

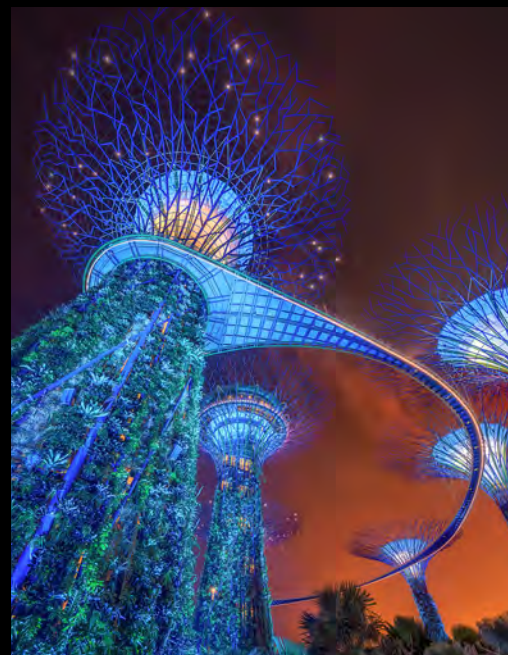
TimeOut

SINGAPORE

Art is ~~not~~
important and
has ~~no~~ future
here.

Meet the artists who defied the odds and made art their career

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TimeOut
SINGAPORE

Hello, Singapore



"YOUR PASSION CAN'T feed you." How many times have artists, creatives, writers and designers heard this phrase? In Singapore, too many times to count, that's for sure. After all, we've been raised in a society that values science over art, the practical against the conceptual, an iron rice bowl instead of a porcelain plate meant just for display.

Yet, there are people who take the plunge. In this issue, we talk to some of these dreamers who have made art their reality. They've ditched a stable nine to five to share their ideas, emotions and work with the world. There's Malik Mazlan (pg 19), a calligraphy artist who's been told he should be a Grab driver and Aisha Rosli (pg 17), a 22 year old who's just starting out but has already sold all the pieces from her first collection. As it turns out, with hard work, talent and a stroke of luck – your passion can feed more than just your soul.

It's time we start thinking about art differently. And at *Time Out Singapore*, our mission is to help you discover the best of the local scene. You might have also noticed that our print magazine is now distributed quarterly. We plan on bringing you more in-depth features with ideas that stick, coupled with the timely information you can find on our website timeout.com/singapore. We hope you like reading it as much as we love making it.

Nicole-Marie Ng Editor
[@nicolemarieng](https://twitter.com/nicolemarieng)

The art of persistence

How these
local artists defied
the odds

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Time Out
SINGAPORE

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71 Robinson Road, Singapore 068895
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Cover
Designed by
Kashmira Kasuri

Managing Director
Tim Webb

Editorial
Editor
Nicole-Marie Ng
Regional Commercial
Director
Nicholas Chan

Digital Editor
Deilina Utomo
Arts and Culture
Editor
Dewi Nurjowita
City Life Writer
Cam Khalid

Food & Drink Writer
Fabian Leo
Contributors
Charlene Fang
Editorial Intern
Aiko Tun

Art
Creative Director
Phoebie Cheng
Designer
Kashmira Kasuri

Photographer
Ahmad Iskandar
Commercial
Regional Commercial
Director
Nicholas Chan
Head of Sales
Michelle Ong
Account Manager
Sherril Lee Singh
Finance Manager
Sally Lam

Marketing Intern
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Executive
CEO, Time Out Group
Julio Bruno
Founder
Tony Elliott

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SINGAPORE
AIRLINES

Time Out Singapore
is available on board
Singapore Airlines flights
and in its lounges

TO DO

The best events around town this month and beyond

DON'T MISS

MUSIC

Garden Beats

Feb 29

Be one with nature at this eco-conscious, carbon-neutral music festival that's brimming with performing, visual and interactive arts. Headliners this year include indie-rock stalwarts Foals, rising contemporary R&B darling Sabrina Claudio, and mystical house hero Blond:ish.

→ Fort Canning Park, River Valley Rd. 📍 Fort Canning. From \$168.



