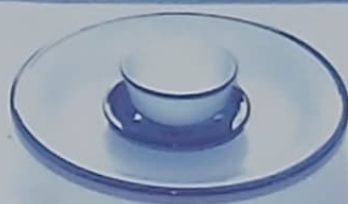


hype

issue no.9 october 1999

the living room

enter our personal space



tips for your own
millennium bash

getting personal
najip ali and daniel wu

win tower hampers and
movie passes to mystery men

editorial

The biggest craze of the moment is probably the long-anticipated strike of the clock at midnight on Dec 31, 1999. Talk has revolved around the massive millennium parties around the world, the countdown of the Swatch millennium watch, the reported champagne scarcity, and on a smaller scale, Year 2000 diaries on sale in Borders with reflections on everything from favourite food to worst dates.

All good and fine but for the neurotics, the excitement seems bizarre, irrational as A.D. 2000 is synonymous with trouble. To these people, the government's assurance of Y2K compliance seems like a public relations' hoax and in reality, the bug might still cause a breakdown in electricity, water shortage, missiles being launched by mistake, the dreaded technological halt - a state of global emergency. The anxiety, certainly peaking at this eleventh hour, shreds these doomsayers into nervous bits.

And so it seems, the best place to hide away from it all is your most private sanctum - the home. Hence, our living room theme recreates a familiar sanctuary for those intimidated by the frenzy. We look inward, to simpler times when fairy tales ruled our minds and speak to homegrown celebs like Najip Ali. But to the braver souls who want a bit of the millennial fun, we say party on, but

don't ignore the possibilities within your own home.

For starters, why not spruce up your home for the New Year. From Wheatgrass decor you can eat, to a complete revamp in Goth, refurbishing the home before the dawn of the 21st century is almost like rolling out the red carpet for the new century. And while you're at that, how about cleaning out the corners and dirty cushions on your sofa as well, you'll never know what germs and viruses are lurking in your living room.

After you're done, shouldn't you show off the new home décor to friends with a bye bye 1999 party (minus the crowds, frenzy and nervousness out on Orchard Road) right in your own living room?

As host of the most important party you'll ever throw in your lifetime, you have the best excuse for some pampering. Indulge yourself with an extravagant bath by throwing in some bath teas. Then, ditch the sequined gowns or fire-engine red hot pants for some understated, earth-toned pieces from U2.

You see, as much hype as there is outside over the advent of the millennium, there really is a lot within your own home. In fact, you don't even have to leave your living room to have a millennial blast.

belindayeo

hype

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"our living rooms"

"I have a hole in my couch and the hi-fi set in my living room is spoilt. I'm very sad."
Jason

"It's amazing how one can find complete satisfaction with a couch placed in front of a television and a cable remote control."
Alemay

"My living room looks confused, thanks to my mom. It is a mishmash of furniture from sheer grandeur to country."
Belinda

"There is this lamp on the coffee table that I like. It used to be white but now it's dirty yellow."
Serene

"The wide expanse of a living room is only good for one thing, not watching TV, not entertaining guests and not relaxing. You figure it out."
Alvin

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

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millenniumbash

As countries, organisations and individuals all over the world gear up for what is undoubtedly the biggest party of the century, Ngee Ann too has plans of its own to usher in the new millennium.

The Millennium Bash on Jan 15 next year will see the most happening party ever hosted and planned by the polytechnic.

Organised by Student Affairs, the day-long event, which will stretch from 3pm to the next morning, promises to be a grand one.



Paintball and a maze competition will kick-start the bash. In these events, NP students, staff and members of related corporations are invited to sweat it out on the field, all in the name of fun.

To get us off to a fine start, participants will try to outdo each other in splattering their opponents with paint pellets. And the champion of patience, skill and intelligence, the first to outwit the twists and turns of the maze, will be revealed.

If, however, you've been avoiding sun and sweat because you're among the girls (and guys) who'd rather look glamorous than sporty, there's good news.

Renowned cosmetic company, Shiseido is offering makeovers at unbelievably low prices. For a few extra bucks, you can even have your new look captured on Polaroid.

Evening is the time to show your new face to the world at the Octagon, where real partying, the much-anticipated fashion show/live local bands gig/dance, begins. Models will parade the latest fashions designed by students from La Salle and Temasek Polytechnic.

If the action gets too hot and heady for you, the movie marathon should provide more than ample reason to stay the night.

Four to six lecture theatres (LT) will be converted into free cinemas where students can come in and watch screenings from 10pm right up to the next morning.

And for those who swear by one particular genre, say comedy, horror or romance, you won't even need to get out of your seat, as the LTs are categorised this way. That is, unless hunger drives you outside for that late night snack you always take.

Then, take your appetite and wallet to the flea market, selling not only food but also a plethora of other items, that will remain open for the entire bash.

The Millennium bash though isn't only about fun. Add "d" to fun, and you'll understand why fund-raising activities are carried out before the party.

Vintage cars will be making their appearance on campus, and Polaroid shots can be taken with these cars at a small fee that will go towards the fund for disabled children in Singapore. Organisers are hoping to raise \$10,000 for them.

Don't miss out on the millennial festivities on Jan 15, 2000 on our very campus.

digitalaudio

Trashing your radio for a CD player because it just won't give you the crystal clear sound the infernal salesman said it would? That's something you won't have to worry about soon, as Ngee Ann Polytechnic braces itself for the **Digital Audio Broadcasting (DAB)** experience.

DAB is a revolutionary way of disseminating the message we hear on the radio, via a new bandway. What it means is that there will no longer be fuzzy signals and irritating interruptions on radio sets. Instead, we can expect CD-quality sounds all the time.

At last we have one promise of high-quality reception that can finally be delivered, and just at the push of a button, instead of the usual bothersome search for the right radio frequency. The display built into the DAB radio shows all the stations that can be received.

The one-day introductory event, organised by students from the Centre for Film & Media Studies, aims to educate all tertiary students about DAB.

Participants from all the four polytechnics, the National University of Singapore and the Nanyang Technological University will learn that this broadcasting method also allows other information such as data, text and pictures to be transmitted.

Meaning that you can get song lyrics, consumer information, weather maps, stock exchange quotations and other data over the airwaves.

But it's not one long lecture either. Outdoor games like the "DAB challenge" and "A Panel for Your Thoughts" have been planned to get you to participate physically as well, while bringing home the purpose of DAB.

Learning was never so fun, and the enjoyment of immersive audio never brought closer to you.

Be prepared to face the music.



Your ears will be grateful for the Digital Audio Experience on Jan 22, 2000, on campus. The latest information will be on the notice boards on the ground floor of Block 23.

quackrace

Satisfy your need for speed in the "quack-iest" method possible: head down to the Singapore River on Nov 14 for The Great Singapore Duck Race.

For the uninitiated, the race isn't contested by bona fide ducks but little rubber duckies instead. These cool racer ducks, flown in from the USA, even wear shades.

Anyone is welcome to take a shot at the championship. All you need to do is to adopt a racing duck for \$10 at authorised dealers the day itself. For \$5 extra, you'll also get an adoption certificate and a miniature of your prized racer.

If you're worried about your duck going under, fret not as these hardy creatures are practically unsinkable. Besides, they're experienced racers who have done the circuit all over the world. Telling if your duck is the champ is easy, as each has a serial number on it corresponding to the one on the adoption papers.

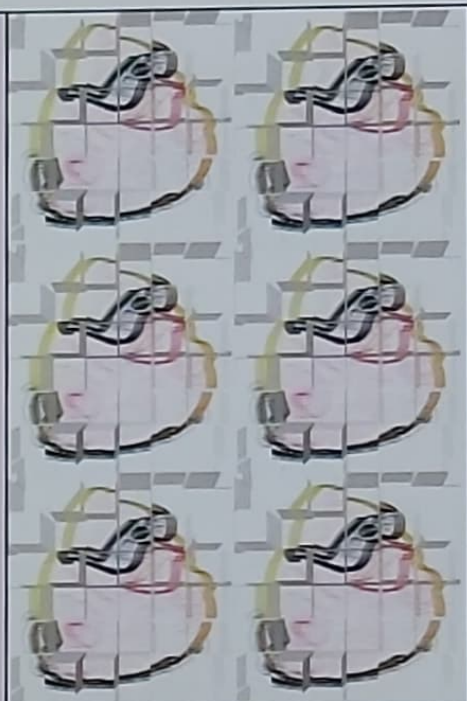
The ducks will start their journey under Clemenceau Bridge and finish at Boat Quay. To cheer your duck on, just plant yourself anywhere along Clarke Quay and Boat Quay. But be prepared for a tight squeeze as the organiser, Diakonon Productions Pte Ltd, is expecting as many as 80,000 people to show up.

Proceeds from this year's race will go to five charities: the Singapore's Children's Society, Lions Home for the Elders, the Singapore Millennial Trust, the Singapore Sports Council for the Disabled and the Singapore Boys Scout Association.

So pit your adopted duckie against those of your family, friends and even enemies for a good cause.

Never mind if racing is not in your blood, you can still cheer on these plucky ducks as they race down the Singapore River, and enjoy the other activities available for spectators, including performances by local buskers. Frankly, it's worth the trip just to see the Singapore River covered in bits of bobbing yellow for this unique derby.

Adoptions can be done through Shell Select, Giordano Outlets, Best Denki outlets among others on Nov 14 at \$10. The event starts at 10am.



in yer face

quack race - serene ho

saltimbanco - alvin ong

campus culture

millennium bash - nazri hadi saporin

digital audio - jason woo

saltimbanco...amagicalworld

The Padang will be taken over by a majestic Big Top tent, which can accommodate 2,500, when *Saltimbanco* finally arrives in Singapore as part of Singapore's MillenniaMania celebrations.

Perhap no accolade better sums up the quality of the performance than **Time Magazine's** commendation of "the greatest show on earth". It's no wonder that the Canadian-based *Cirque du Soleil* (Circus of the Sun) has awed audiences in over 120 cities. Theirs is an amusing circus (and humane too, as it doesn't rely on animal acts), an entertaining street performance and poetic dance all blended to give you a once-in-a-lifetime experience.

With a multi-national cast of 54 artistes dressed in dazzling bright costumes, *Saltimbanco* is sure to bring you to your feet with their energetic yet exquisite performance. They will be showcasing a range of stunts, from hand-balancing acts and working magic with Chinese poles, to the breathtaking "bungee ballet".

Accompanying them is a live five-piece orchestra, providing music that ranges from classical to modern, and two vocalists. This in itself is a treat, as CDs of *Cirque's* various shows can attest to.

Saltimbanco is the troupe's most dynamic production, and presents life as a journey full of optimism, happiness and adventure. As with its other world-renowned productions, *Cirque du Soleil* has created an enchanting world in *Saltimbanco*. So set aside a day in the November/December holidays for this spectacular show, and book your tickets fast to avoid disappointment.

Saltimbanco will be staged at the Padang from Nov 25 to Dec 12, 1999. Shows start on Tues-Fri at 8pm, Sat at 4pm and 8pm, Sun at 1pm and 5pm. No shows on Mon. Tickets priced at \$120, \$80, and \$40 are available at Sistic outlets or book online at www.sistic.com.sg. Each student card gets a 10% discount for 1 pair of tickets. For more information, see www.cirquedusoleil.com.



choices and simple pleasures

atuboftea

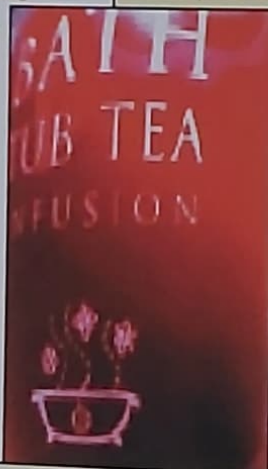
If you think bathing is another mundane routine of life, think again. Where history saw Cleopatra bathing in milk, the future envisioned another similar possibility.

Following the footsteps of the Egyptian queen, some Australians are introducing a new ingredient in the tub.

Called the Bath Tub Tea Infusion, this product is made from 100% natural ingredients that include dried tea leaves, flowers and herbs.

The tea infusion comes in five flavours - spearmint, orange, lime, rose blend and lemon. They are packed in plastic canisters coloured according to their flavour to make them easily distinguishable.

So the next time you yearn for some tea, forget the cup and stir up a tub full for a soothing soak. The Bath Tub Tea Infusion, priced at \$19.90, is available at C.K. Tangs' basement.



fancy eating grass

For those who have contemplated eating grass those times when you were broke, wheatgrass has made this an acceptable and appealing reality. Imagine, a plant that is both healthy to eat and decorative for your home.

