformation of Media and American Life**. In it, Gilder predicts the fall of television and the rise of age of the Telecomputer - "a powerful interactive system connected by fiber-optic threads to other PCs around the world". Sounds like the Internet, no?

This "telefuture" optimist gleefully awaits the future where "technology will overthrow the stultifying influence of mass media, renew the power of individuals, and promote democracy throughout the world". Some seven years later, the lone voices of people like Matt Drudge may have outscouted traditional media like newspapers and magazines over the Internet, but for the most part, Gilder's vision is not reality.

In fact, big corporations like Sony seem determined to prove him wrong. The consumer electronics giant is planning smarter appliances which will make the computer unnecessary. Hence television sets that allow you to surf the net, perform electronic transactions on it, play a home-recorded video, plug in your PlayStation®, and channel surf up to a few hundred channels if you have cable.

According to Sony, you get to enjoy all these, plus the best picture and sound ever. Aggressively



marketing the lifestyle to the young here with magazine **Digital Dream Kids**, Sony predicts that the Digital revolution will take about a decade to be fully integrated.

What will be the deciding factor when computers and television become interchangeable? Right now the score is Computers: 1, Television: 1. Watch this space.

FOOD

five The 60-million-dollar question that's been nagging at our biggest sexual organ (the brain) is: Will Cybersex ever replace the Real Thing? As Dinty Moore proclaimed in his book **The Emperor's Virtual Clothes - The Naked Truth About Internet Culture**, "God, I hope not."

Cybersex is illustrated by him thus:

1. Two people sit in front of their computers, anywhere in the world.
2. They type descriptions of what they might be doing to one another if they were not separated by 3,000 miles,

marriage, total lack of acquaintance and the fact that one of them is really a 13-year-old boy pretending to be a voluptuous blonde woman of 25.

3. When one types words like "I am ripping off your blouse in a passionate frenzy", the cheap line is read almost immediately by the other person who responds: "Careful, it's faux silk." God, we hope not too.

But admit it. Looking for L-O-V-E has never been a case of snapping your fingers. Not unless you're Cindy Crawford's body double. Hence the need for faceless modes of communication. Take the Lovegety for example. The girl buys a female version. The guy buys a male one. They set it to tune into the Lovegety frequency of the other sex. As they come within metres of each other, their sets go off. They turn around in the crowded mall, searching desperately for each other, hampered by people standing around, checking if it's their pager that's just gone off and countless of other lovegeties going off at the same time. Mass hysteria never needed a better excuse.

Think the Internet Relay Chat (IRC) holds more promise? In reality, cautions counsellor Francis Ngui, the IRC is somewhat of a scourge to society.

According to him, the IRC may be a faster and easier way to meet people, but hidden dangers lurk, first of which, the person is a stranger. "A guy may talk to a girl in a nice gentle manner and bowl her over, and she may trust him without really knowing what kind of a person he is." He recounts one of many cases he had to deal with where a girl became physically involved with someone she met on the net only to discover that he was married. "There is always risk involved. It may be easier to get to know people or to get dates, but for most part, it creates more problems." His advice for the lovelorn and languishing: "Do it the old fashioned way lah."

six\ If you think shaking your body on Saturday at Zouk is the digital way to go, forget it baby. Electronica. drum 'n' bass, rave, techno... call it what you like, but dance music is NOT the music of the future, according to music critic and DJ Paul Zach.

"The thing that always bothers me about electronic dance music," he grumbles, "is that people are always saying that it's new, it's the music of the next century, it's music of the future.. it's NOT! It's the same old stuff we've been doing for thousands of years! People have been dancing since caveman days when they were pounding on rocks and stuff, so dance music is nothing new".

The digital age however has been kind to the muse of music. The CD gave us pristine sound quality, and now with an MD player, you've got your digitally-recorded demo.

Websites on the Internet mean all you have to do is click here, and you can download a song clip or even a video. Bored with Perfect 10? Tune in to the many online radio stations or e-mail death threats to your local deejay and demand he play "Joy Division" six times a day, everyday. With www.mp3.com you get a gazillion Mp3 files, fresh and rearing to be downloaded for nothing more than paying for Internet time. alt.music.blur finds you discussing the merits of who in the Brit band blur is sexier, Damon the singer or Dave the drummer? while www.ubl.com tells you the difference between the Cars and the Corrs, and lets you buy their albums online.

Fusion is the way to go for music of the future, adds Paul Zach. So what you'll get are albums like Beck's *Odelay*. "It's a kind of a Sergeant Pepper's Lonely Heart's Club band of the 90s," according to Zach. "(Beck's) doing things with (keyboards and synthesisers) that are very human because he has a natural knack for working with that technology, and people can relate to him when they sit down and listen, rather than be distanced from it."

So remember, Techno is not the only way to go. In fact, grab a copy of Radiohead's brilliant *OK Computer* or Blur's fantastic *1 3* (see pg 24 for review) and see for yourself what digital age music is really all about.

seven\ The rate at which computer technology is progressing is breathtaking to say the least. Barely a year ago computers that ran at speeds of 400Mhz commanded prices as high as \$8,000. Now, a 500Mhz computer retails for only \$3098, less than half the price. Unlike the old days when they built TV sets that worked for 15 years, no one these days waits to see if the five-year computer warranty really works. It would have been obsolete two years earlier and been junked out by then.

Perhaps it's a catch-up game of price that computer makers don't want to play. Maybe that is why the geeks are making their gadgets so fashion-conscious. Macintosh successfully released the imac, a revolution in computer design, with soda pop colours and delicious fruity names. Now computers have a distinct personality!