PHOTO: COLOSAL

FEBRUARY

THINGS TO DO Chatuchak Night Market Singapore

• FREE Till May 3

Singapore's edition of Bangkok's famous market features over 200 vendors from Thailand that rotate every week to give you something new with each visit. Expect handicrafts, apparel, home decor, antiques and of course, the best of Thai street food.

→ The Grandstand, 200 Turf Club Road.

📍 Kranji.



The Lifespan of a Fact

PHOTO: SINGAPORE REPERTORY THEATRE

STAGE Lady of the Camellias

Feb 21-23

The Hamburg Ballet is on pointe to make its debut Singapore performance. Lauded as one of his best works since its premiere in 1978, this adaptation of Dumas' tragedy is famed for its choreography and portrayal of the characters' psychology.

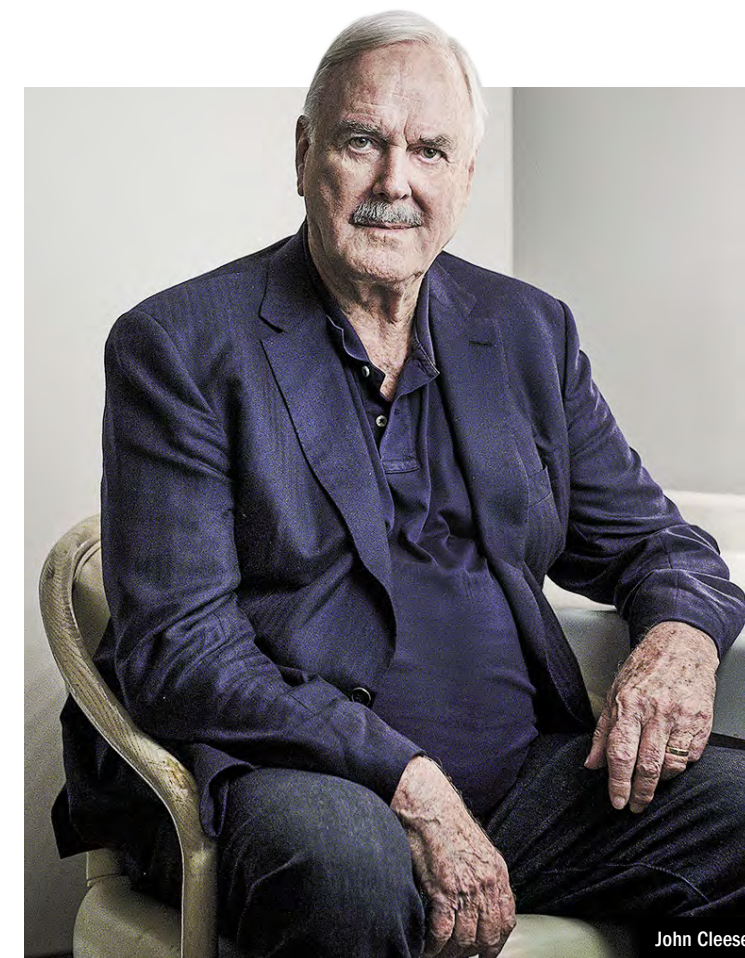
→ Esplanade Theatre, 1 Esplanade Dr.

📍 Esplanade. From \$60.

STAGE The Lifespan of a Fact

Feb 25-Mar 14

This Broadway comedy takes



John Cleese

centre stage with a clash of two opposites. Watch a diligent fact-checker, a demanding editor and an unorthodox essayist battle it out in an epic showdown between fact and poetic truth.

→ KC Arts Centre – Home of SRT, 20 Merbau Rd. 📍 Fort Canning. From \$45.

STAGE RuPaul's Drag Race Werq The World Tour

Feb 27

The queens of RuPaul's Drag Race are coming to slay. Led by mission leader Michelle Visage, this must-see show will have you flipping wigs while saving the galaxy with each planet's respective queen – Aquaria, Detox, Kim Chi, Monet X Change, Plastique Tiara, Sharon Needles and Violet Chachki.

→ The Star Theatre, 1 Vista Exchange Green.

📍 Buona Vista. From \$108.