Wheatgrass is easy to grow as no pruning or tender loving care is required. It can thrive even under indirect sunlight and after eight days, you can harvest it and toss a healthy salad for lunch.

But for those who wrinkle their noses at the thought of consuming anything that looks like what soccer lads trample on, its angular geometric shape when grown in a shallow plate, adds a touch of fresh lively

green to an otherwise bland corner. The possibilities of wheat grass are endless. Whether you decide to make juice, a salad, or even a gift out of it, the choices are only limited by your imagination. Give your green fingers some

practice when you purchase a 200g bag of wheat-grass seeds at \$2 from most health food shops.



wheatgrass - jean leong
spice mug mats - lauren tan
bath tea - ravina s a rahman
photographer - isaac



spicemugmats

Say goodbye to ugly and mouldy cork coasters that don't retain water. Finally, the stores are offering something you'll want to show off.

Spice Mug Mats are flat cloth coasters filled with spices, perfect for conjuring up memories of piping hot cinnamon buns each time you put your drink down. Although it may take time to change gears from the futuristic design

mindset to enjoy these old country-style mats, their charms are evident from the prints of rabbits, seashells, lighthouses and the sweet picture of a boy and girl exchanging flowers.

When the intoxicating spice scent diminishes, it can be easily renewed with a few quick rolls of a rolling pin. For those who have never seen or can't get one, a few good smacks of your heaviest diction-

ary will do as well. These American handcrafted mats are even tough enough to be thrown into the washing machine when they start to smell more of mould than of spice.

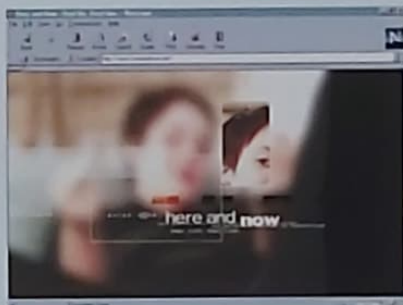
Spice up your life with these new mug mats by making your way down to the Woven Shop at Tanglin Mall. Do it fast because at \$18.90 for a set of four, these mats are flying off the shelves.

living room

Welcome to the world of Sue, Mel, Joe, Erik, Lisa and Mandy- the stars of the website aptly named **Here and Now**.

Every day, they sit on the couch in their rented college house, speaking their minds as though unaware of being filmed and watched live by the internet community, sort of like **The Truman Show** with six consenting leads. For them, the living room becomes a stage for endlessly frivolous and frank discussions about sex, school or Sue's hair.

What was planned as a simple live webcast in a living room spawned a community of sorts. Surfers contact the gang via email and a message board.

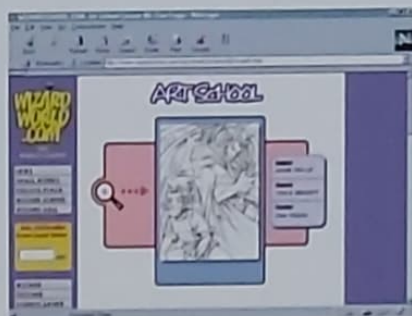


Occasionally, the camera follows them on outings like the one they took to a cemetery. This and other impromptu moments are available in the archive gallery on the site.

Privacy is a hotly debated issue in the World Wide Web but the group thinks nothing of being filmed in the very place they call home. It's refreshing to stumble on to a site with such raw content.

So click on www.hereandnow.net and let the voyeur in you take an intimate peek into the lives of these six American college kids.

living room - jeremy chia
higher art-ducation - jason woo
underwear games - lauren tan
goth at home - melissa wang



higher art-ducation

Ever wanted to perform magic on paper à la Stan Lee (artist for Marvel comic, **Spiderman**)? Well, do more than just dream at **Wizardworld.com**, where the best in the comic industry congregate to impart their skills.

Best of all, the site includes a separate sister page aptly titled **Wizardschool** where tips on how to start drawing your first comic page are given. Aspects of inking and pencilling are taught through real comic samples taken from some of the biggest names in the industry such as Marc Silverstri (**Witchblade**), Todd MacFarlane (**Spawn**) and Joe Madureira (**Battle Chasers**).

With the new Café DNA, budding artists can send in their "two-pens" worth of fan art (art pieces done by fans of a particular comic title) and get the chance for display.

So, if you want to have a swift 'brush' with professionals, then www.wizardworld.com can kickstart your "art-ducation".

underwear games

Underwear isn't the order of the day at the Joe Boxer website. Games, fun and underwear puns are.

Joe Boxer has been selling its fun-oriented underpants since 1985, and these days the company has let its playful streak run wild onto the World Wide Web.

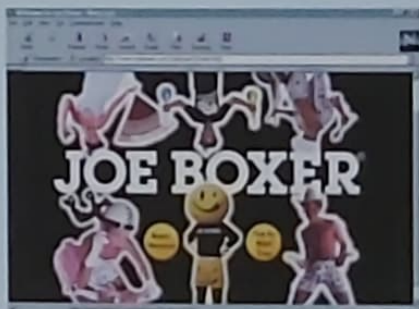
Quirky games take centrestage as Joe Boxer apparel takes a backseat in this wickedly amusing site.

Have your palm read, or play Tic-Tac-Toe, before putting together the tragic life story of a tobacco-addicted poodle.

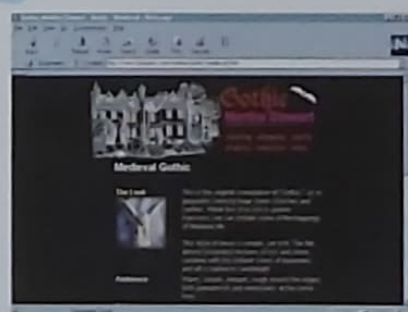
Dying to get something off your chest? Type in a message, and it might be posted on Joe Boxer's interactive billboard in New York City's Times Square. Lay off the vulgarities though.

In true Joe Boxer style, this site is mind blowing, wacky, male adolescent-inspired and designed to thrill.

Best of all, you won't need to take a cold shower before clicking on www.joeboxer.com.



goth at home



While everyone's refurbishing with the Millennium's metallic colours and digital themes, why not try something radical like goth instead?

The creators of this website have cleverly adapted ideas from the book **Martha's Good Things**, giving it a gothic spin. And as the creators recommend buying material and accessories from thrift stores, redecorating your room should not cost more than \$40!

What's more, the site has a section advising teenagers on ways to create goth while living with parents.

For example, they encourage non-permanent decorations like making your own gothic bolster, instead of painting your entire wall.

Since our room is an expression of our style, so recreate yours to reveal your true personality. Zip over to www.toreadors.com/martha.

It's a *Bugs' World*

The roach scurries from you now, but Jean Leong discovers that the meek might just inherit the earth, and the invasion starts at your home...

To many, home is the safest place on Earth, your haven from the dark, wicked world. Living with bugs and billions of bacteria? No way, you say. It figures that the average person does not think much about the creepy crawlies at home.

Damian Sng, a 21-year-old electronics student in Ngee Ann Polytechnic, says, "The only bug I'm interested in is the Y2K bug and how it's really going to affect the world's computer systems. I mean, bugs are only rampant in dirty places, right?"

His concern is somewhat misplaced, as Singapore has been diagnosed as well prepared to tackle the millennium bug in a recent report. The real six-legged bugs are actually a bigger problem than many people know and they aren't as lovable as Dreamworks' animators have portrayed them to be. Wait till you hear about the vast ecosystem living in your home that could be hidden from the naked eye. This is the dark and chilling reality of your seemingly safe habitat.

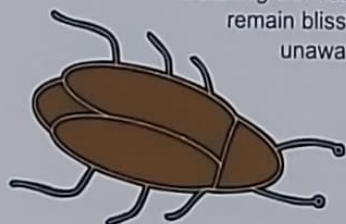
Here are just a few common

specimens of uninvited tenants that are putting up in your home without your knowledge.

Be warned. The following information is likely to bring out the hypochondriac in you:

Dust Mites

These microscopic organisms belong to the spider family and feed on dead human skin cells. Up close and personal, a dust mite resembles a bloated spider with claws that can hang on to your skin. How revolting, you shudder. But still, you curl up on your sofa and hug your favourite cushion while watching TV. You remain blissfully unaware



that the distance between you and millions of dust mites, that have infested the cuddly prop and are craving for more of your dead human cells, can probably be measured in mere nanometres.

According to Dr. Ashley Woodcock, a respiratory physician in Manchester, dust mites are found everywhere in the house, especially pillows and mattresses (naturally they had to target your most intimate

possessions). They are drawn to humidity greater than 60% and temperatures higher than 20° Celsius, which makes Singapore the perfect breeding ground for them.

Each mite lays up to 300 eggs at once, hence the exponential increase in mite population in a short time. A mite's excrement of 20 pellets a day is the main cause of allergic diseases such as asthma and eczema and can also trigger off coughing, sneezing and rashes. According to the statistics in a Slumberland Mattress' pamphlet, as many as 30% of Singaporeans have some form of allergy and 15% of children suffer from allergic asthma. And the majority of children suffering from allergic asthma are also allergic to the dust mite at home.



Cockroaches

It is strange how many people seem to have a chronic phobia of cockroaches, be they grown men or young children. Yes, cockroaches are everywhere but advertisements will have you believe that a fatal zap of the aerosol insecticide will spell the end of all your problems. Not

Fright Bites

Fright Bite #1: More than 500 insect species are resistant to pesticides.

Fright Bite #2: Today's newspaper is usually germ-free, since fresh ink inhibits the growth of micro-organisms. But yesterday's paper, or a weekly, will be covered with potentially dangerous bacteria.

Fright Bite #3: Some bacteria can survive for months on a single dust particle.

Fright Bite #4: Except for one family, ALL spiders are venomous. Only about 60 species have jaws and fangs that can penetrate human skin.

(All Fright Bites are extracted from The Hypochondriac's Handbook by Wendy Marston)

quite, as research has shown that these hardy pests are becoming increasingly difficult to kill with conventional sprays.

Fossil evidence shows that roaches have existed in an almost unchanged form for more than 250 million years. Instead of getting weaker and being slowly eradicated by changing conditions of the world, they became stronger and more resistant to the harsh conditions like freezing cold or intense heat. Scientists even believe that in a nuclear holocaust, cockroaches will be the survivors, inheriting the earth long after the extinction of man. And you thought they would always be at the mercy of your Shieldtox. Perhaps they are only biding their time.

can embark on exploratory feeding, thus damaging electrical wiring and other materials. They come from soil surrounding the building and enter through crevices into homes.

Mr. James Wong, General Manager of Rentokil, said, "Termites don't know the difference between an expensive piece of artwork/interior furnishing and an ordinary piece of wood. They cannot distinguish the pieces they ravage."

Imagine your antique furniture being eaten away and, before you know it, completely destroyed by hungry termites. And all of this is done in absolute silence. Treatment to exterminate these silent demolition crews can be carried out, but sometimes help arrives too late.

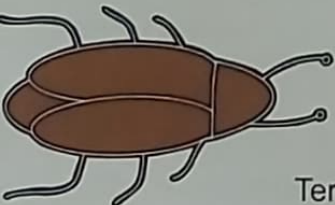
This is because termites are often discovered only after the insides of the wood structures have already

treating the termite-infested soil as there was a reservoir nearby, says Rentokil's Preventive Pest Control guide.

Germ and Bacteria

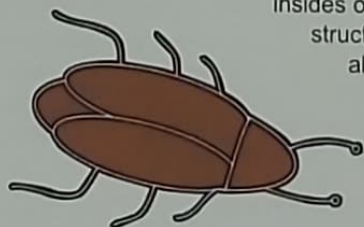
Even your trusty old mug may not be safe to drink from, and not just when you forget to rinse it out. Watching your regular drama serial while sipping coffee, you look at a chip on the side of the mug, thinking how nicely worn it looks. Place that chipped part under a microscope and you will be horrified at the germs and bacteria breeding in it. You could put yourself in danger of getting an infection or even food poisoning if other insects feed on the residual food particles that were not washed off from that chip.

That was just a warning to drive home the point that the world, your home included, is a dangerous place.



Termites

According to Rentokil, one of the leading pest control companies in Singapore, termites are the main structural pests (insects which attack and break down woodwork in buildings, furniture, artwork, etc.) in the country. They generally feed on the cellulose in timber but curious ones



been eaten up. Lest you shrug off the likelihood of meeting a team of these wood-eaters just because you live in a HDB flat, there have been cases reported in the papers of flat owners' furniture being devoured by them. There was even an incident in Bedok where the flat owner had a dilemma over



Thus begins our tedious journey to fight the omnipresent bugs. Will we win the battle only to lose the war? Or must we forever suffer their repulsive presence and helplessly watch them as they multiply...

alcatraz

The cold concrete walls, the tin cups from which prison inmates share a sip of water, the barbed wire encircling the place and the wardens in black striped uniforms. Not exactly welcoming. But throw in a little contemporary and hip-hop music and you've found yourself in Singapore's only prison-theme pub.