It's the same with handphones. Smaller, with funkier colours, and designed by Jean Paul Gaultier, no doubt to accessorise with your Beng/Lian JPG jeans, sunglasses, bags etc. New models are released every few months, so compelling they make you Buy! Buy! Buy! And all designed to be so faddish you'll feel like the fashion police will hurl their spangled batons at you if you're still wielding a chunky Phua Chu Kang-type handphone.

In the name of the humanisation of technology, we even have handphones that play an awful rendition of a Vanessa Mae ditty or those that appear in "hot pants green".



eight\ Ask any self-respecting techno-tyro, and chances are, he'll tell you Cyberpunk writer William Gibson (the guy who wrote both the story and the screenplay *Johnny Mnemonic*) is the pioneer of digital age literature. It was Gibson who first coined the term Cyberspace.

Literature in the digital age is vastly different from the dust-a-book-off-the-shelf-and-curl-up-and-read scenario we're so used to. Now, stories come in a disc, like Gibson's poem *Agrippa* which was accompanied by a complex code you had to crack if you wanted to read the next sentence. Increasingly, stories are now being exchanged in newsgroups. One such newsgroup is alt.cyberpunk, which works like this: You can post a story about anything, but it has to be set loosely in the cyberpunk context. (Cyberpunk is a sub-genre of science fiction. It's also used to describe shallow trendies in black leather who talk rabidly about technology instead of actually learning or doing it.) Other people in the newsgroup can critique your work or argue its points. Sometimes, a writer posts a story and others try to finish it as best as they can.

There are also sites on the net that let you download full text stories for free, one of them being Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.net), which contains more than 1,400 e-texts. So all you have to do now is get a steaming mug of cocoa, rev up your computer, download the stories you want to, and enjoy! No searching around in dusty, cavernous libraries, no late fines and best of all, no snooty librarians going "shh!"

sound bytes

... celebs ponder implications of technology in their lives !!!

sound bytes



sound bytes

sound by

"Probably he would be really lost with a computer. Give him liquid paper, he may apply it on the screen."

—MCM 3rd year student Don Yap on how his character 'Ah Soon' in *Phua Chu Kang* would deal with technology

"We can't go on thinking that theatre is just a group of people on stage talking to each other. We can have two people on stage talking to each other and the images in the background show birds being decapitated. It'll be interesting to see what the effect of those images on each other and the audience will be."
~Hareesh Sharma, playwright, on theatre in the Digital Age

"If I really had a choice, I would create a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde thing, where she's a really nice person (by) day and really nasty at night."

~Triple Nine star Chong Chia Suan on how she would play VR Woman.

"I'd be very flattered... Thanks, I never knew you all thought so highly of me. (But) if the photos look horrible, I would report to the police."

~Actor/comedian Hossan Leong on how he'd react to nude pictures of himself on the Internet.

sound bytes



X' Ho, the music guru of Singapore, the self-proclaimed Punk Monk Hunk - veteran D J, writer, music critic and musician, enlightens Tzang Merwyn on the

Now Sound of the Future, alternative culture and himself.

Back in 1967, in Los Angeles, California, when the Doors was interviewed, Jim Morrison foretold a vision of a shaman using machines instead of people and in place of instruments to create the music of the future. Decades later, in Singapore, a shaman was born, in the not-so-commercial image of X'Ho a.k.a. Chris Ho. Not only is this man a local rock icon, he is leading the charge of alternative music in his radio programme called *Hip-Parade* and has just published his first book, *Skew Me, You Rebel Meh?*

Just how does one person manage to do so many things and do them so well? Seated opposite is a man with a mohawk hairdo, body piercings, and tattoos crawling out of

his T-shirt, onto his arms, legs and the exposed area of his chest, drawing stares from passers-by. What is more surprising is how a man, with enough tattoos to put Axl Rose to shame, can speak so poetically and yet be so Singaporean.

X'Ho on His Book.

"I wanted to write a book because it is cheaper than making a movie. This book is a collection of thoughts and previous articles published in *Big O Magazine*."

The full title of the book reads, *Skew Me, You Rebel Meh? Thoughts of a disavowed Rebel*. Even Gurmit Singh complained on *Tonight With Gurmit* that it was such a long title.

"I am not a rebel at all," he snorts. "I'm just

"Very readable writing about unlistenable music and unlivable life by my oldest friend."

--Damien Sin's thoughts on X'ho,
an extract from *Skew Me, You Rebel Meh?*

"I see computer-generated music as the rock 'n' roll revolution of this era. It's the way rock 'n' roll evolves, constantly testing ground and doing the most outrageous thing anyone can think of. Whatever is the most outrageous will register as the next revolution."

This is how Singapore's epitome of rock music explains why he is leading the charge of rock's extreme antithesis by hosting the **Hip Parade: The New Sound of the Future**. The music he plays ranges from lounge to trip hop to breakbeat to techno to drum 'n' bass, a music scene currently dominated by Ah Beng and Ah Lian fans.

"Rock 'n' roll is about the human spirit. The use of machines to create sound is totally ... (unforgivable). But that's how rock 'n' roll re-invents itself. It's a reactionary thing... To come out with a cultural revolution is rock 'n' roll. To push the limits, and to do something at odds with it, so that it changes and evolves," which is why X'Ho is at peace with promoting this new sound. So, no, he's not selling out.