THINGS TO DO ONE: King of the Jungle

Feb 28

Brace yourself for major paws featuring the world's best martial artists as ONE Championship returns to the Singapore Indoor Stadium. The main event – two-sport ONE World Champion

Stamp Fairtex from Thailand takes on Janet 'J.T.' Todd from the United States to defend her ONE Atomweight Kickboxing World Title.

→ 2 Stadium Walk. 📍 Stadium. From \$15.

ART Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden Commission: Cao Fei

• FREE Till Oct 25

A five-metre-tall swinging ship on the rooftop of National Gallery Singapore? While it's far from the sea, this large-scale kinetic structure installed by China's leading contemporary artist Cao Fei is a nod to Singapore's identity as a maritime nation.

→ National Gallery Singapore.

1 St Andrew's Rd. 📍 City Hall.

MARCH

ART #BuySingLit

• FREE Mar 6-15

Get lost in the pages of stories from Singapore. Championing homegrown book publishers, retailers and literary non-profits,

#BuySingLit promotes Singapore literature through an exciting line-up of programmes across the city over two weekends.

→ Various locations including The Arts House, 1 Old Parliament Ln. 📍 Raffles Place.

THINGS TO DO iLight 2020

• FREE Mar 6-29

Get your cameras out – the Marina Bay precinct lights up for the annual sustainable light art festival. Spanning three weeks, this year's showcase extends from Marina Bay to Esplanade Park. Expect stunning installations that use energy-saving lighting and environmentally friendly materials.

→ Various locations including Esplanade Park, Connaught Dr. 📍 Esplanade.

STAGE John Cleese

Mar 7

Since his 2014 sold-out show, legendary comic and actor John Cleese – best known for Monty Python (and as the voice of King Harold in the *Shrek* series) – is back to entertain audiences with his silly antics, incomprehensible mimes, and Algerian love songs.

→ University Cultural Centre Hall, NUS, 50 Kent Ridge Cres. 📍 Clementi. From \$128.

MUSIC Green Day

Mar 8

Don't be a *Basket Case* – the American pop-punk heroes are back as part of the Hella Mega Tour. Rock your socks off as the trio performs their hit headbangers and

ALSO DON'T MISS



MUSIC

Disney on Ice: Live Your Dreams

Mar 12-22

Journey across raging seas and snowy mountains with Disney's *Moana*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *Frozen*, *Tangled*, *Cinderella*, as well as Disney and Pixar's *Coco*. Gliding in with special choreography are guests *Winnie the Pooh* and *Tigger* who will have the kids breaking into laughter and dance.

→ Singapore Indoor Stadium, 2 Stadium Walk. 📍 Stadium. From \$20.

PHOTO: FELD ENTERTAINMENT



PHOTO: MARTIN GARRIX

Hydeout; Martin Garrix

tracks off their upcoming album *Father of All*.
→ Singapore Indoor Stadium, 2 Stadium Walk.
📍 Stadium. From \$108.

MUSIC
**Symphony in the Gardens:
Gardens by the Bay**

• **FREE** Mar 15
BYOB (bring your own blanket) to Gardens by the Bay for a picnic under the stars with the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. Prepare to be serenaded with renditions of classical favourites from Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake*, Bizet's *Carmen* and Verdi's *La Traviata* and more.
→ 18 Marina Gardens Dr. 📍 Bayfront.

MUSIC
Stormzy
Mar 21
After making history as the first British rapper to headline Glastonbury, the reigning

king of grime is Vossi Bopping his way to Singapore to spit bars from his five-year discography including tracks off his sophomore album *Heavy Is The Head*.
→ Zouk, 3C River Valley Rd. 📍 Clarke Quay.
From \$55.

APRIL

MUSIC
Hydeout
Apr 10-18
The region's first multi-genre music festival shakes up the scene by packing as much uncurbed fun, global sounds and eye-catching art in one massive space. The top bill sees Gucci Mane, A\$AP Rocky, Rita Ora, DJ Snake, and Martin Garrix.
→ Gardens by the Bay, 18 Marina Gardens Dr.
📍 Bayfront. From \$178.