From the moment you enter, you feel as though you are being thrown into jail for some unforgivable crime. A warden's cage greets you as you make your way to the entrance and by now you are dreading the endless days of torture that he'll be giving you. Once beyond the great doors you are confronted by two huge cellblocks separating the dance floor with a massive stage right in the middle of your view. Good advice for first-timers would be to go along with a big group of friends as Alcatraz might be too intimidating.

Get ready to be served in your cell, as your cubicle is a credible replica of a 4 x 4 jail lockup.

Expect to spend the night enjoying your drinks from old tin cups, which just adds to the feeling of imprisonment.

When it comes to the pool table, though, they don't stint on space. Don't worry guys, with the amount of room you have to play, you won't find your cue stick ever hitting against the walls.

There are many reasons why you should sentence yourself to Alcatraz. The most attractive would be the "Free Flow Friday" promotion. Be prepared to drink yourself silly from 6.30pm to 9.30pm for a mere \$15 for ladies and \$20 for guys. Wednesdays are Retro music nights, so for those nostalgic music lovers, you know where to find yourselves when mid-week comes.

*Alcatraz is at 15 Cairnhill Rd (behind the Heeren). Opening hours are from 6pm to 2am daily. Happy hours are from 6pm to 9.30pm daily. The minimum age for entry is 18. **Produce your NP student card on Wednesday nights and you only pay \$5 a drink all night long (you have to buy a minimum of three drinks) till the end of the year.***



simplybread

Bread is a word that's been glamourised by an American band of the same name and a staple said to be so good you can eat it on its own.

With the latter in mind, one walks into Simply Bread, a theme café tucked in one corner of Holland Village that's carving a niche in a market dominated by that chain of French delis.

Rather than have overpowering smells of pastry in the bakery greet you, your ears are treated instead to jazz tunes and your eyes to pleasant homely décor.



Although the selection of breads available is limited and not what the shop's name so gleefully suggests, the lack of variety is a blessing in disguise. It just means less stress when making choices as trivial as these, which is more than you can say about the process of ordering coffee these days.

There are no chemicals or preservatives added to the pastry, which probably explains why each mouthful of the Sticky Bun or the Fruit Danish (\$1 each) feels so fluffy. The small selection varies from day to day, but at prices like this, who can complain?

Whether intentional or not, the lack of artificial light is compensated by sunlight streaming into the shop via the windows, giving it a late afternoon feel all day. One can't help but feel sluggish in such quarters, but to keep from dozing off, get a quick fix with the Iced Cocoa (\$2.30), which packs a mean milky punch.

Perhaps the nicest thing about the place is its ability to soothe nerves. Enter the shop's tranquil interior and the daily grind is all but forgotten, slowing everything to a slothful pace.

Avoid life's bread and butter issues and make your way down to either the Holland Village branch at 27, Lorong Liput or the Bukit Timah branch at Guthrie House, along 5th Avenue.

alcatraz - roy tan
simply bread - jeremy chia
hoax - alison jenner
c.a.n cafe - alvin cher
photographer - roy tan



hoax

It's not called Hoax for nothing. The pub looks every inch a seedy joint, located along the dark alley of Arab Street. Contrary to first impressions, this three-storey hangout is in fact a pretty snazzy place.

Locating the pub is a breeze. With its bright green Carlsberg and red Hoax signs, you'd have to be colour blind to miss it. Within, throngs of merry makers groove to Retro and House music, which alternate throughout the night.

Dancing space is at its maximum, thanks to carpeted platforms that serve as seats (think Japanese). Peach-painted walls and ceramic tiles indicate a no-frills style.

The focus of the first floor is the bar, and if you are wondering where to sit, you'll need to go up to the second floor. At the far end, romancing couples looking for a quiet spot will find and love the large plush settees. Dimly-lit, with sentimental and classical music playing in the background, it creates a perfect atmosphere for sipping wine and whispering sweet nothings.

Another draw is what a relief Hoax is on your wallet. There is neither cover charge nor first drink charge. Housepours are priced at \$8, \$7 gets you a mug of beer, \$10 a glass of house wine or a bottled drink like Hooch. But the lowest priced items are their snacks at \$6 per plate.

So don't get fooled by the look of the place. This Hoax actually has a lot more to offer than it seems.

*Hoax is situated along Arab Street, opposite Golden Landmark Hotel. There is a minimum age requirement of 18. **Produce your NP student card and for \$22, you are entitled to a free flow of housepours and draft beer from 5pm to 9pm every night till the end of November.***



c.a.ncafé

Want something different from the usual minimalist style of cafés nowadays? Some place with more character and colours to assault your senses? If your answer was yes on both counts, read on.

Think Emoh (a homely café located at Boat Quay run by a elderly woman) without the fuss and matriarch smiles.

C.A.N Café grows on you even if you cannot seem to put your finger on why. Maybe it's their collection of antique fans and lights on a huge cupboard on one side. Or the immense collection of movie collectables there, from classic movie posters to certified autographs from the likes of Bruce Lee to rubber masks of screen heroes like Batman and The Mask.

Unusual in its presentation, "coffee ice cubes..." are served in a tall glass of fresh milk. Watching the cubes melt into the milk in lazy brownish swirls is a delight.

Loud mix-and-match Ikea tables and chairs take up most of the cozy space. You can choose to dine alfresco style outside or inside, in the comfort of air-conditioning.

The drinks here are anything but regular. Items on the menu include "ice cream splashed with hot coffee" and "coffee ice cubes in a glass of cold milk". Unusual in its presentation, "coffee ice cubes..." are served in a tall glass of fresh milk. Watching the cubes melt into the milk in lazy brownish swirls is a delight and a treat for the taste buds too. Durian milkshakes and ginseng teas are great for that afternoon pick-me-up.

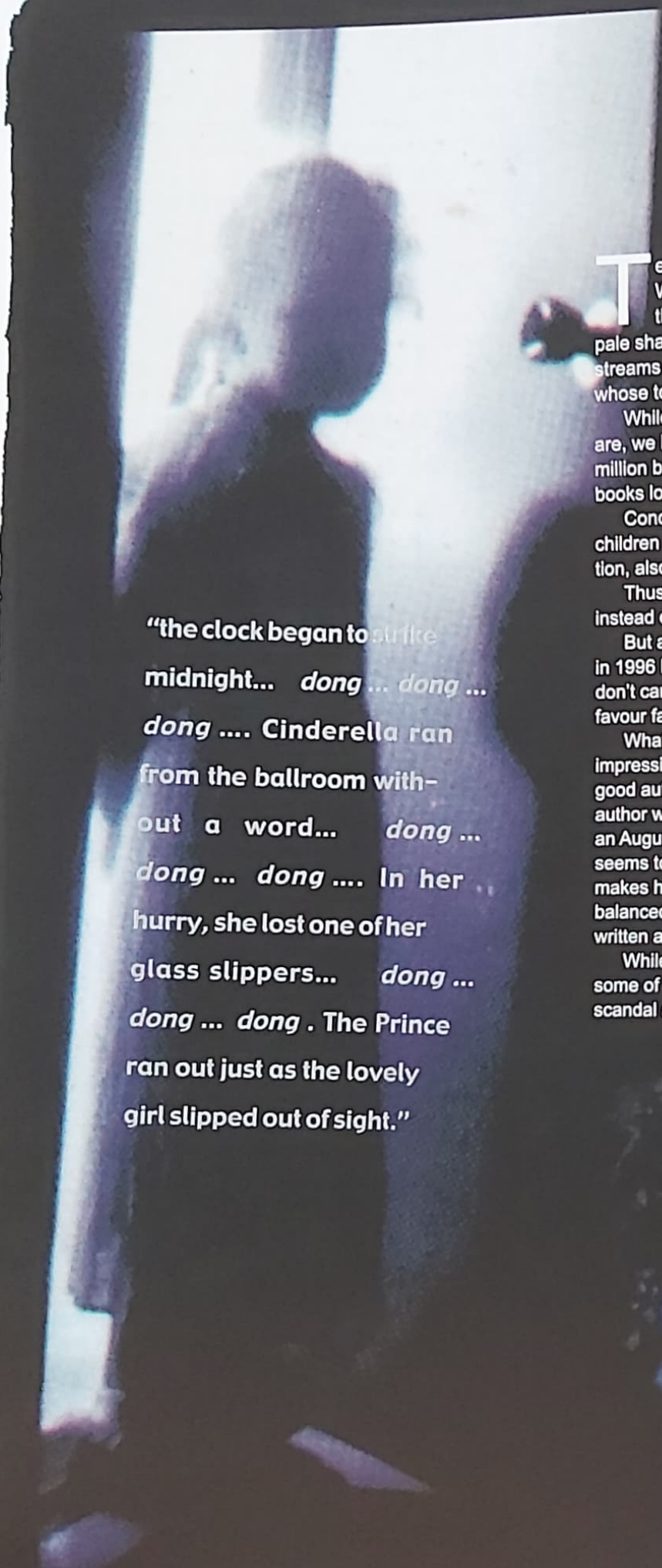
Whatever your choice, you'll feel at home, away from those new fangled places that thrive on minimalist nothingness. Bah!

Priced with students in mind, everything costs under \$8, the most expensive meals being the Japanese set lunches, at \$7.80 each. Or check out their range of pastas, pizzas, sandwiches and cakes, perfect for that light snack.

Hidden among pseudo-Italian restaurants, C.A.N Café stands out along Liang Seah Street stretch.

And one last thing. Remember to check out their Coke-inspired toilet filled with Coke collectables, you will not regret it!

*C.A.N Café is located at Liang Seah St, #01-12, Liang Seah Place. It is open every day— Mondays to Fridays from noon to 1am, Saturdays & Sundays from 3pm to 2am. **Produce your NP student card at C.A.N Café to enjoy a 10% discount off all food and beverages from now till November 2000.***



Behind Those Kiddy Words

by Lauren Tan

Tell a child that *Cinderella* is unreal and you miss the point. We all grew up on fairy tales, and we love them no less for the liberties they take with accuracy. After all, real life is a pale shadow compared to colourful worlds inhabited by chocolate streams and giant peaches created by Roald Dahl or Enid Blyton, whose toys talked and plotted adventures.

While no study has been done to show how popular such tales are, we know that in 1994/1995, Singaporean children borrowed 5 million books from the National Library, more than half of total books loaned, despite being fewer than 20% of library members.

Concerned parents happy that the love of reading in their children will improve their language, comprehension and imagination, also want material that will teach children about the world.

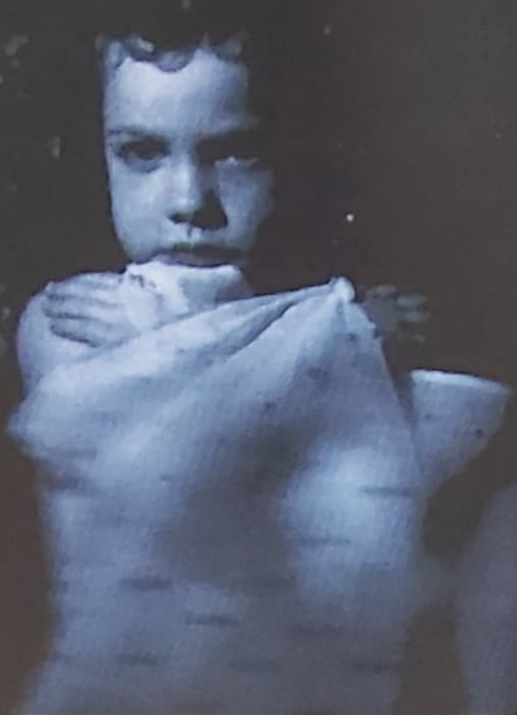
Thus, there have been calls for these books to mimic reality instead of painting amazing stories.

But according to a survey of 9,000 British children conducted in 1996 by Surrey University's Roehampton Institute, children don't care if characters in their books were like themselves, they favour fairy tales and the wild adventures books can tell.

What makes the issue critical, is that children are highly impressionable, almost like sponges soaking in every little detail. A good author will entertain and, at the same time, educate. Can an author with questionable morality still do both? In a commentary in an August issue of the *Daily Telegraph*, Melanie McDonagh seems to think that a troubled life, far from discounting a writer, makes him or her a better one. "If these authors had been well-balanced, solvent and fulfilled people, it is unlikely they could have written as brilliantly as they did," she wrote.