"I have been accused of selling out once before. But that was long, long before Punk Monk Hunk came about. People stop attacking me now... I've been here for too long. It's the latest trends now that get attacked by the newer ones."

X'Ho has paid his dues. Alfian Sa'at, who wrote the foreword of X'Ho's book, describes him as being "in the scene even before there was even a scene".

"It's just like how rock guitar never eradicates the classical guitar. It (digital music) just augments the original."

And like the rock and classical guitar, techno/house music will last forever, he believes. That's probably also why X'Ho is still in the scene. Like rock 'n' roll, he has never been displaced by newer artistes. He sleeps for a while and just when you thought he's disappeared, he reappears again before the eyes of the media.

"Music is an art-form that deserves to progress alternatively." X'Ho feels the lack of lyrics is just a reaction to the amount of messages we've been getting from music since the days of Bob Dylan and Jim Morrison. There are just so many messages that they don't mean anything to people anymore.

And contrary to belief, X'ho does not think that the rise of techno/house has made music any less meaningful. It just allows it to be a little more abstract.

X'Ho on X'Ho

"It has always been the music, I love it so much... that it is taking a hold and ruining my life.

A lot of people move on. DJs move on to become successful business-men and entrepreneurs. But I can't (move on), because I am stuck at the music level. For

me, it's not the job but the music... I started as a part-time DJ, and I'm still a bloody part-timer after all these years!"

On the flip-side, part-timing has allowed him the opportunity to discover more music, given him time and space to delve deeply into music, to do all the things he wants, like writing, for instance, or spinning in a pub. X'Ho is also thinking of producing his own movie soon, but no details are available yet. This Punk Monk of a Hunk is such a learned disciple of rock 'n' roll, that he is sacrificing a life of wealth and stability for his passion.

"That, in itself (X'Ho still being a part-timer), shows that my real preoccupation is not the career, but the music."

It would be a shame if anybody thinks that this man is doing all that he does for money and publicity. His contemporaries may be into stability, securities and shares, but X'Ho is not the man who is afraid to admit that he is poor.

"Everything I did, I did at the expense of money and career advancements. And in that sense, rock 'n' roll has done me in."



Be sure to catch X'Ho on the Perfect Ten's **Hip Parade**, 11 pm, Sundays on 98.7 FM. His book, **Skew Me, You Rebel Meh?** is available at all leading bookstores

X'Ho on Music.

not entirely mainstream. The term mainstream is too well-defined here in Singapore ... and because of that, somebody like myself will be seen as 'irregular'."

Despite being stopped at lifts by policemen and security guards, X'Ho is actually a law-abiding citizen. Even when under the strictest discipline, during his National Service, he was never charged. On the roads, he is no speed demon either, mainly because his lime green scooter can only reach a maximum 50km/hour.

;-)
Watching
frozen meat
defrost would
be more
interesting.

:-\n
Slightly more
interesting
than counting
the hairs on
your chest.

:-)\n
More satis-
faction than
finding 10c
some poor
loser left
behind at the
coin phone.

:-)\n
Even better
than knowing
the differ-
ence between
"stationary "
and "station-
ery".

:-P\n
Definitely
more gratify-
ing than
getting an
extra nugget
in your happy
meal.

couple with some sizzle!

To understand the soporific of **Message in a Bottle**, you'll have to know that Mexican director Luis Mandoki's last American effort was the Kleenex-happy **When a Man Loves a Woman**. While the earlier film was replete at its best, **Message in a Bottle** reeks of effusiveness.

You can bet there'll be some sniffing in theatres and you'll enjoy the unabashedly romantic show if you're a fan of movies like **The Horse Whisperer** and **The Bridges of Madison County**. So if stories about love lost and love found appeal to you, **Message in a Bottle** is the movie for your lazy Sunday afternoon.

Tan Kai Ying

two people change from being emotionally closed to pouring their hearts out to each other in a day?

Oh, but not all is smooth sailing. Obstacle number one—Garret's denial and inability to get over his wife's death is played up all the way till the last five minutes. Obstacle number two—Theresa starts a relationship with him without revealing her knowledge of his letter to his dead wife, which, of course, leads to issues of trust.

The only performance that sparked was Paul Newman's As Dodge, Garret's father, he gives the film a much-needed anchor. When Theresa hugs him, you'll find yourself wondering why this couldn't be one of those older-man/younger-woman flicks instead. Now, there's a

Theresa (Robin Wright Penn) picks up a bottle with a romantic letter on the beach. Using her journalistic resourcefulness, she tracks down the writer of the letter to his lovely seaside town in North Carolina. There, the divorcee meets Garret (Kevin Costner), sailboat restorer and grieving widower, still trying to get over the death of his wife two years earlier.

Of course, you must already know that Theresa and Garret will fall in love, but please, put aside your cynicism for the next two hours. After all, that's probably the only way you're going to enjoy this sappy melodrama.

Based on a best-selling novel by Nicholas Sparks, the movie bombs with its overwrought storyline and impossible circumstances. A bottle floats across the ocean unharmed and



MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

Starring: Kevin Costner, Robin Wright Penn, Paul Newman
Director: Luis Mandoki
120 mins

:-\n

Rating

CRUEL INTENTIONS

Starring: Sarah Michelle Gella and Ryan Phillippe
Director: Roger Kumble



97 mins Rating :-)

If Sarah Michelle Gellar's kick butt, good-ridance-to-evil performance in **Buffy the Vampire Slayer** made you sick to the jugular, here's a chance to rub your hands in glee and see her play evil. Gellar puts up a wicked show with co-star Ryan Phillippe as they plot and scheme to torment the lives of others around them. Just for fun.