THINGS TO DO
HSBC Singapore Rugby Sevens
Apr 11 & 12
Get ready to rock, ruck and rumble as the world's top teams including powerhouses such as Fiji and New Zealand take on defending champion South Africa in their quest to clinch the coveted trophy. It's super family-friendly so bring the whole brood down for some action-packed fun.
→ National Stadium, 15 Stadium Rd.
📍 Bayfront. Stadium. From \$49.

Find more awesome events at
timeout.com/singapore/things-to-do



PHOTO: SINGAPORE SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

Symphony in the Gardens

SPONSORED FEATURE

STAGE
The Nuclear Family

From Mar 12

Checkpoint Theatre is back with a hilarious new comedy, *The Nuclear Family*. A follow-up to the Southeast Asian classic *Atomic Jaya* (1998), this political satire tells of one woman's mission to thwart nuclear disaster.
Running from the past has never been easy. After exiling herself to the United States, Dr Mary Yuen thought that she was done with absurd nuclear projects... or at least those that are top secret. Two decades and one daughter later, political pressures send her careening back to Malaysia and the atomic bomb she sabotaged. In an era of climate change, nuclear proliferation, and other apocalyptic anxieties, how much is Mary willing to sacrifice for her home and her family?
Written with Huzir Sulaiman's signature wit and incisiveness, this is

a play for anyone who has ever gaped at the insanity of politics but also craved for the comforts of belonging. "Even while exploring the messy tangles of Southeast Asia, *The Nuclear Family* is, at its heart, a story of the search for identity and the difficulties of returning home," remarks Huzir.
The stellar cast of Jo Tan, Rebekah Sangeetha Dorai, Munah Bagharib, and Amanda Tee, take on more than 30 zany characters and a variety of original musical numbers in this electric production. With wickedly funny writing and virtuoso acting, *The Nuclear Family* is sure to be a blast!
→ #03-01, National Library Building, Drama Centre Theatre, 100 Victoria St. 📍 Bugis. From \$45.



→ Book your seats now at sg.bookmyshow.com

SPONSORED FEATURE

STAGE
National Theatre's War Horse

From Apr 24

Hold your horses, the National Theatre of Great Britain's *War Horse* is coming to Singapore. The internationally acclaimed production is based on the beloved novel by Michael Morpurgo and has been hailed as "a landmark theatre event". One of the most successful plays in National Theatre's history, the production has won 25 awards – including the Tony Award for Best Play on Broadway. Thirteen years after its debut, *War Horse* has successfully shown in 98 towns and cities across 12 countries and is

galloping its way into the Esplanade Theatre, courtesy of Singapore Repertory Theatre and Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay.
A show of extraordinary inventiveness, *War Horse* is an immensely moving and imaginative drama that takes audiences on an extraordinary journey from the fields of rural Devon to the trenches of World War I in France. At its heart is the relationship between Albert and his beloved horse, Joey, which is sold to the cavalry and shipped from England to France during World War One.
Watch in awe as the breathing, galloping, charging horses are brought to life on stage in this unforgettable theatrical event of the year and immerse yourself in this phenomenal production when it comes to Singapore.
→ Esplanade Theatre, 1 Esplanade Dr. 📍 Esplanade. From \$48.



PHOTO: BRINKLOFF & MOEVENBURG

→ For more info, visit esplanade.com/warhorse



MY SINGAPORE

Shi Kai & Susan Teo

Owners of *The Blue Ginger*
@the.blueginger

AFTER BEING IN business for 25 years, Peranakan restaurant The Blue Ginger is finally ready for a change. This new chapter is led by 32-year-old Teo Shi Kai, the younger son who is taking over the reins of the family business. His mission? To bring the traditional, home-cooked Nonya flavours he grew up loving out of home kitchens. And that's exactly what he plans to do at The Blue Ginger's second branch, located on the first floor of recently renovated Great World mall.

He's not going at it alone, though. He's counting on the help of his mother, Susan Teo, who's been running the Tanjong Pagar outlet since 1995. She ensures the new venture doesn't deviate too far from The Blue Ginger's roots. Together with Shi Kai's modern ideas, they're looking to preserve a tasty piece of local heritage in their own way. We caught up with the duo to learn more.

"You can make tweaks to the dish, but it should still retain the same Peranakan flavour."