While she may not be able to prove her theory, it is true that some of the most loved children's authors have had their share of scandal and troubles, if not, minor derangements.

"the clock began to strike
midnight... *dong ... dong ...*
dong ... Cinderella ran
from the ballroom with-
out a word... *dong ...*
dong ... dong ... In her
hurry, she lost one of her
glass slippers... *dong ...*
dong ... dong . The Prince
ran out just as the lovely
girl slipped out of sight."

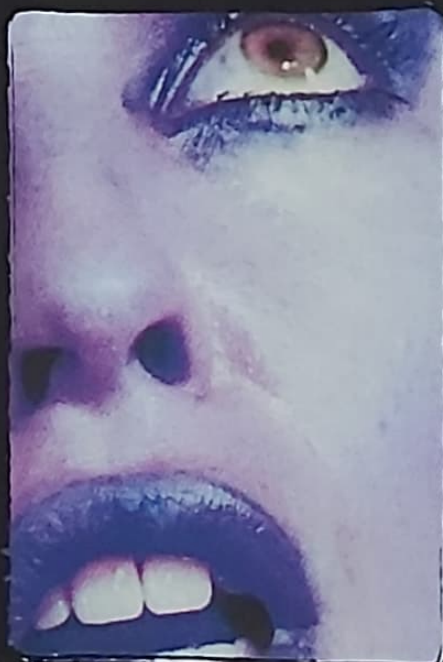


Hans Christian Andersen- the would-be prince

Books like the *The Little Mermaid*, *The Ugly Duckling*, *The Princess and the Pea*, and the vast number of animated features based on them (and screened on holiday mornings), are the work of the much beloved Hans Christian Andersen.

Alison Prince in her biography, paints the Dane as a repressed homosexual, quite likely the illegitimate son of Crown Prince Christian Frederick, who was raised in poverty by a shoemaker.

His childhood and the suppression of homosexuality emerged as metaphors in autobiographical fairy tales. According to Alison Prince, Andersen's *The Snow Queen* reveals his feelings regarding the frigidity of women, and with a line from *The Ugly Duckling*, "It does not matter that one has been born in the hen yard so long as one has lain in a swan's egg." Andersen could have disguised his reference to his true parentage.



Enid Blyton- Noddy loses the nod

In the 70s and 80s, Enid Blyton's books were taken off library shelves as she was accused of being racist, sexist, xenophobic and a poor storyteller.

Critics noted that her villains often had German accents and she banished poor Ebony Golliwog from Noddy's Toytown. Though her *Famous Five* series seemed likely to pass the scrutiny of the Politically Correct camp, with two girls and two boys and a dog saving the day every adventure, the fearless girls automatically became scaredy cats whenever the boys weren't around. Big Ears also seemed to insult and marginalise people with big ears or anyone who doesn't look "normal".

P.L. Travers- shocking Mary Poppins

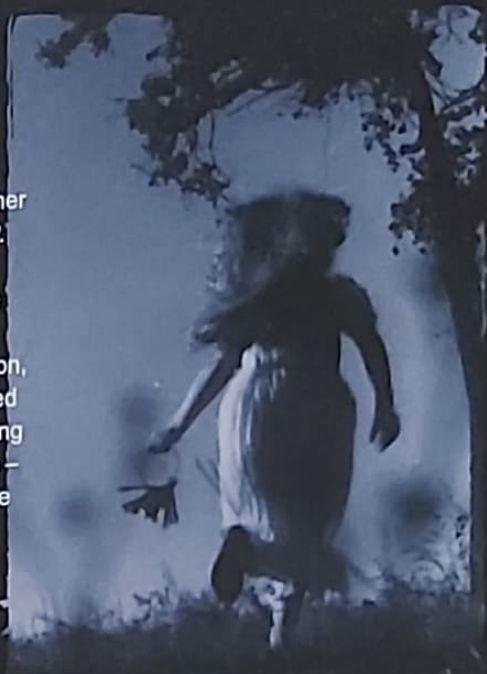
Julie Andrews immortalised Mary Poppins' cheery disposition, her sweet songs – "A Spoonful of Sugar", "Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious" – and her carpetbag in a Disney movie. But it was P. L. Travers who wrote the wonderfully imaginative children's books on which the movie was based.

In Travers' biography by Valerie Lawson, *Out of the Sky She Came* she's described as a woman whose other passions – writing erotic poetry and having a string of lovers – were far from the innocence you associate with tales about the English nursery.

Roald Dahl-rhymes and other crimes

"That this is actually a book About a brazen little crook... Crime One, the prosecution's case: She breaks and enters someone's place. Crime Two, the prosecutor notes: She steals a bowl of porridge oats. Crime Three: She breaks a precious chair Belonging to the Baby Bear. Crime Four: She smears each spotless sheet With filthy messes from her feet. A judge would say without a blink, 'Ten years hard labour in the clink!' But in the book, as you will see, The little beast gets off scot-free" (An excerpt from Roald Dahl's "Goldilocks and the Three Bears", from his book, *Revolting Rhymes*)

"Roald Dahl was, notoriously, a shocking character generally – yet this is the whole point of him as a writer. The really enjoyable sadism of his *Revolting Rhymes* could not have been brought forth by a terribly nice man," writes Melanie McDonagh in her *Daily Telegraph* commentary. Although the bulk of Dahl's paycheck comes from the sale of children's books, he wasn't sentimental about them at all, once describing a child thus-"when it is born, is an animal with no manners, no moral sense at all." No wonder the "uncivilised" children characters in his storybooks all meet disgusting fates.



What to blame for our faults: a 2-minute guide

Dr Lynne Tan, an Assistant Professor of Psychology at the National University of Singapore thinks that children's books don't really affect children greatly as there are so many other influences like parents, friends, and the television.

But if deranged authors and fantasy stories really did shape us, we'd be able to blame all our faults on what we read as kids, and use those books as our scapegoats.

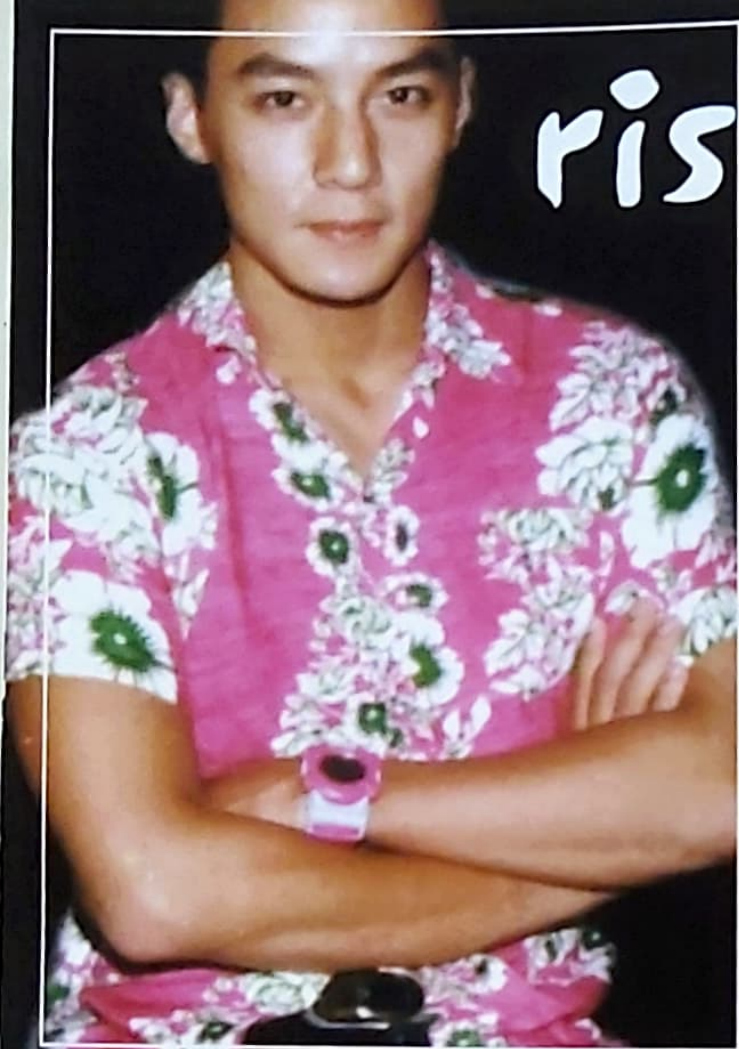
SYMPTOMS

The Ally McBeal neurosis of waiting for Prince Charming
People are seen as either impossibly wicked or good
Imaginations running wild à la Ally McBeal and John Cage
Animals talking to us
Believing there's a hex on you

VIRUS

Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, Rapunzel, The Little Mermaid
Sweet Valley series, just about any fairy tale
Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Noddy
Winnie the Pooh, Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
Witches

rising storm



Alvin Cher talks to rising Hong Kong-based star **Daniel Wu** about his roots, his ambitions and the days to come.

type: You're a talented all-rounder, from wushu champion to architecture graduate, model and now up and coming actor. Is there anything left to achieve?

dw: I prefer to have many different kinds of stimuli in my life, whether it's architecture, acting, wushu, my art, or my new hobby deejaying. I make sure I'm constantly working from one medium to another and using what I have learned from one discipline to apply to another. For me, it's really important to maintain creativity in my life. It's what keeps me alive and going!

I would like to think of myself as an artist, not the entertainment industry meaning of actor/singer/celebrity, but someone creating a body of work which reflects the things I see, hear and feel. One day I would like to direct a film. Film to me is a good form of expression, because it combines most of the things I have learned, architecture, acting, music etc. into one medium.

type: How does it feel to be compared with Jackie Chan and Andy Lau by the Hong Kong media?

dw: It feels very good. Especially Jackie, because he is one of my own idols. He was able to overcome extreme poverty and a really hard life to achieve the things he has. On top of that, he is a genuinely kind person and helps anybody any way he can. If it weren't for Jackie, I probably wouldn't have learned martial arts... I wouldn't have had such an interest in Hong Kong... the great management company that I have and I wouldn't be doing an interview with you today. He really inspires me to work hard and to simply be a good human being.

type: You've acted in various films, from art house fave **Bishonen** to commercial action flicks like **Generation X Cops**. Which genre do you prefer and why?

dw: Of course I love working on action films because of my martial arts background and my love for Hong Kong action movies, but I also like dramas if I can see the passion involved in it. **Bishonen** was important for me because it taught me how to act. I've an affinity for the art house films and directors because they are really trying to create a piece of art. So there is a high level of creative energy involved in the filming process that gives a special life and energy to the film itself.

type: We know you spent most of your life in San Francisco, and now you're based in Hong Kong. How do you juggle time between family, friends and work these days?

dw: I love both Hong Kong and San Francisco for completely different reasons. I grew up in San Francisco and I still cannot get over how beautiful and ideal a place it is. It's clean, the people are nice, there are many places to go and it's comfortable. I like Hong Kong because, although I am American, it puts me closer to my people, plus the work I'm involved in puts me in constant contact with very interesting people.

Hong Kong is also just a very exciting place to be. So for me, it is literally a juggle between the two. When I'm not working, and I can foresee a good amount of time for a break, I will go back to see my parents in San Francisco. If I don't have time, they will come here. My sister, her family, my aunt and uncle all live here too, so there is plenty for my parents to come back to.

type: Do you see a trend in more American-born Chinese (ABCs) returning to their homelands to start careers? Why is this happening? Especially when accomplished Hong Kong directors and actors are moving west. Why this reverse?

dw: I'm not sure quite why ABCs are returning to the "homeland". Maybe, like me, there is a certain comfort in being "back with your own kind". Not that I feel alienated or prejudiced against in the States, but I have a very close tie to my own culture and what better place to be than Asia? For me, starting my career here was fate because I had no intentions of becoming an actor, it just happened and I went with it. I think the trend in the States is since all the big Hong Kong names have crossed over to Hollywood, we are also going to see more ABCs coming up and making it in Hollywood. I think it's really important for Asians to make a presence in America, because there are so many!

type: What are your plans in the near future?


dw: The near future consists of a few more films lined up and after that, I don't know! **Purple Storm** (which I just finished filming) will be released in Hong Kong in November and I will start filming **AD2000** with Aaron Kwok by mid September. We may be doing some filming in Singapore. I think I will have less time to model, when I'm working on films.

type: There has been a gradual increase of gay films being made in Hong Kong lately, with **Bishonen** being the most recent. Would you say this is an upcoming trend in the Hong Kong film industry?

dw: I wouldn't say gay films are an upcoming trend in Hong Kong but I do think that people are slowly starting to accept that the gay issue can now be brought out in the open and talked about. It is a voice that needs to be expressed and finally people are being serious about it and trying to listen.