Don't expect an original story line however, as **Cruel Intentions** is a teenage version of **Dangerous Liaisons**. Director Roger Kumble has successfully made it as nasty, profane and entertaining as the notorious 1782 novel, **Les Liaisons Dangereuses** by Choderlos De Laclos. Phillippe makes a sexier, more seductive Sebastian Valmont than John Malkovich in the 1988 version, and "Buffy" plays Kathryn Merleuil no less mean and manipulative as Glenn Close was.

Kathryn wants to get even with her beau who dumped her for innocent Cecile (Selma Blair) and she challenges Sebastian to deflower the girl so that she'll arrive as 'spoilt goods'. Sebastian finally agrees when Kathryn offers herself as the reward since she is the only woman he cannot get because of the spectre of incest, even though they are not blood relations.

His greatest challenge, however, is Annette (Reese Witherspoon), the headmaster's daughter who vows to remain chaste till marriage. To double his chances of bedding his step-sister, he bets her that he will be able to seduce Annette before term begins. If he loses, Kathryn gets his 1956 Jaguar.

Viewers will be shocked if they are expecting a preppy, teenage sort of lovey-dovey movie as the characters are much darker and twisted for their tender age. But if you've always fancied a film with elements of **Dangerous Liaisons** and **Wild Things**—get ready to be seduced by **Cruel Intentions**.

Tiana Tay

URBAN LEGEND

Starring: Jared Leto and Alicia Witt
Director: Jamie Blanks



105 minutes Rating :-)

Remember the girl who didn't check the backseat of her car where an axe-wielding killer sat waiting? Or how the boy who downed crackling sweets with Pepsi burst his intestines? Perhaps even the one about a babysitter harassed by phone calls from within the house?

Students at Pendleton College unwittingly star in urban legends—folklore passed on as true stories—when college girl Natalie, played by Alicia Witt (**Cybill**), finds her friends, Jared Leto (**The Thin Red Line**), Rebecca Gayheart, Michael Rosenbaum, killed in the fashion of those folk tales.

A whodunit plot with a big twist at the end, this sees the killer justifying his actions like in every other horror flick.

With a perpetual frown on her smooth forehead and poor acting skills, Witt fails in her attempt to make an impact on the big screen with her first lead role. It is difficult to see her character any differently from the petulant daughter Zoe in the sitcom **Cybill**.

Australian Jamie Blanks should not have relied on such a young and weak cast for his directorial debut. In fact, the movie would have been a total failure if not for Jared Leto's rather convincing performance as an ambitious journalism major and ex-Freddy Krueger Robert Englund, as a college professor.

Urban Legend is rather entertaining to watch if you can't get enough of teen slashers like **I Know What You Did Last Summer** or **Scream**.

And remember to look behind your seat before you leave.

Karan Low

Win 5 Urban Legend posters if you can give us the most frightening urban legend. E-mail your answer to us at: hype8448@yahoo.com
Frighten us all at **hype Magazine** now!

Movie Reviews



THE MATRIX



Even before a computer beats the world's chess champion at his game, mankind's worst technological nightmare has been of computers outsmarting us, enslaving us and making us the subject of their experiments.

In *The Matrix*, this nightmare becomes reality as humans exist for a sole reason — they are batteries in a universe run by computers. Harnessing this biological energy, the artificial intelligence known as The Matrix consumes "people power" and creates a virtual reality to fool its fuel into thinking that they are happy and leading fulfilling lives.

What follows is a sci-fi thriller that depicts the struggle for freedom and a greater purpose in life, than being Matrix feed, when the plot is discovered by the main cast. They must devise ways of freeing themselves from *The Matrix* and destroying it.

Keanu Reeves (Neo), best known for his lead role in the box-office hit, *Speed*, is the action hero recruited by those who have escaped the mind-bending clutches of *The Matrix*. Emmy Award winner and Oscar-nominated Laurence Fishburne (Morpheus) sweeps audiences off their feet with the inimitable style that he showed in Steven Spielberg's *Event Horizon*. The other members of the high-calibre cast include new face Carrie-Anne Moss (Trinity), Australian Hugo Weaving (Agent Smith), and Joe Pantoliano (Cypher) who starred with Tommy Lee Jones and Wesley Snipes in *U.S. Marshals*.

Viewers may find *The Matrix* a mix between *Dark City*, where sinister memory-sucking aliens spied on humans, and another tale of a hapless human being

observed in *The Truman Show*, in that the underlying message is no matter how our memories and thoughts are tampered with, the heart remains the strongest enemy to conquer. And this is because from it springs the will and resources to overcome incredible odds to change our environment and lives.

Indulge your passion for action thrillers, with excellent choreography supervision by Hongkong fight coordinator, Yuen Wo Ping (*Drunken Master*, *Once Upon A Time In China*) and his team. Look out for some actual stunts that are done by the cast themselves, especially in a government lobby scene where Carrie-Anne runs up against a wall and does a cartwheel on the wall (she broke her ankle thereafter). If you were impressed and thrilled by the car chases in *Ronin*, then be prepared for adrenaline-pumping helicopter chases right in downtown Sydney. In another 30-second scene, watch out for a 100% computer-generated exposition of how a human comes into the world.

With more than 30 years of movie-making experience, directors and screenwriter, Andy and Larry Wachowski (*Bound*) have executed a vision so real viewers may at times wonder if what they have experienced is part of the Matrix's evil mind control.