On modernising traditional recipes

Susan: I am still quite old-school, and I've always believed in traditional tastes. You can make tweaks to the dish, but it should still retain the same Peranakan flavour. For instance, we have our babi assam, where instead of fatty pork, we changed it to pork ribs. You still get the meat with just a little bit of fat. It's still as nice and flavourful, and the original taste of the babi assam remains.

On stepping up to the plate

Shi Kai: I feel a responsibility to keep the business going given that it's been around for 25 years. This is something my mum has been doing for so many years – the sentimentality really pushed me.

On working together

Susan: Of course we have our disagreements.

It's a steep learning curve for him. How the new generation sees things is so different from the older generation's approach. We meet halfway, we compromise, and we see what works. In order for someone to take over, new ideas have to come in. But sometimes, the old-school still has its charms.

On change

Shi Kai: I won't say everything has been turned on its head. We refreshed the logo, and made the space more open, clean, and light. The menu highlights lesser-known Peranakan dishes like kerabu kacang botol (spicy winged bean salad), kerabu timun (cucumber and chicken gizzard), and the Nonya noodles, which was previously a catering-only special.

On the future

Susan: Beyond opening more outlets, I'd also like to see The Blue Ginger continue to cook good food for people to enjoy.
■ Interview by *Fabian Loo*
→ #01-106, 1 Kim Seng Promenade. 📍 Orchard.



OVERHEARD IN SINGAPORE

"The Wuhan clan ain't nothing to mess with."

"If he wants to go on a hike for our first date I'm just not going to turn up. That's serious incompatibility."

"Since tea is an antioxidant I'm drinking more bubble tea to fortify myself."

"If men can walk around the beach with their beer bellies out then why do women have to self-police our bodies?!"

"My mum was telling her boomer friend on the phone, 'my daughter bought masks for me online, did your son buy for you?' – walau eh mother this is not the time to flex please."

"This week is my probation review. I should tell my boss I need a six-month sabbatical."

"Cruises are floating Petri dishes."

FIND ME A DATE

These city kids ditched Tinder and let us play matchmaker. Here's a blow-by-blow account of their blind date...



↑
HARDI, 32
Financial services consultant
"I'm career-driven and focused, no time for a personal life at the moment."

↑
WYNTRICE, 29
Marketing manager
"I'm working on becoming a more complete version of myself."

"She had a good energy and I liked how she made me feel comfortable."

FIRST IMPRESSION

"He looks like a kingpin, or someone in the mob."

"There was a constant flow of communication and she was funny."

CHEMISTRY

"It was really friendly. We bonded over our favourite movies, TV shows and Phoebe Waller-Bridge."

"When the lights dimmed suddenly and we both felt sleepy and the conversation dipped a little."

AWKWARD MOMENT

"Probably right at the start – as always on any first date – but the conversation flowed soon after."

"I said it was nice meeting her and we parted ways. I had to head to the hospital to check in on a client."

AFTERWARDS

"Called it a night! I had an early morning, he had work to attend to. #Adulting."

♥♥♥♥♥ "I had fun and the conversation was great – it went into interesting tangents at times."

VERDICT

♥♥♥♥♥ "Blind dates or first dates might seem scary at first but don't overthink it."

Want to get set up on a blind date? Visit bit.ly/findmeadate.

HOT SPOT

Our daters had a meal at **1-V:U**



THE ATMOSPHERE

"It was by the beach, and there were fireworks from the *Wings of Time* show – it was a perfect combination."
– Wyntrice



THE FOOD

"The octopus was really tasty! But the dark horse dish was the Thai-style natto long bean hot salad."
– Wyntrice



THE DRINKS

"I had a whiskey sour and a Sunset on V:U cocktail, which were really good."
– Hardi

→ 10 Artillery Ave. 📍 Harbourfront.

NEIGHBOURHOOD GUIDE

Siglap

Despite its spooky secrets, Siglap is far from a ghost town with its cool eateries and shops.

By Cam Khalid, illustration by Ngo Ha Le

IT'S BEEN SAID that Siglap is a hotspot for pontianak sightings. Legend has it that its name is derived from the Malay phrase 'si gelap' – which means 'the dark one' – given to it by a Sumatran prince who arrived during an eclipse. It was also a massacre site during the Japanese Occupation. But beyond its morbid past, this quaint and tranquil 'hood is home to a plethora of restaurants, cafés and pubs where easties rock up for afternoon brunch, late-night supper or a yoga sesh without the crazy crowd.