*Daniel appears in action thriller **Purple Storm** with Joan Chen and Emil Chau, due for local release in December. **AD2000** is slated for a Lunar New Year screening in 2000.*

photography **Belinda Yeo**
fashion styling **Alemay Fernandez**
interior styling **Alvin Cher**
make-up **Angela Ng** and **Wee Lilyn**
hair **Mark** at **Summer The Ete Salon**
models **Alyssa, Crystal, Melissa and Jesper**



urban weave



urban weave

the living room, a space to relax, reflect
and recover from the urban grind. to
loungue in comfort, we prescribe U2.

clockwise, from bottom left: alyssa
wears hooded jacket (\$53), stone
pants (\$53) crystal wears white
poplin top (\$36), khaki capri pants
(\$43) jesper wears crew neck
sweater (\$43) cargo pants (\$145)
melissa wears blue wind breaker
(\$59), pants (\$46).
all clothes available at U2.

all furniture and furnishings featured
courtesy of barang barang

special thanks to the substation

Gender

Crystal Tan brings Venus and Mars out of the living

This October is a time to celebrate women. Firstly, a book, showcasing the writings of 2nd year Centre for Film & Media Studies students on feminism, is being launched. Limited copies are sold on campus. The Association of Women for Action and Research (AWARE) will also be holding "Walk the Talk" a walkathon and concert to be held at the Botanic Gardens.

We put the age-old topic of gender equality to Dr. Nirmala Purushotam and Gilbert Tay. The former is a mother, wife, NUS sociology lecturer, and feminist panelist at a forum for AWARE in August.

Gilbert, 27, with an Australian degree in Film/Screen Production is a self-proclaimed Male Chauvinist Pig who catapulted into the Singapore limelight in an expose in *Cleo* magazine.

hype: What does gender equality mean to you?

Gilbert: Equal treatment. Women have been looked at differently. I think women want more than money or status. Something intangible, like treatment. To be treated with respect and integrity is what they want.

Nirmala: If you are working in a firm whereby two men are doing equal work but you are getting lesser pay, would you call that unfair treatment?

Gilbert: Financially, yes.

Nirmala: That is precisely what it means. Unfair pay means unfair treatment.

hype: But if women put in less hours because her priorities are given to the home and the care of the children, how can she expect to be paid the same?

Nirmala: See, that's the whole meaning of patriarchy, whereby some work is treated as real work and some not... Going out to work is treated more seriously, has more status and more prestige. It is no wonder women postpone having families, seeing that as a drain in their time and a hindrance to climbing the corporate ladder. Your dissatisfaction with equal rights is understandable because who then is going to take care of the family? It is the same structure that forces a man to abscond responsibilities. The same is happening to women because equal rights is getting the same rights as men. What feminists want is recognition of work in the private, in the family sphere.

hype: So you think a woman should be paid equal for work at home?

Nirmala: Women are spending six to seven hours of work in the public domain, six to seven hours in the private domain. She is thus working a lot more hours than a man. Women are not just taking lower pay for equal work, they are taking a lower pay for more work! Society is refusing to consider the work in the private sphere. Men who take time off for National Service are compensated, society recognises this is serious social responsibility. What about taking care of the baby? It is also a very serious social responsibility.

hype: You've mentioned patriarchy, what exactly is a patriarchal way of thinking?

Nirmala: It narrows the way we look at ourselves as human beings. Women are allowed to develop certain human qualities, engage in certain activities, and locate themselves in certain domains but men are not. For example, I can hug a friend, I can show joy and emotion. Now the new age sensitive guy can do that. It took a long time for that to happen. It's human beings caught within a way of thinking which limits the way we think and relate to each other.

hype: So how can you as an individual feminist start changing things?

Nirmala: Answers can't be found in the individual. There have been studies done by Associate Professor Euston Quah Teong Ewe from the Department of Economics at NUS. He did research on the amount money a housewife deserves for her work at home. It is estimated to be about \$1,200 to \$1,300 a month, seen as a conservative estimate. Professor Quah is seen here as an economist, not a feminist. There are ways of costing it and people are working on it.

Gilbert: But from most women I have met, the recognition they desire is not so much monetary. They want to feel the joy from within.

Nirmala: I don't think that's a fair statement. How can you feel the joy from within when you live in a capitalist society where status, recognition and privilege comes from monetary evaluation?

hype: Are you anti-man?

Nirmala: I have a husband and son and I thoroughly enjoy them and I am glad they

Chair` Em Equality

bedroom and into
room, for a heart-to-heart chat on feminism

are in my life. There's a misconception of feminist being man-hating, we are not. The problem is not men.

Gilbert: What would you consider the greatest moment of your life? How did you feel giving birth to your son? What were you thinking of? Did you think about getting recognition? Getting money?

Nirmala: Are you married? Because I can ask a man the same thing and...

Gilbert: According to my brothers, and friends, it's mostly relief that nine months have gone by.

Nirmala: I had immense joy when I gave birth to my child and so did my husband.

Gilbert: Would that joy be equal to any thing in the world? Let's say, a pay rise?

Nirmala: For me, it's different because I have an anti-patriarchal viewpoint and I put relationships in front of work. My husband agreed to go three years without a pay increment because he decided he wanted to be home every single day to be with his child.

Gilbert: So with your husband stagnated at his job for three years, would you consider it something he's done for you?

Nirmala: No, this is what he is doing for himself.

Gilbert: From what I see, what your husband did, which is something I cannot do myself, is bringing you equality, recognising your efforts...

Nirmala: No, you are stressing he did it for me, he did it for himself. Some men never realise that.

Gilbert: You say you have a network of feminists, about a few thousand?

Nirmala: Are you saying most women don't think this way? I fully agree. Otherwise we don't need AWARE, we don't need feminists to fight for women's rights.

hype: Do you have a girlfriend, Gilbert?

Gilbert: Yes.

Nirmala: What is her education level?

Gilbert: O'levels.

Nirmala: Would you prefer an educated girl as opposed to one who doesn't have education?

Gilbert: Yes, because her level of understanding is better and we can talk about certain things on my level.

Nirmala: Your girlfriend would not have access to this education without change. Not a very long time ago, girls weren't allowed to go to school. Feminism changed that. If you say that all these changes are not necessary, I mean, women's feet were bound!

Gilbert: But studies have shown that men and women are different, biologically...

Nirmala: It has been shown that these biological theories are, I am going to use a strong word here, bullshit. There was a study that showed that men are more visual, they are better at reading maps etc. But six, seven years later, they discovered that it was the women who were better at these things. There is so much evidence, but why aren't we informed? Because the mass media is patriarchal. You can pick up Stephen Jay Gould's **The Mismeasure of Man** and lots of other people writing that these biological ideas we have are highly questionable. In this patriarchal society, it's hard to disseminate this information. All the information is reformulated and packaged so that we believe these biological theories.

hype: Nirmala, do you like being treated as a lady in an old-fashioned chivalrous manner?

Nirmala: I think it is nice if a man or woman opens a door for me and I do the same. It's courteous and I enjoy it. I don't expect only men to do it for me. I'm not against men doing it for me, but I am against people thinking that only men should open doors for me.

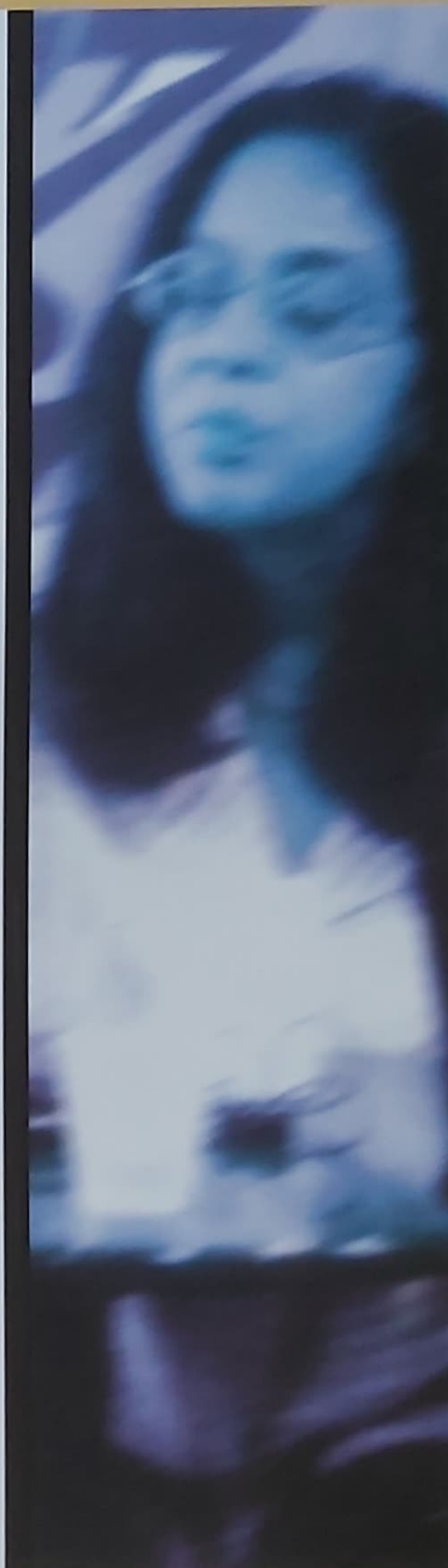
hype: Gilbert, you mention that it's a man's job to pamper the woman and bring home the bread. Would you like to elaborate on why you say so?

Gilbert: I think women are great, and are born great. We are here because of them. I feel we should make them feel like women. Women are respected because they can reproduce.

Nirmala: It takes two to reproduce.

Gilbert: But a woman can go to a sperm bank. Overall, I think women are born great so they should be treated with dignity and respect.

Nirmala: I find that condescending and patronising. I think both men and women should be treated with respect and dignity. In this age, the standard does include monetary valuation of men and women. And to say that men can be appreciated with all these things that men are already normally getting and women cannot because women are different, is to say that women are living on one planet and men on another. We are both living on the same planet and grew in the same historical period.



partyplus

Beautiful people mingling among lit candles and trays of exotic nibbles. Jazz fills the room, intertwined with luscious laughter and bartered gossip. Alvin Cher and Serene Ho party long and hard to show you how to glamorously pull off a successful do at home.



Food (and other nibbles)

Food is essential at any party. Fried chicken wings, beehoon and curry, however, are passe. Instead think green salads, finger nibbles and al dente pasta. Libraries have great cookbook selections, so start there.

The keywords here are chic and small, but make sure you have oodles of it. Structure a theme for your foods, which makes it easy for guests and yourself to know what to expect and procure. For example, American Junk would consist of hot dogs with all the toppings, pop corn and chips with dips. Or try Asian Fusion: wrap roast chicken slices into roti prata, then layer on the mayonnaise. Slice into rolls and you have classy finger foods for guests to hold while making small talk. Let your imagination flow, but try your recipes on family members first. Needless to say, bad (or diarrhoea-inducing) food will permanently kill your reputation as a host/hostess.

Alternatively, host a potluck party, and have guests each bring a dish, saving you time, money and the ire of your kitchen-proud mum. Make sure you tell guests to bring different items though, or risk having three trays of this and two pots of the same sitting on the table.

Caterers are also a solution. Look into the yellow pages and find one that fits your budget and serves food that suits your palate.

Drinks (aka Liquid Boon)

Next to food, drinks must be the second most important component. Unless you are angling for your 100th Coke card, avoid canned drinks. Guests usually consume half, leave it on the table

2000

You'd be surprised how much class issuing invitation cards adds to your party. Don't worry about cost. Check out the following ways to make your own cards cheaply.

Simple Folded Cards

This is a classy and simple card to make. Perfect for formal parties, all you have to do is to cut out circles on paper in contrasting colours, place one on top of the other and fold this into a triangle.



All it costs is the price of a pack of coloured paper and it takes only two minutes to make.

For an even cheaper alternative, you can rip out a page from an old magazine and contrast it with a sheet of plain paper.

*Detailed instructions and more ideas are in **Creative Cards** by Yoshiko Kitagawa, published by Kodansha International.*

Use Free Postcards

Are you one of those people who can't resist picking up more free postcards than you can use? Well here's how to recycle them. Since each postcard has a different design, unleash your creativity and design some of the funkiest invitations.

This is dirt-cheap yet chic-looking stuff.

and forget which ones belong to them after turning away to chatter. Instead, get drinks that come in plastic bottles (which are cheaper. Plus it won't go flat like canned drinks within 20 minutes of being opened) and have lots of cups nearby. This way, guests can pour what they need, reducing wastage.

Supply them with marker pens to personalise their own cups so there's no excuse to reach for a fresh one every time.