The Matrix is a gripping illustration of how malevolent and destructive computers may evolve to be, but it is definitely not a depressing movie about the ruthless rule of the evil computer. Undeniably thought-provoking, it acts as a reminder of our precarious existence and privacy in an increasingly digital world.

Kenny Wong

WATCH FOR IT IN CINEMAS ISLANDWIDE

In less than 25 words, tell **hype** Magazine what you think the Matrix is.
E-mail your answer to us at: hype8448@yahoo.com
Win movie passes for two if your answer is one of the best 20 selected.
The next 20 will win a large Matrix movie poster.
(Prizes courtesy of Golden Village)

Book. Reviews

Release 2.1 - A Design for Living in the Digital Age

by Esther Dyson,
published by Broadway Books

Moving on the digital age and everything seems to be changing at a lightning speed. Modes of communication are changing, typical Asian closed-minded attitudes are opening up, businesses are going high-tech, forming new relationships are becoming easier and the list goes on. Esther Dyson's **Release 2.1** is a great book for those of us who are still left behind in the ever-changing digital world.

Written by Dyson, who has published the **Release 1.0** newsletter every month since the early 80's, this is finally a book that the masses will understand. What makes this such a successful formula is that this book is written in a conversational tone which engages the reader to react and relate with the issues that are brought to light in the book. Dyson explores the fascinating possibilities of life in the new digital society we are heading toward. Almost every angle is covered here as she discusses the changes that the Internet has imposed in the many areas of our lives, such as work, communities, education and businesses. Another plus point for **Release 2.1** would be that it addresses the many worries that traditionalists will have on using the Internet. Issues such as privacy, security, content control and anonymity are looked into great detail.

This **Release 2.1** is an upgrade of the earlier edition **Release 2.0** which was published in 1997. Dyson basically keeps the same formula for this edition and adds on all the changes that have occurred since the earlier release. The increased popularity of E-commerce along with more case examples are all found here. And critics of her **Release 2.0** have all their doubts about her views rebutted.

Release 2.1 boldly suggests the possibility of literally waking up and sleeping with the Internet and on how life in the cyberworld can be made possible. The hard-hitting message here would be that with the advent of the Internet, we all have both the opportunity and the obligation to shape the rules we want to live by in the digital age.

Reading this book leaves one with a very hopeful and optimistic view about the future of You and The Internet. It has the ability to set your mind at ease before you approach the digital age and is a must buy for all of those who still fear using the computer and the Internet.

The only drawback with this book is that it is not suitable for the seasoned Internet junkie as he or she would probably be left saying, 'But I already know all this!'

Available at Tower Books for \$32.99

Roy Tan

Rating :-)



Idoru

by William Gibson,
published by Penguin Books

Genre-setting novelist William Gibson gives cyberpunk a fresh treatment by using familiar internet jargon and a very readable plot. He who first penned the term "cyberspace" spins a tale of two protagonists— an adolescent, Chia Pet McKenzie, and an "netrunner" named Colin Laney.

Laney has the unique knack for unearthing celebrity scandals. His skills take him to Japan where buildings grow like mushrooms in the night. His psychic investigative services are needed to find out why singer Rez, of the famous celebrity duo Lo/Rez, has announced plans to marry Japanese superstar Rei Toei. The twist lies in the fact that Rei is the ultimate media-created celebrity, an *idoru*, an entirely computer-generated idol.

Meanwhile, the Lo/Rez fan club in Seattle sends 14-year-old Chia to Japan to find out the truth behind the rumour of the impending marriage. Chia's adolescent viewpoint adds a third dimension as we see both Laney and Chia juggling their problems in both the "real" and the "virtual" worlds. Eventually, they join forces to prevent Rez from 'marrying' Rei.

Gibson blurs the line between real and virtual, deftly using various perspectives to make you re-define the concepts of what's real and what's not.

The engagement between Rez and Rei, serves as a potent metaphor for humankind's increasingly intimate relationship with technology. Although Rez is a flesh-and-blood musician, the software-created Rei could actually be the half of the couple who is truly in love.

Idoru sounds more exciting than it actually, is but Gibson's distinctively textured writing and bizarre, vivid settings manage to compensate for the fairly straightforward plot.

While **Idoru** isn't as dynamic and exciting as Gibson's classic **Neuromancer** and its sequels, this book offers what those novels evidently lacked: funny, likable characters, and moments of genuine poignancy. It is not only a neat sci-fi novel, but has philosophical depth for the thinking reader too.

Available at Tower Books for \$15.81

Karan Low

Rating :-P

Chat :-)

by Nan McCarthy,
published by Pocket Books

Chat :-) such a quaint read in comparison to Net espionage and Net love stories that are extensively narrative.

The first book in the trilogy by American Nan McCarthy taps into the modern-day mode of communication via e-mailing and its potential for meaningful relationships. The method of storytelling is done through the e-mails and some sessions at a Writers' Forum between the two characters.

The two characters are BevJ@frederic-gerard.com and maximilian@miller&morris.com. She is the happily married editor-in-chief of Frederic Gerard books. He is a copywriter for the Miller & Morris advertising agency, determined to stay single. They begin their e-correspondence, total strangers who share a little more of themselves with each e-mail. The tone of their messages is at first casual, playful, heart-warming and highly amusing. But as their conversation deepens, they open up about their innermost reservations with one another.

The seamless flow of the correspondence grips the reader throughout the novel. Bev and Max become the representatives for millions of Internet chatters who formed cyber relationships, be they relationships of platonic fondness or ones shared between trusted confidantes.