1 PETER'S BUTCHERY

Meet the freshest and finest cuts of beef, lamb, pork and chicken at this east-side butcher. Besides the usual suspects, it also offers marinated meats and Aussie beef sausages, as well as a range of seafood products. It doesn't stop there either – quality wines from South Australian wine regions like Wattonbully and the Limestone Coast also line its shelves.

→ 32 Siglap Dr. 📍 Siglap.

2 CRAFTSMEN SPECIALTY COFFEE

The strong aroma of freshly brewed coffee is the ideal antidote to lazy mornings. Whether your first order of the day is a flat white, red eye or cold brew, the coffee connoisseurs here make your Java the way you like it. And if you're hooked, you can find a selection of single origin coffee beans sitting on its shelves ready for you to bag home.

→ #01-01, Siglap V, 2 First St. 📍 Bedok.

3 SIGLAP PARK CONNECTOR

Feel the fresh breeze through your hair as you whizz through the park connector, which forms the gateway to the Eastern Coastal Loop. The path leads you towards the Tampines and Bedok Park Connectors if you want to pay these bigger 'hoods a visit. Make a pitstop at East Coast Park or Telok Kurau Park to rent a bicycle or rollerblades if you don't have your own set of wheels.

→ Starts from 1030 East Coast Park.

📍 Kembangan.

4 PLANK

This pizzeria sees Baker & Cook's Dean Brettschneider flexing his dough-making muscle to dish out thin-crust, sourdough pizzas. The wild yeast dough ferments for up to 18 hours before toppings like tomato, eggplant, mozzarella and chorizo, or smoked salmon, sour cream, dill, prawns and capers are tossed on and baked in a brick oven.

→ 1 Swan Lake Ave. 📍 Bedok.

5 COAST CYCLES

Score the perfect two-wheeler at this industrial-chic store. It carries a range of quality bikes including the sleek Coastliner designed by ex-national cyclist Jansen Tan, which allows you to navigate through the city with ease. The store also doubles as a workshop where you can bring your bikes for a tune-up or to pimp your ride.

→ 54 Siglap Dr. 📍 Bedok.

6 ART OF YOGA

Find your zen at this minimalist boutique yoga studio that runs over 60 classes in various styles, from Ashtanga Mysore to classic Hatha. After your satisfying stretches, pick up some artisanal products from homegrown brands such as Homemade Handmade and The Mala Company from its shelves.

→ 121 Upper East Coast Rd. 📍 Bedok.

7 KOTA 88

Straight out of Glodok (aka Jakarta's Chinatown), this retro-inspired restaurant serves Chinese-Indonesian cuisine till the 3am – all you supper-seekers take note. Try its signature nasi campur babi, a bowl of assorted pork bits served with fragrant chicken rice. Feeling crabby? Cheer up with the kepitng saus padang complete with Sri Lankan crab smothered in Kota 88's special spicy sauce.

→ #01-02, Springvale, 907 East Coast Rd. 📍 Bedok.

8 LITTLE ARTISTS ART STUDIO

2B or not 2B? Sharpen those pencils and get your creative juices flowing at Little Artists Art Studio. Not just for kids, the studio believes that you're never too old to learn the works of sketching, painting, clay-making, printmaking, photography and digital art.

→ 15 Siglap Rd. 📍 Bedok.



For art's sake

The six creatives you need to know in Singapore's multi-faceted art scene. By Dewi Nurjuwita, photography by Ahmad Iskandar

CERAMIC SCULPTURES INSPIRED by space shuttles taking off into the abyss. A cheerful wall covered entirely in Post-it Notes. A mixed media installation made of everyday items like pails, cricket bats, and household brushes. There is no single definition as to what art is, as long as it communicates its intended message.

We've gathered six local artists specialising in different niches who are championing the cause. This is the current state of Singapore's art scene – and it's looking more glorious than ever.

Zestro Leow

Ceramic artist



“Does it have a function if it loses its functionality?”