Alcohol is a key item that every party (without parental supervision) should have and with the millennium as an excuse, how could they refuse anyway? Decide whether you want to set up a drink counter where everyone can help themselves or a punch bowl so you can restrict how much alcohol goes into it. The trick to economising is looking for house brands which are cheaper, Cold Storage carries vodka, gin and bourbon at only \$29.90 for a 750ml bottle. After all, after a few drinks, who can tell the difference?

Entertainment (and a little noise)

Popping non-stop greatest techno hits CDs into the hi-fi just isn't going to cut it these days. Be creative in providing guests with things to amuse themselves with. Rig your flat for a treasure hunt, supply clues and let the guests run amok. If your flat is too small, include the area downstairs, just to make it more challenging. Be adventurous. Hire a psychic palm reader to read your guest's fortunes. Or get a henna artist that will draw intricate designs on your guest's hands as party favour. Having your kid brother sing "Baa Black Sheep" is cute, but don't count on guests having any respect for you.

Decoration (dolling up party central)

This is easy. Once you've decided on a theme for the food, stick with it for the decor. If you're having Chinese, hang kitschy Oriental lanterns from the ceiling. Plonk a bamboo birdcage in the middle of the table and fill it with orchids. A good way to start is to decide on a centrepiece. It could be a large floral arrangement or a giant bowl filled with popcorn, lollipops and sweets. This will set the tone and mood for the party.

Considering balloons? Not the common children's party variety, please. Instead get balloons that come with matt silver or gold finishes, tied with white ribbons. PartyLand (479-3911) at Anchorpoint Shopping Center sells them at \$1.60 for each helium-filled balloon and do home delivery as well, at an extra cost naturally. Pricey yes, but it scores you top points in the glamour department. Minimum number to have is four bundles of five balloons in the four corners of the room. More is better, but only if you can afford it.

Forget the paper plates. Not only are they not chic, they tend to flop over when laden with food and styrofoam tableware just screams Food Court. Use your own plates or call

what \$10 can buy



4 cans of Anchor beer at \$2.50 per can.
(your neighbourhood provision shop)



130 9oz cups. Each pack of 20 cups is \$1.50.
(your neighbourhood provision shop)



60 slices (3/4 pack) of Kraft Super Value
Sandwich Cheese at \$13.50 per pack.
(Carrefour)



16 1/3 rolls of crepe paper at \$0.60 each.
(Popular bookshop)



About 180 slices of F/P Bread (10 loaves)
at \$1 per loaf.
(Carrefour)



3 and 1/3 bottles of DC Orange Cordial
Each bottle makes 10 litres and costs \$4.30.
(Carrefour)



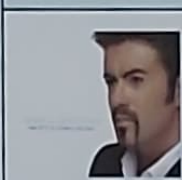
166 pairs of forks and spoons at \$3 for 50
pairs
(your neighbourhood provision shop)



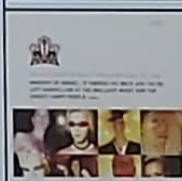
madonna
| queen of pop, 'nuff said |



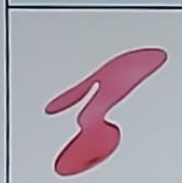
celeda
| funky disco beats with lotsa soul |



george michael
| double whammy of sounds, one fast, one
slow, take your pick |



ministry of sound annual
| with boy george and pete tong behind the
console, what more can you ask for? |



the rest of new order
| the best of new order remixed, a retro dream
come true |

some

musical

must

have

Party House (733-5647). They specialise in renting out party house-ware. Prices range from \$1.20 for a large salad bowl to \$3 for a coffeepot. More unusual items up for rent include bamboo steamers and claypots for unique food presentation. Cold Storage also loans out glassware if you buy at least \$50 worth of liquor from them.

Budget (and other concerns)

Doing it on your own means you run the risk of overspending. Be savvy, draw up a list, fix your budget and don't budge from it. Never buy anything on impulse. Look around weeks before the party for foodstuff and decorative props bargains, this helps to avoid the millennium crush when everybody is shopping too. Buy in bulk whenever possible to lower costs. Check out different shops and supermarkets to compare prices.

If you have money to burn, why not hire an event organiser? These companies can arrange everything for your party, from entertainment to decoration. Says Mr. Bernard Lau, an event producer with GenerationX, "More teens are hosting home parties and hiring us for sound systems and DJs to save them the hassle." No trouble at all, but be prepared to pay anything from \$500 to over \$1,000, depending on your needs.

Epilogue (happy hangover)

You had your fun. Finally, the party's over and you're dog-tired. The fastest way to get rid of lingering guests is to ask if anyone wants to help clean up. Or announce that you've run out of vodka. People will be making a beeline for the door after that.

Now comes cleaning up. One good tip is to place trash bags over cardboard boxes you can pick up from neighbourhood provision shops. During the party, get guests to throw their scraps there, so it makes clearing up easier the next day.

Expect a hangover if you drank too much. According to Shooter Blitz at <http://www.icenter.net>, you can minimise your misery by drinking a lot of water the next day. "This will help to 'get rid of some of the excess alcohol along with the excess water. The only side effect is you will be in the washroom quite often."



Rising Yen For J-Pop

Amuro Namie, Kinki Kids and Utada Hikaru. If you're asking "Utada who?", then you were asleep while our island was hit by a new music trend. Serene Ho says it's time to wake up and catch up with how big Japanese music is.

Japanese records have been doing brisk business locally for the past six to eight months. Utada Hikaru's debut album scored platinum (selling more than 15,000 copies), and the compilation album **Best Of J-Pop** hit the top of the SPVA (Singapore Phonogram and Videogram Association) charts, the first Japanese album ever to occupy the number one spot. In August, four Japanese CDs were placed on the SPVA charts.

So popular are Japanese artistes that they are even beating their Chinese counterparts. Ayumi Hamasaki outselling Heavenly King Leon Lai's album, *If I Could See You Again* is no isolated

success. HMV has seen sales increase for Japanese CDs outstrip Chinese CDs in recent times and the sales of Japanese CDs at Tower Records had increased 20% compared to 1998 figures.

This probably ex-

plains why Japanese CDs are no longer seen as a small niche product. Where they used to be sold only at major record stores and some Japanese music stores, they can now be bought at neighbourhood CD stores. Even Ngee Ann Polytechnic's campus CD store, Disc Z, carries various Japanese CDs.

Our exposure to Japanese music has also increased because it has invaded local airwaves. FM 88.3, has a weekly 90-minute programme called **In Japan** which plays 100% Japanese music. This programme was started in February 1998. Other radio stations like FM 93.3, have also started including Japanese songs in their playlist. You can even count down the **HMV Japan Charts** on FM 96.3, the International Channel. On TV, you will find Japanese

music videos being played in between programmes on Prime 12, TCS 8 and even TCS 5.

So popular are Japanese artistes that they are even beating their Chinese counterparts.

The print medium is also showing increased interest in J-Pop, with *The Straits Times* covering some news from the Japanese music industry and *Lianhe Zaobao* having regular reports and reviews on Japanese albums. Singapore's best-selling entertainment magazine, *i weekly*, also features Japanese music news regularly. Indeed, fans appear to be so eager for information that they will pick up articles from, if not local media and in English/Chinese, then Japanese music magazines. Despite local readers' obvious language handicap, Books Kinokuniya, the largest bookstore in Southeast Asia, has seen a higher sales increase in Japanese music magazines than other Japanese magazines. Explained Leng Ho Kit, Personal Assistant to the Managing Director (Books Kinokuniya), "Some people buy magazines because their idol appeared in the magazine. Also, magazines have more pictures than words and as such the language barrier is a lesser problem. Other buyers may not be proficient in the language but know a little of the language."

Music Street, which handles artistes like Amuro Namie and Speed, admits receiving fans' requests for romanized lyrics (where the pronunciation of the Japanese words



Hamasaki Ayumi, 21, is the current darling of J-Pop, scoring well on the charts with hits like "Depend on You" and "Boys and Girls".



Popular group, Kinki Kids is also active in the TV scene, with numerous serials to their names and even their own variety show.

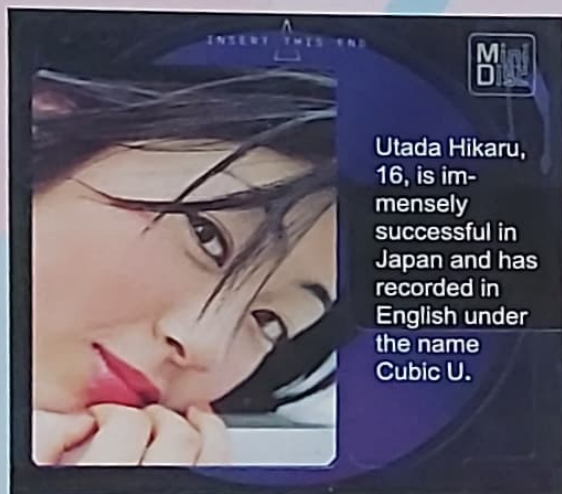
is written in English, for example "arigatou"). They want to be able to read the lyrics and visit karaoke joints to belt out their fave Japanese hits.

Other music lovers are so committed, they are even making the effort to learn Japanese. A check with Miss Mayumi Sakai, who has been teaching for 10 months at Bunka Language School Private Limited showed that there are always a few students in every class who signed up for lessons because of their interest in Japanese music. She said that those fans are usually quite "serious" in their studies. Those who don't study the language, like Wong Kah Wai, a 20-year-old trainee teacher, rely on friends who are proficient in the language for help.

"Whether or not J-Pop is a one-off thing or a long-lasting phenomenon, it will depend largely on what the mass media wants to do with this phenomenon"

But the impact of Japanese music doesn't just stop there. While most local bands cite Western musicians as their influences, there's a new breed of musicians who look to the land of the rising sun for inspiration. One such outfit is local Chinese rock band, Hysteria.

The five-man band got together in 1998 due to love for Japanese rock music. According to guitarist Michael Koh, they have seen a "drastic" increase in the number of local bands playing covers of Japanese



Utada Hikaru, 16, is immensely successful in Japan and has recorded in English under the name Cubic U.

songs or playing Japanese-influenced music. As pioneers in Japanese-influenced local music, both Michael Koh and vocalist, Alex Chia, agree that more local bands are likely to get ideas from Japanese bands and mix this with other influences to produce their own signature sound. "Japanese music is very unique...each single offers something new," said Chia, who calls himself Kojima, explaining how local musicians benefit from exposure to Japanese music.

All these signs point to Japanese music being hot now, but will it be stale sushi soon? Industry experts are divided on the issue.

Jasmin Chong, Special Projects Executive (Universal Music) gives Japanese music a few more years in the limelight, while Chwa Bee Har, J-Pop Buyer for Tower Records, is more upbeat and sees the trend lasting for an "indefinite" period.

Fans agree with her, with many seeing themselves remaining fans in future. Says Benjamin Seow, 19, who is self-employed, "I can't live without J-Rock (Japanese rock)!"

Their biggest grouse, now that their kind of music is gaining attention, is that they still aren't likely to see their idols in Singapore. Record companies say that the sheer cost of hosting a Japanese artiste is a big deterrent. According to James Kang, Promotions Executive of Music Street, bringing a Japanese

artiste over can cost up to five times as much as doing the same for a Chinese one. "They are very particular about the sound system... Normally they like to bring their own people all the way from Japan just to keep things at a good standard," he discloses. Joey Leong, Senior Marketing Manager (Sony Music Regional Division) finds it better to just fly reporters to Japan for write-ups.

These artistes also have very packed schedules, which makes it hard for them to visit. Although artistes like L'Arc-en-Ciel and Puffy are keen to come over, Leong says that they are committed right up to mid-2000.

With all these promotional constraints, fans need to be self-driven to keep their passion for Japanese music alive for long. Another vital ingredient is media receptivity. James Kang says emphatically, "Whether or not J-Pop is a one-off thing or a long-lasting phenomenon, it will depend largely on what the mass media wants to do with this phenomenon."

Make it BIG

Many people find it odd how Japanese music has suddenly become big in Singapore but there are some reasons for the boom.

The popularity of top-rated Japanese dramas like **Heaven's Coins** and **Beach Boys** have certainly made Japanese music more prominent. These play a part in exposing locals to Japanese culture and music. Explained Joey Leong, Senior Marketing Manager (Sony Music Regional Division), "It's easier for them [youths] to accept the culture. When they know about the culture, they start to know more about the music."

Another rationale is that Singapore follows the footsteps of Hong Kong and Taiwan. Jill Koh, Section Manager (HMV Asian Pop) supports this. "We have a lot of programmes, variety shows coming from Hong Kong and Taiwan... Singapore refers to Hong Kong and Taiwan for lots of entertainment information."