But as the novel develops, a revelation of how the two characters have actually met before causes a total turn in Bev and Max's relationship. The only frustration is that as with all books in series, **Chat :-)** ends on a climatic cliffhanger and leaves the reader dying to know what happened after that. Which explains **Connect** and **Crash**, the two other books in this trilogy.

Like much of e-mailing, **Chat :-)** is a tease but it captures your attention so intensely that the next thing you know, you have actually read the whole book. And unsatisfied, you leave mumbling, to get book two and three.

Available at Tower Books for \$14.32

Grace Chiam

Rating :-)

15% OFF
@ TOWER BOOKS

Present this page, together with your student card, at Tower Books for a 15% discount off your books purchase! Hurry, because it's only valid until May 15, 1999. Not to be used with other offers, promotions and sales, or items other than books. Offer available only at the Pacific Plaza branch. Page only to be used once for discount.



Music

Reviews

blur - 13 (EMI)

Once, in a very long while, you get an album like blur's **13**. An album that leaves you a gaping, dishevelled, bug-eyed mess, stock still in the middle of the street, discman in hand, too blown away to move.

"Tender is the touch of someone you love too much", croons main man Damon Albarn on **13**'s first single, the seven minute epic "Tender". And blur's magnificent sixth album is exactly that - tender, pulsating with an aching perfection almost too much to behold. And the very moment you hear guitarist Graham Coxon's heart-wrenching plaintive wail of "Oh my baby, oh my baby", the truth suddenly hits home - the boys have grown.

Gone are the indie indispensables like hand-claps, la-la-la bits in every song and rousing rah-rah choruses. Instead, a whole landscape of painstakingly-edited, multi-textured sonic beeps, static and weird noises courtesy of the current Eno of producers, William Orbit, has been set up. And because Damon is sick of narrative and character songs ("I had to move on and start to sing in a more genuine voice"), never again will you get to hear about women who

complain about ants in their carpets, families who wash their cars on Sundays and city dwellers who live in a big house in the country.

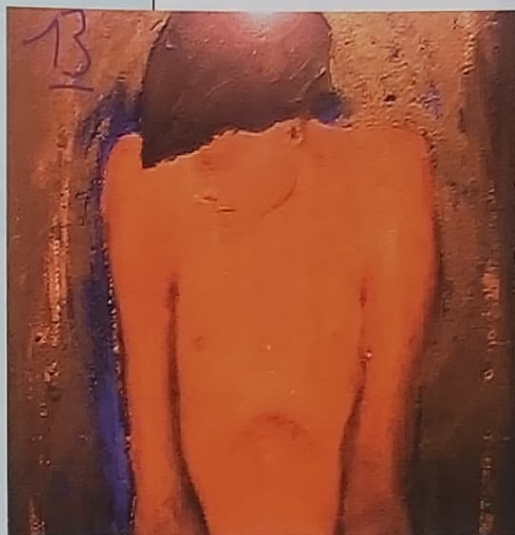
13 sparkles with timeless gems ranging from Graham's delicious lo-fi nugget "Coffee & TV", the lush, eerily-ethereal synth sounds of "Battle", the weird crankiness of "Trailerpark", with the hilarious bit where Damon intones moodily "I lost my girl to the Rolling Stones", and the tormented, tortured blues of "No Distance Left To Run" where Damon starts off singing like a broken-hearted Elvis Costello and ends up tugging madly at your heartstrings.

For a band that has improved with every album, yet made each one an inimitable masterpiece, **13** is an apt celebration of the coming of age of Britpop's brightest spark.

So for better or worse, say one last goodbye to the blatant Britpoppers that were blur and listen to what Damon describes as the new "artistically liberated" blur.

Daphanie Teo

Rating :-PPP* (just crazy)



Fancy yourself a "13lur" CD or T-shirt? Then tell us the name of "13lur's" latest album (it can't be easier than that!). Mail your answers to hype8448@yahoo.com along with your name, dept., student no. and contact no.

The first five entries get a CD each, while the next five get a groovy T-shirt. Hurry!

TLC - Fanmail (BMG)

With their long-awaited third album Fanmail, the young women of TLC put misdirected women and playa-wannabes in their place. The lyrics are fuss-free and hardcore in comparison to their past two albums. In Fanmail, TLC gets down and dirty with reality.

The first released single "No Scrubs" describes the repulsion towards lame members of the opposite sex - scrubs being those who think that they are all smooth and slick when they are plainly not. The single has used a recycled winning-formula for the music, which bears much similarity to their hit songs "Diggin' On You" and "What About Your Friends?". Combined with their 'heck no!' lyrics "I don't want your number/ I don't want to give you mine/ And I don't want to meet you nowhere/ I don't want none of your time", it makes it a sure-win start-off single.

Other tracks off the album are as easy to listen to. "I'm Good At Being Bad", "Silly Ho" and "Unpretty" have varying sounds and lyrics of substance to engage the listener. But one might feel a little ripped-off at the familiarity of certain songs. "Don't Pull Out On Me Yet" is suspiciously similar to "Red Light Special".

Which really sums up the essence of Fanmail - because **CrazySexyCool** was such a winning album, staying close to that formula should guarantee Fanmail's success. But on the lines of creativity and ground-breaking efforts, the latest album does not deliver and one wonders if it even intends to match the quirky, fresh sound they created with their first album **Ooh...** on the TLC tip.