ENTER A LIGHT-FILLED studio hidden in an unassuming industrial building, and you might just find Zestro working on his handcrafted ceramic creations. Just last year, those pieces were shown at the Affordable Art Fair, where he was a finalist of the Young Talent Programme. The passion for the craft runs deep in his veins. He aims to share it with the world, running classes at an independent pottery studio called Common Touch Craft Unit that he co-founded with Fyon Cheong.

I learnt my craft in NAFA, where I did my Fine Art Programme. During my three years there, I put in a lot of effort and also assisted in lectures. Ceramics is a craft-based skill. So you have to practise, practise and practise.

I found myself drawn to Shinto beliefs after graduating in 2015. Although I’m not a practitioner, I’m inspired by how they worship structures, houses, objects, trees, rocks, boulders and believe that there’s a spiritual affinity going on. I started looking deeper, asking myself how people value ceramics. Does it still have a function if it loses its functionality?

I look at how I can fuse ceramics with different materials to create unique finishings – and how I can build it in a different way to give it more character. Originality is very important. I’m inspired by space shuttles that carry different things, people, or mission – and how they just leave earth behind.

The most important thing is not to create fantastic work. It’s to create something unimaginable, something that is incredible. I like thinking about how art affects us as human beings. It plays a very important role.

Everyone is working very hard in the art industry. They’re very determined. It’s a marathon, not a 100-metre race. It’s good to see the same artists at every show. But at the same time, we also look forward to seeing new faces.

It’s a big challenge for me when I use ceramics – usually associated with traditional craft – to portray contemporary art. When people look at my work and a teapot in front of them, they assume they’re the same as they’re made of similar materials.

→ Common Touch Craft Unit. Four Star Building, 44 Kallang Pl. 📍 Kallang.

Khairullah Rahim

Assemblage artist

KHAIRULLAH’S CAREER HAPPENED almost serendipitously after he graduated from LASALLE College of the Arts. Now a part-time lecturer and a renowned artist, Khai creates primarily through assemblage – with commonplace items he finds around the city such as shower heads, signages, concrete blocks and broken-off bits of road curbs. In fact, that forms the basis of his Singapore Biennale 2019 commission, *Intimate Apparitions*.

I’ve always dealt with presenting stories of communities – particularly the marginalised. More often than not, these are the minority groups. For my Singapore Biennale piece, *Intimate Apparitions*, I worked with these communities: particularly gay men, drag queens, Indian migrant workers and domestic helpers. I was interested in how they utilise space. For instance, Indian migrant workers who come together every weekend to meet at empty fields, transforming them into cricket pitches.

I don’t particularly think about or try to define my niche. Maybe my working style or process could be a bit different. But then again, I’m sure all artists think that way. If anything, what stands out is my willingness to embrace this sense of ‘making do’.

I got into art by accident. Maybe it’s a very naive beginning but I’ve always been interested in drawing. I joined LASALLE thinking that I wanted to pursue interior design. In Singapore, a lot of us have been programmed to think about practicality, and I figured I could make a living from that. But when I was going through my foundation programme, one of my lecturers encouraged me to consider the fine arts and I thought, ‘yeah, why not?’.

I’ve learnt to embrace change and let go of what I had in mind initially. I usually have an idea. There’s a sketchbook, there’s always a visual. But more often than not, it’s always a blur. Most of the time, things will change midway.

I didn’t decide to be an artist, it’s an innate thing.



Things worked out for me and I really enjoy and feel for the craft. I definitely feel an affinity for art making so I decided to just do it. Ten years later, here I am. It comes with a fair bit of challenges and obstacles – but it’s something I love.

The audience should embrace their own judgment instead of relying on given things. There is definitely more interest in art now but like any partnership, this is a two-way street. The responsibility lies with the viewers as well.

Who knows if I’ll end up doing something else? I am quite skeptical as a person. But I’m pleasantly surprised I’ve lasted this long. Especially here in Singapore. It’s always at the back of my head – how much longer can I do this?

→ Gillman Barracks. 9 Lock Rd. 📍 Labrador Park.