However, James Kang, Promotions Executive (Music Street Private Limited), disagrees. "To attribute a major factor (for the trend) to Taiwan and Hong Kong, I feel, would be unfair because J-Pop has always been very big in Hong Kong and Taiwan. Even six years ago. I don't see why it's going take six years for the winds of change to come here," he reasoned.

Whatever industry experts may think, fans have other reasons for hopping onto the Japanese wave. "Through the influence of friends," says polytechnic student Marc Lim, 20, of how he got hooked.

There are also fans of Japanese animation who became Japanese music converts after hearing the opening and closing theme songs of the animations, like Mavis Poh, a student at the Nanyang Technological University's School of Applied Science.

"It [the theme song] suited the story very well and made me cry. So I started listening to J-Rock."

The J-Pop Starter Kit

How can I get romanji lyrics (Japanese pronunciation written in English, for example, "arigatou") and translation for the lyrics?

There are many online resources to prep you up for a karaoke session belting out Japanese hits. One of the biggest sites with romanji lyrics has to be **Japan Lyrics** (<http://www.japanlyrics.com>). Translations are harder to find but the search engine at **Bonsai's Jpop Pages** (<http://jpop.hatch.co.jp>) will point you in the right direction.

When's the best time to visit Japan to watch concerts?

The bulk of the concerts are held in the summer months of June to August, when Japanese students go on vacation. Ideal for us too, as it coincides with our vacation. Beware the sweltering heat though...

How can I get CDs/magazines that are not brought in by the retailers here?

You can place an order with retailers like Books Kinokuniya, HMV, Tower Records and Maruzen Books, or order online through **CD Japan** (<http://www.cdjapan.co.jp>) or **All Japan World** (<http://www.office21.com/shop/entry.html>). Both companies will ship your order to you in three to five days and via either registered airmail or Express Mail Service. Shipping costs depends on the type of shipping you choose. CD Japan accepts credit cards, as well as cash. All Japan World only takes money orders.

Where can I find information about Japanese artistes online?

Bonsai's Jpop Pages (<http://jpop.hatch.co.jp>) is definitely the place to go to. With a huge database of web pages related to Japanese entertainment, you're sure to find what you need here. You can also download the search program there, install it in your computer and search by typing into your browser's URL box.

What must I do to join the fan clubs?

Most of the fan clubs are meant for Japanese only. If you just want to try your luck, you can send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to the fan club and pray hard that they reply.

Win Limited Edition Da Pump's Albums

Answer the following question and win yourself one of five limited edition CDs of their latest album, **Higher and Higher!**, which includes a special photo insert, Chinese lyric translations on top of the 20-track album.

Q: How many members are there in Da Pump?

Just email your answers to hypemag@hotbot.com with the subject as "Da Pump Contest" by Nov 15, 1999. Include your name and contact number. Winners will be notified by email.



A portrait of a man with dark hair, wearing white-rimmed sunglasses and a white collared shirt. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is plain white.

Najip Ali

Ravina S.A. Rahman has an audience with his royal hipness
and lets us in on his plans for Malay Drama.

Clad in uncharacteristically understated white pants and shirt, Najip tears into his office's conference room like his behind is on fire.

"Am I late?" he asks, breathlessly, the trademark hat and oversized glasses the only hint of the funky, irrepressible co-host of eight years' worth of **Asia Bagus**, which he has just left.

Always the one to put others at ease, Najip dispenses with the formality of an intro, and leaps excitedly into his new vision – to revive Malay theatre locally.

The multi-talented singer/dancer/choreographer/producer wants to push the envelope with what's been achieved in the local arts scene. With an intent look in his eyes, he says, "Dick Lee has established what Singa-POP is. What

is east and what is west. Now we need to go forward. Mix East and West and say, 'This is us!'"

The way he sees this being accomplished is by bridging the generation gap between the old and young. And this can only happen if parents and children understand each other's eras and discuss issues with each other. "We [Malays] should be exposed to two different worlds [old and young] and quickly tell ourselves, we are going to a New World [a mix of both the old and young]."

He added, "We are trying to say that we are at a new millennium and this is what our culture is all about."

In order to achieve this mission, Najip set up Dua M, a company under the umbrella of Music & Movement, a local talent management and show production company. The company came about after the production of **TV Kini**, a Malay entertainment programme that mixes elements of nostalgic

Malay culture and MTV style. It just ended its first season here.

"**TV Kini** was a channel to encourage dialogue between parents and children," explains Najip. "Veteran Malay crooners like Mat Raja Kilau and new bands that

"Dick Lee has established what Singa-POP is. What is east and what is west. Now we need to go forward. Mix east and west and say, 'This is us!'"

play loud, punk music are invited on the show." This helps to expose parents to the new music their children are listening to and vice versa. At the same time, it also creates conversation between them. However, Najip admits this was not enough, hence the need to move forward.

And he's lost no time getting to work. Within a month of Dua M's set up, it secured three projects – a triple-bill play, a cartoon series and his own talk show.

The first project is the Malay triple-bill, **TV... Pentas... Dunia** (TV... Stage... World), expected to cost about \$100,000 to produce, and postponed due to poor ticket sales. The brainchild of Najip, this showcases three plays: **Ibu Mertuaka** (My Mother-in-law), **Tengok TV** (Watch TV) and naturally, **TV... Pentas... Dunia**. The performance is a collaboration of talents and directors from the television and theatre scene. Far from being a faddish move, this is strictly in line with the play's theme, centred on TV and its audience.

Second on his list of productions is **Uddyn**, a cartoon series that has been telecast on Prime 12 since the end of September.

An animated story about a modern

Malay family in a HDB flat, it also touches on the generation gap. To visualise Uddyn, the main character, think Bart Simpson meets Lat, the famous Malaysian comic character.

Alternately mimicking the high-pitched voice of the boy and the low growl of his conservative grandma, Najip spontaneously plays out a scene to illustrate Uddyn's struggles to keep up-to-date. Not wanting to give away too much information, Najip says simply, "**Uddyn** is a cartoon to watch out for."

A long-overdue nod to his abilities is his own talk show in Malay titled **Kopi O, Teh Tarik**. Due to be aired next February, Najip is adamant that it is "not **Tonight with Gurmit**, as the show is not titled, **Tonight with Najip Ali**."

"**Kopi O, Teh Tarik** is about the people that appear on my show. It's about guests [celebs and experts] who want to speak their mind and be themselves," he adds, barely containing his enthusiasm.

With so many projects underway simultaneously, you'd imagine the 34-year-old is calling for a break. Instead, he can't wait to work with more young people. "They come up with good ideas, new vibes and new energy, and we need to capture that energy to make something."

Then, in a rare moment, Najip sits back and turns reflective, before saying the new generation should break away from old traditions and be open-minded. Boldly, he adds that the young should never be afraid to do what they want to do and they shouldn't practise self-censorship. Najip believes they have reached a stage where they are "sensitive enough to know what can and cannot be done."

"If it fails, it's okay. You are entitled to failure. Enjoy the process."

*Catch **Kopi O, Teh Tarik** on Suria beginning Feb 1, 2000. Najip will be down in Ngee Ann to promote **TV... Pentas... Dunia** close to its staging next year.*

music&books

introducing

Listening to Michael Fredo's

first major release, **Introducing**, you get a taste of all of this new artiste's influences, which include standards like Michael Jackson, Marvin Gaye and the Rolling Stones. You can't help but get nostalgic at times, as his music is reminiscent of past pop sensations like Bobby Brown.

This album has a good mix of pop styles ranging from chirpy mainstream pop tunes to soul-searching ballads.

In a promotional interview, he described his music as 'youthquake', a new sub-genre of pop music he's coined that basically combines a variety of styles.

Arguably the most outstanding track is the closing track "Now You're Gone". Fredo penned this emotional and powerful ballad for his father, who passed away three years ago in a tragic car accident.

Suffusing a good mix of musical styles, **Introducing** is a display of intensely personal music. For pop die-hards, this is a must-buy.



win free cds!!!

Suggest a name to Michael Fredo's next album. The five most creative answers will receive a copy of **Introducing**. Email your answers to hypemag@hotmail.com together with your particulars by Nov 15, 1999.

vitaminC

With the classic looks of Jewel, the soft sweet voice of Andrea from The Corrs, and music similar to All Saints comes Vitamin C, who's set to break out on a pop landscape dominated by Christina Aguilera and Britney Spears.

This self-titled album by Colleen Fitzpatrick, the former lead singer of the band, Eve's Plum, is chirpy-sounding with plenty of spunk and girl power.

Her first single, "Smile", called simplistic by some for it's Don't Worry Be Happy philosophy is radio-friendly, vibrant and upbeat. Other tracks such as "Girls Against Boys", can practically be a feminism anthem for secondary school students.

If you are searching for profound lyrics or a serious display of vocal power, you won't get it here. What **Vitamin C**



readily provides, however, is fun, optimistic words set to contagious, cheerful tunes.

It's a great pick up after a tiring day at

school, and that needed shot to boost the energy level of just about any party.

In the right doses, **Vitamin C** is exactly what the doctor ordered.

win free cds!!!

Tell us "Which fruit contains the highest amount of Vitamin C?" and win a copy of the Vitamin C album, email your answers to hypemag@hotmail.com together with your particulars by Nov 15, 1999.



ray

L'Arc-en-Ciel (rainbow in French)

is a difficult band to describe. Although they are generally classified as a rock outfit, this four-man band from Japan produces a unique blend of pop-rock, experimental and even jazz sounds, all found on their latest album, **Ray**.

The trademark melodic bass and powerful vocals are still present in this album. Each of the 11 songs in **Ray** offers an insight into the colourful world of L'Arc-en-Ciel.

The pick of the tracks has to be the melancholic "Ibara No Namida" (thorn's tears). A good representation of the group's overall style, the song also highlights vocalist, Hyde's far-reaching vocal range.

Even so, **Ray** isn't without its failings. For one, given Hyde's weak English enunciation, you can't be blamed for thinking he's singing French lyrics in "the silver shining". There are also downright boring tracks like the impossibly monotonous "L'heure" (French for the hour) which will surely be useful for insomniacs.

L'Arc-en-Ciel has put out an album worth a few spins in **Ray**. This will definitely prove you wrong if you think that Japanese music is solely shiny-happy, pop-fluff.

playingmygame

With song titles reading like a heart-wrenching poem, 18-year-old Lene Marlin's debut album **Playing My Game** is a well-crafted album of instrumental acoustic and synthesised sounds, well thought-out lyrics and a sweet, soulful voice undoubtedly primed for international success.

The Norwegian's debut single, "Unforgivable Sinner" speaks of lost love and the regrets. Familiar? Yes, but packaged as a well-conceived folk number with a catchy beat, it became the fastest and biggest-selling single in Norway, where it



stayed on the top of the charts for five weeks. In Singapore, the song is enjoying increasing airplay and is poised to climb the charts.

Other notable tracks include "Sitting Down Here" and "So I See". These songs talk of Lene's interpretation of her environment, of short summers and long winters in

the Nordic North.

Call it music to take the tedium out of Sunday afternoon household chores. Nothing too serious, nothing too deep. For honest lyrics, heartfelt singing and easy listening tunes, try Lene Marlin's **Playing My Game**.

es for today

white city blue

Finally, there comes a novel that sheds light on the male psyche. Generally stereotyped as commitment phobes with an insatiable need for male bonding on a weekly basis, the author, Tim Lott brings readers some clarifications. With his novel's protagonist, Frankie Blue, he opens eyes to an otherwise private world of men.

Set in Britain, the novel reveals the intimate thoughts and intentions of a housing agent, Blue. Egoistic, lost and sentimental, he actually craves to fit in. Which is why he constantly surrounds himself with friends. And to be acceptable, he often puts up a pretense before them when in reality, he desires for something real. Here Tim Lott reveals the

deeper side of men through Frankie who laments the lost intimacy he once had with these childhood pals.

"Flamboyant Tony, righteous Nodge and chicken Colin were his best buddies". Now, they have an expired



friendship. But despite their weakening friendship, their Saturday nights at the bar remains a regular date. You will start feeling sorry for Frankie here because he desperately wants to reconcile that bond. And fearing their friendship might terminate, he hesitates announcing his marriage plans to his girlfriend of six months.

Written simply with a light touch of British colloquialism, Tim Lott depicts the sad and almost pathetic reality of male friendships. To many, Frankie may seem a oversensitive softie who thinks too much. But maybe he speaks the minds of many who fear the emptiness.

White City Blue hits bull's eye. Tim Lott presents men as the exact opposite of all they have been perceived. Macho, tough and unconcerned with details. He debunks the misconstrued ideas of the stronger gender. An easy read with many revelations of the opposite sex. Definitely a book for the feminists.