Grace Chiam

Rating :-\

Rugrats OST (Interscope Records/ Universal)

What are alternative artistes such as No Doubt, Jakob Dylan and Iggy Pop doing together in an album from a cartoon filled with tiny tots? It's probably the latest craze among celebs who can't wait to contribute their vocal talents to animated features.

First up is Elvis Costello who toys around with No Doubt in "I'll Throw My Toys Around", a track which is definitely not what you'd expect of Gwen Stefani and gang. Highlight of the album "This World Is Something New To Me" has 15 artistes such as Patti Smith, the B-52s and even Iggy Pop lending their voices to it. Reminiscent of "We Are The World" in scale, it is however on all other counts dissimilar as it has neither grandeur nor an unforgettable melody.

Excerpts of the movie are evident in the soundtrack. Laugh along with the Rugrats when they use the wrong words such as 'Yum' instead of 'rum' in the song "Yo Ho Ho And A Bottle Of Yum" and 'A Bob' instead of 'above' in "A Baby Is A Gift From A Bob". Not all the songs are fun and catchy though. "Dil-A-Bye" is guaranteed to lull you to sleep, if not inspire dreams of four-eyed rascals and their baby brothers.

If the songs are not enough to make you go out and grab the CD, then the fact that the CD includes a demo of the Rugrats PC game should.

The Rugrats' movie soundtrack is certainly a compilation of artistes as varied as the characters in the cartoon.

Charmaine Suriya

Rating :-\

Wanna win one of five Rugrats movie soundtracks? Then e-mail your name, dept., student no. and contact no. to hype8448@yahoo.com



Lilac Saints - Awake (Springroll Records)

Home-grown four-piece band Lilac Saints have been most successful in establishing the reputation of being a really lazy outfit, so much so that with the release of Awake, a disturbing voice at the back of my head went, "Lilac who?"

The type of sound in Awake is what bands like 'Bread' and 'The Byrds' would sound like if they were trying hard to make it in the 90s music scene. Lilac Saints is to The Byrds what Oasis is to The Beatles.

The problem with this album is that every song sounds like the one before, despite their claim in an interview with E-Buzz, an on-line entertainment magazine, to have concentrated a lot on melodies in this album.

Someone should tell the Lilac Saints that it takes more to give their music a new face than adding sound effects at the start and at the end of songs like 'To be the one', 'Jamaica' and 'Shooting Star'.

So to Desmond, Kevin, Bhaskar and Eugene, a little diversity in your music would be great even if to stop your listener from nodding off somewhere in the middle of the album.

If you are looking for an album to keep you Awake for that long bus ride, this is definitely the wrong one to choose.

Roy Tan

Rating :-\

(for their effort, and the fact that they're Singaporeans, just support lah, huh?)

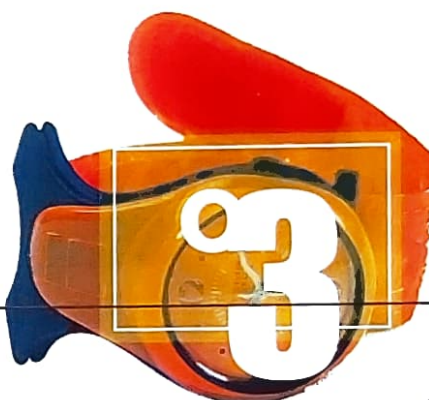
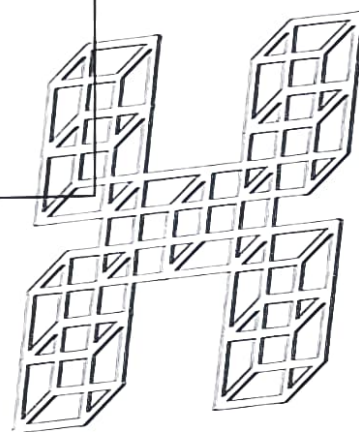
The Big Tic **01.**
 The Side Watch **02.**
 Swatch.beat **03.**
 Rude Awakening Alarm Clock **04.**

\ KENNY WONG
 \ TIANA TAY
 \ GALVIN SOH
 \ DAPHANIE TEO

Time

wait for no man." A
 time-honoured cliché
 gaining significance
 as the new
 millennium waits at

and tide



our doorstep. The
 continual evolution of
 technology, which has
 resulted in the
 "Information
 Superhighway" and
 the "Digital Age"
 gaining priority in our
 lives, means that our
 Time is being re-
 defined.

X PAGE

pix :
 No 1 = Swatch .beat
 No 2 = The Big Tic
 No 3 = The Side Watch

SIDE WATCH SOURCE: SINGAPORE FHM



Digitisation offers us many
 new products and services:
 on-line databases,
 interactive imaging, video-
 on-demand, cable internet
 surfing, the list goes on.
 Such inventions help us save
 time, freeing up more of it to
 go through our daily grind.



James Champy, the chairman of
 the CSC Consulting Group listed an
 example on the Internet of a
 pharmaceutical firm that slashed
 its product development from eight
 to four years through technological
 breakthroughs, instantly adding
 US\$1 billion (S\$1.7 billion) to the
 bottomline of the products.



The current scenario of a
 highly-accelerated and
 relentless communication flow
 forces us to acknowledge that
 time is no longer measured in
 seconds or minutes, but
 kilobytes per second; and that
 the saying "Time is money" is,
 more than ever, worth its every
 two cents as a truth.



What better instrument to
 measure the evolution of Time than
 the trusty watch? This, too, is
 evolving, reflecting our obsession
 with ever faster performance,
 capturing a snapshot of human
 advancement and changes. Here,
Hype spotlights some new happenin'
 watches.