Judy Blume



summersisters

New York Times bestselling author, Judy Blume possesses the talent of flexibility that eludes most writers. She surpasses many with her ability to captivate the minds of both adults and children, much the way Roald Dahl did. Commonly known for her **Fudge** books (a series for children), Blume has outdone herself yet again with a new adult novel, **Summer Sisters**.

A riveting tale that celebrates the triumph of a friendship bordering on sisterhood, it pivots on the conflict and intimacy between two friends, proving that familiarity does breed contempt.

Caitlin Somers is an effervescent but wilful girl whose divorced parents give her anything she wants. She shuttles between school in Santa Fe with her mother and warm summers in Martha's Vineyard with her islander father.

Her best friend, Victoria Leonard aka Vix was brought up in a puritanical household where austerity is a virtue. Underprivileged and suppressed by her upbringing, Vix's world changed when she met Caitlin in the sixth grade, who invites her to spend the first of many summers by the ocean in Martha's Vineyard.

The success of this novel lies in its subtleties. Avoiding the melodrama most novels fall victim to, Blume instead uses poignancy in careful doses, making sure it doesn't become another weepy tale flooding bookstores today.

A large part of the book is written in third person narrative but the delectable parts are one-page accounts where characters reveal personal thoughts unknown to anyone else. Almost like precious morsels of fruit in your peach yogurt, these pages makes refreshing breaks in the story, pulling the reader in.

Using simple language, which makes for a lazy afternoon read, Blume avoids poetic prose like in Arundhati Roy's **The God of Small Things** but with earnest writing and plenty of dialogue, she creates characters that come alive.

A good bet for females who cherish the intimacies of a close companionship. And for those who haven't experienced the blessing of having such a friend, perhaps this book will help you realise what you have missed.

geographies of home

Geographies of Home is a debut novel. With that said, it's easier to forgive the author, Loida Maritza Perez for her heavy dose of melodrama, reminiscent of those Hollywood tear-jerking TV mini series.

The novel tells of 18-year-old Iliana, the second youngest of 14 children born to Dominican Republic immigrants living in New York. Raised in a dysfunctional family, she struggles with family abuse and scandals, leaning upon the support of her loving mother, Aurelia.

Perez was born in the Dominican Republic and now resides in New York. Because of her background and knowledge of the two countries she writes about, she is able to bring out a somewhat more realistic portrayal of the

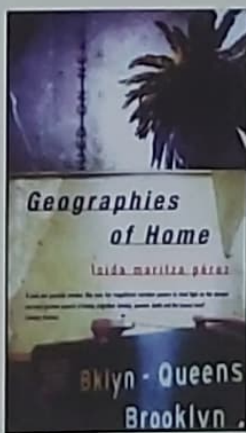
difficulties of migration, mental illness, passion but most of all, survival within these contexts.

Undoubtedly a promising writer, she unfortunately falls short when it comes to the subtle (and cultivated) art of storytelling. The more tragedies Perez prescribes for the family, the less emotional impact shines through the novel.

Perez seems focussed on impressing her readers. She fills the book up with too much content (turning the novel into a weepy 320-page documentary), as she over explains her characters with unnecessarily pompous vocabulary. Instead of giving herself room for simple prose, she errs with

overdone verbosity.

Although flawed, this novel is still a good piece of literature.



Win Tower hampers!

Stand to win one of five Tower hampers in this lucky draw. Answer the following question and drop this slip into the box outside the Hype office at Blk 23, #02-01 before Nov 15, 1999.

Frankie Blue is the main character in _____ (the book title).

Name: _____

Contact no.: _____

the blair witch project

These are excerpts of the diary of Heather Donahue, discovered a year after she and two other student film crew members vanished in the woods near Burkittsville, Maryland.

Together with Joshua Leonard and Michael Williams, they were chronicling the history of Elly Kedward, a woman banished to the woods for drinking children's blood 200 years ago. She came to be known as the Blair Witch. **October 21, 1994**

We're going into the forest now. We were told that the area where disappearances took place is very easy to reach.

It seems almost surreal that we're actually going to the site.

It's 7am and I'm feeling a little tense. **October 23, 1994**

We're lost. Our maps are missing and our compass spoilt. We shouldn't have ventured so far in. We hear things at night that we can't recognise and we just run deeper into the woods.

We found the remains of what looks like a hand but we aren't sure. We have no contact with the outside world and no idea how to get out of here.

I feel as though somebody is stalking us, but I can't be certain. The footage we



have so far is all we've got. It's keeping us from going insane. God, I hate the forest. Somebody please help!

Help us indeed. No one was lost, and there is no Blair Witch. But such was the way the film was marketed, it fooled many into thinking it was a documentary, instead of drama. Often, the show uses darkness or desperate voices of the lost to create a disturbing effect, which is to be expected for a film with a budget of less than US\$50,000.

This film succeeds as a horror film because its stark simplicity makes the story all the more credible, and because it encourages your imagination to run wild on a canvas of nothingness.

The Blair Witch Project successfully plays on your tendency to get lost, and more importantly, that sinking feeling you get when you're about to face defeat, and death.

bowfinger

Pair up two of Hollywood's most popular comedians for the first time and add insider digs at those who dream of making it big in Hollywood. Then see if you have enough mayhem for a laughing good time.

Bowfinger's lines and impeccable comic timing were penned by veteran funnyman Steve Martin, who plays Bobby Bowfinger. The man will spare no prisoners to realise his childhood ambition of being a movie director in the league of Steven Spielberg. And he's not going to let the fact that he's broke and not well-connected stand in his way.

When **Bowfinger's** script has a shot at being made, his ecstasy is tempered only by his inability to land Hollywood's hottest action star, Kit Ramsey (Eddie Murphy), an A-list Will Smith character, for the lead role in his movie.

The rest of the movie details how he tries to make the film with Ramsey anyway. **Bowfinger** and his crew stalk their unwitting star through the streets of LA, filming Kit's every move and trapping him in scenes he doesn't know he's in. When this fails, he hires a nerdish Kit-lookalike (Eddie Murphy exercising his talent for playing double roles) to fill in the shoes.

It's hard to empathise with how desperate some Hollywood wannabes get, but **Bowfinger** confirms what **The Blair Witch Project** teaches us – to be a successful director on a shoestring budget, you really need to be a big con artist.



playing by heart

With a heavyweight cast whose collective appeal spans people in their teens to octogenarians, **Playing By Heart** should have no trouble drawing the crowds.

Sadly, the stellar cast of Gillian Anderson (**X-Files**), Sean Connery (**James Bond**), Anthony Edwards (**ER**), Ryan Phillippe (**Disturbing Behaviour**) and Angelina Jolie (**Hackers**), may be the modern-day romance's only strength.

The movie revolves around five different couples who learn that love is no walk in the park, and that excessive analysis and drawn-out conversations about relationships are useless. When you talk about true love, what it comes down to is that you have to follow your heart.

Madeleine Stowe (**Bad Girls**) and Anthony Edwards, are the most lustful couple in the movie. Watch for their raunchy hotel room scene, sure to set

your pulse racing at dangerous speeds.

Suitably dignified are veterans Sean Connery and Gena Rowlands, playing a contented couple and creators of an award-winning cook show filmed in their own kitchen.

But an event sparks off a heated argument and soon their relationship is both shaken and stirred.

The youngest couple, Angelina Jolie



and Ryan Phillippe, are a pair of star-crossed lovers in the city of angels. Jolie's impressive portrayal of a trend-setting, club-going Gen 'X'er gleams, further convincing audiences that she is one of the more promising young gems rising the ranks of Hollywood. And of course, Phillippe never fails to leave any bona fide male with a bruised ego.

Although the presence of so many stars makes your ticket's worth, it also guarantees little screen time for each, and as a result, time for character development is compromised.

Despite that, the movie manages to lead audiences on a rollercoaster ride of emotions which will have you sobbing one moment and reminiscing sentimentally about an expired relationship the next.

And it leaves you believing that in the game of love, even if you have a hand full of aces, you still end up **Playing by Heart**.

bowfinger - alvin ong
playing by heart - jason sebastian
the blair witch project - jeremy chia

WIN MOVIE PASSES TO SEE MYSTERY MEN



Mystery Men is a mercilessly funny movie about frustrated blue-collared men (and a woman) with normal day-jobs who assume superhero alter egos by night.

In a safe little town called Champion City, average people harbour fantasies of becoming superheroes.

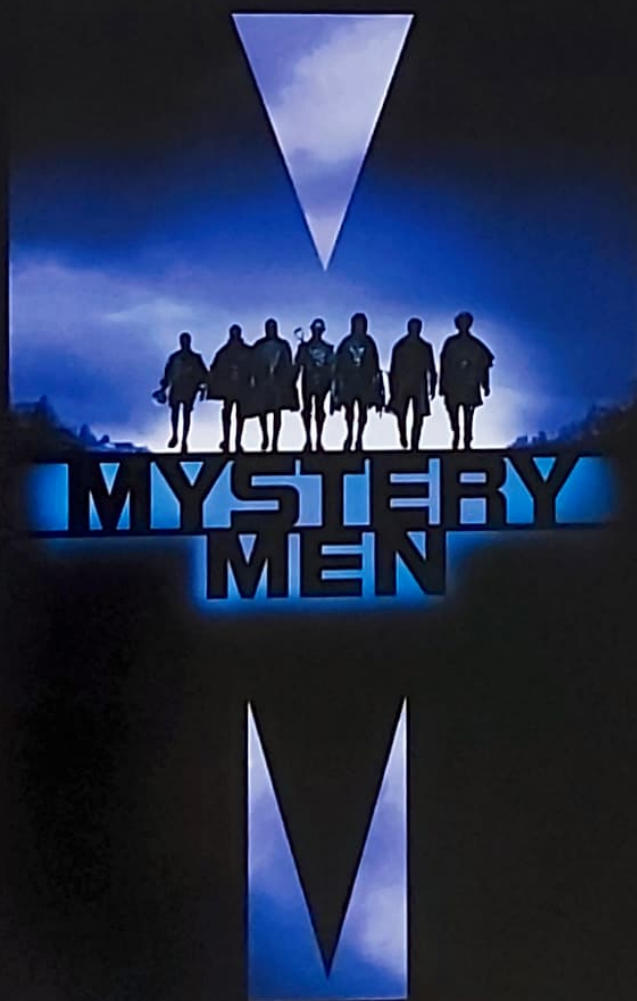
The first three to comb the streets as aspiring heroes are the violent-tempered Mr Furious (Ben Stiller in *There's Something About Mary*), Blue Raja (Hank Azaria from *The Birdcage*), who flings forks at his opponents, and an expert at wielding a shovel, The Shoveler (William H. Macy of *Pleasantville*).

However, since the town isn't your average crime-infested Gotham City, resident superhero Captain Amazing (so famous he has company endorsements on his costume), becomes bored and arranges for his nemesis Casanova Frankenstein (Geoffrey Rush, *Shakespeare In Love*) to be released from the mental institution. Of course, he didn't count on the mad criminal kidnapping him and planning to destroy Champion City.

Faced with a challenge, our armchair heroes recruit four new wannabes. There's Spleen (Paul Reubon), who farts when confronted with an enemy. Invisible Boy (Kel Mitchell), who ardently developed the power to turn invisible – but only when no one is looking.

The only female, The

Tell us, "Who is the director of Mystery Men?" and win one of 25 pairs of tickets to Mystery Men. email your particulars and answer to hypemag@hotmail.com by Nov 15, 1999.



OPENS IN CINEMAS DEC 16

Bowler (Janeane Garofalo, *The Truth about Cats and Dogs*), bowls crooks down like pins in an alley; while The Sphinx slices guns in half with his mind.

After surmounting a few teething problems, this new league of superheroes begin their quest for justice as the Mystery Men.

Talented Geoffrey Rush steals the show with his comically sinister portrayal of the Champion City villain, while Ben Stiller and Janeane Garafalo sizzle with their on-screen chemistry.

Director Kinka Usher who is better known for his Taco Bell commercials, has done a fine job at taking a stab at serious superhero genre movies like *Batman*, *Superman* and *Spawn* with this movie of spoofs. These oddball superheroes are so incredibly stupid, you'd think twice about trusting them to save the day.

The set and costume designs are also first-rate, turning Champion City into a virtual masterpiece.

The only unfunny moment comes when you realise these men seek solace in the world of crime fighting and costumed alter egos only because they are repressed and unaccepted by the real world.

That said, if you cannot get enough of slapstick humour, absurd scenarios and ridiculously funny characters, you'll definitely want to stab yourself with one of Blue Raja's forks if you miss *Mystery Men*.

crystal tan



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