TAN BOON LENG

The Big Tic

No more excuses for twiddling thumbs and letting precious hours fly by. The Big Tic from Fossil is another grim reminder of how much time we have left before the arrival of a new century.

With every second flashing precariously across its whole screen, it's not a good idea to even blink because you might miss one very valuable second. This is the first watch in the market that demands your utmost attention as time takes off practically at warp speed.

Whether you're a control freak with an unhealthy obsession for time or just another severe nutcase who goes all edgy with the mention of seconds, minutes and hours, this is one watch that is ticking away like a time bomb, ready to send adrenaline coursing through your veins and shivers down your spine.

Even if aggravation is not what you're after, The Big Tic will prove to be your most faithful companion in the countdown to the coming millennium.

The Big Tic is available with regular displays (silver display with black numbers) or reverse display (black display with silver numbers). It has a variety of accent rings around the dial complemented by a futuristic metal (\$108) or a bold black strap (\$98). Get it at Ngee Ann City, Takashimaya Shopping Centre basement one. Opening hours from 10am to 9.30pm daily.

|| xx |

The Side Watch

Just when you thought the digital age has outdone itself by saving every nanosecond and microjoule of time and energy expended - the side watch offers a novel way to tell time even faster.

The watch is so named because it sits literally on the side of your wrist. This makes time

Swatch.beat

Finally, a world time we can all agree on.

Swatch, the innovator that put art on our wrists, has created a new meridian - BMT or Biel Mean Time. And along with it, they have introduced six funky watches under the umbrella of the .beat. Truly a watch of the digital age, the .beat effectively shrinks our world to the extent that everyone's time is synchronised.

According to Swatch Internet Time, a day is divided into 1000 beats, with each beat equalling 1 minute 26.4 seconds. The day starts at @000 (midnight Central European Wintertime) and this means that noon in the old time system is the equivalent of @500 Swatch Beats. Thus, time is the same wherever you are on Earth. Whether you're in New York, Tokyo or Paris, you're all at @355 (355 beats) for example.

The .beat has two liquid crystal screens. One is for functions such as local time, a second time for a different time-zone, Internet time, the day and the date, and a countdown to the year 2000 (this function can be re-programmed to monitor your own countdown to anything else after that). The other LCD screen shows a comical animation of a dog answering the call of nature!

Just as Swatch has revolutionised the way the watch looks, the .beat will truly change how we tell the time. Coffee at @625, anyone?

The .beat, in six models with curiously apt names like Webmaster' and 'Download', costs \$120 and is available by calling Swatch at 270-6171.

|| xx |

Rude Awakening Alarm Clock

Has the dignity of humankind come to this? It's one thing that we have descended from our lofty heights as Masters of Machinery to being abused verbally every morning by an inanimate object. But to pay for that pleasure as well?

The Rude Awakening Alarm Clock is the one product that seems to herald (and very loudly too) the fast approaching age of digital dominance and the humiliation of humankind.

No doubt designed to you out of bed as quickly as humanly possible, rather than getting your day off to a good start, this alarm clock spews a full minute's fusillade of wisecracks, sirens, clashing cymbals, guttural "Get off yer lazy ***!" grumbings and a whole lot more. And you thought mum's nagging was bad!

Currently priced at US\$19.99 (S\$34), and manufactured by Boink products in America, The Rude Awakening Alarm Clock functions like a normal radio clock at other times, so you can regain some control in your life by choosing either to wake up to soothing strains of music or a whole cacophony of noise.

There may be nothing like the shriek of a loving mum to get you out of bed every morning, but the sleek, black and painfully nondescript Rude Awakening Alarm Clock is a sure bet that you'll never have an excuse for missing another 8am lecture.

Rude Awakening Alarm Clock can be found in May at The Clarke Quay Flea Market (open only on Sundays), at the store which sells the South Park memorabilia.

|| xx |

CONTENTS

issue 8 special

13. future shock

[commentary + pictorial + fashion spread]

features

- 05. get rich quick! online businesses leave marianne goh money-fazed
- 11. real and virtual stars slug it out, lynda hong and lee amizadai referee
- 16. daphanie teo gives a low-down on the digital revolution and our network generation

getting personal

- 09. roses are red. violets are blue. can love breed on the net? donita gives us a clue
- 19. sound bytes - celebrities talk

tattletale

- 04. tiana tay talks shop with online money-maker robin leong
- 19. tzang merwyn asks x'ho if he has cause to rebel

regulars

- 02. in yer face
all **hyped** up with nowhere to go?
- 03. campus culture
campus events to remedy your stressed-out school life
- 06. OVERhyped, underHYPED
our pick of what's hot and what's not
- 07. x-page
beats, bytes, seconds. take your own pick from our x-page time special
- 15. dot.com
piping-hot internet sites surfed up for your browsing pleasure
- 25. time out
newest hangouts to see and be seen at

reviews

- 21. Movies: Cruel Intentions, Urban Legend, Message in a Bottle, The Matrix
- 23. Books: Idoru, Chat :-), Release 2.1
- 24. CDs: blur, Rugrats OST, TLC, Lilac Saints

promos

The Matrix movie passes and posters, Urban Legend posters, blur albums and T-shirts, Rugrats OST CDs, Tower Books discount, Bolasports discount, Mea Culpa, Sakae Sushi and The Stop-Over Pub discounts



april 1999

magazine no. 8

hypo