“In Singapore, a lot of us have been programmed to think about practicality, and I figured I could make a living from [interior design]”

Soph O

Visual artist

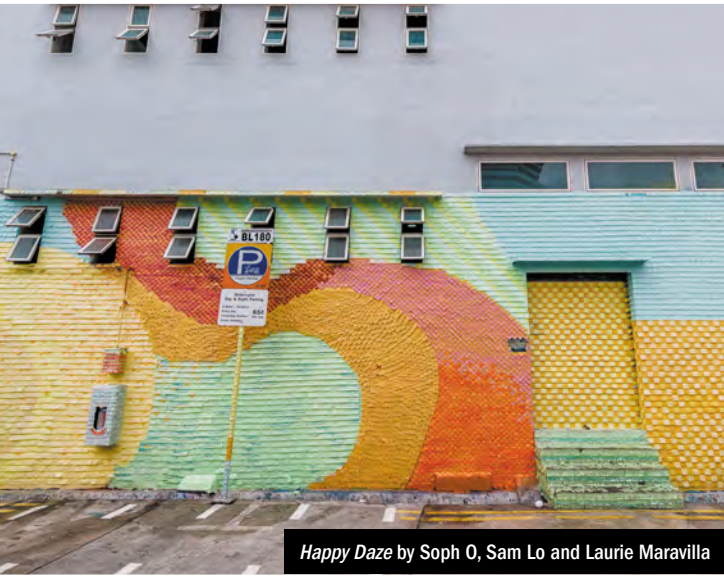
WITH AN ABILITY to make anyone feel at ease, Soph's personality is just as colourful as her works – which you might have seen adorning the alleyways of Kampong Glam or music festivals like Neon Lights. Beyond being aesthetically pleasing, Soph's bold pieces tackle social issues head on – one mural at a time.

I went to art school in New Zealand and I was completely lost when I came back to Singapore. In school, they never taught us how to sell our ideas. We never talked about money. But I had to make a living. So I started painting and doing 2-D art because I thought it was an easier way to bridge the gap between people and my work. Prior to that, I was mainly doing installations and 3-D sculptures.

I chose to be an artist because I enjoy that solitude and process of making art. But when I paint murals, or when I create like bigger works, I enjoy the company. It can get lonely sometimes.

I love anything that is a bit crazy and laborious. The process of doing something repetitive is enjoyable. Because then I can bring everyone together and we can work on a project as one, it feels almost therapeutic in a way.

I think a lot of artists still hold full-time jobs in order to fund their passion. Whether it's putting money into a studio or having an art-related job in order to fund the art practise. The hustle is real.



Happy Daze by Soph O, Sam Lo and Laurie Maravilla

As artists in Singapore, we tend to self censor. We can't really challenge the status quo and talk about politics or deeper issues. Everything ought to be pleasant and pleasing to the eye, and relatable to everyday life. I love everyday life, but art should be more than telling things as they are. It should be able to make you feel and dive into something deeper that words cannot describe.

As we merge seamlessly with technology, I'm afraid that we might lose the tactile quality in our lives. Everything is curated now: from the music we like, to the art we see, and the posts that have been fed to us. I want to encourage people to go out more and experience things. When I make art, I try to highlight small details that require the audience to touch, hear, and interact with the piece. That's the thing I want to bring back.

→ Aliwal Arts Centre. 28 Aliwal St. 📍 Bugis.



“In [art] school, they never taught us how to sell our ideas. We never talked about money. But I had to make a living”



Aisha Rosli

Fine artist

LOOKING AT AISHA'S paintings, it's hard to believe that she's just 23. Her pieces are on display at the new Cuturi Gallery, where she was handpicked as part of its mentorship programme. Call it a stroke of luck or ingenious talent, but the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts graduate sold all her paintings within four days. This is one young artist to watch.

My art is an extension of myself. It's like writing diary entries in visual form – I let my emotions guide me. It's a routine that I have to do in order to express myself. After finishing my paintings, I compile them and put them in a setting that evokes a movie – or a children's tale like the *Wizard of Oz* so I can relate to them. That way, I can connect to my art better.

I've been jotting down my feelings since I was young. I can't pin-point when I decided to be an artist. But maybe it all started in secondary three when we had to choose if we wanted to specialise in art or design and technology. I chose art. I feel

lucky that I was able to travel to Vienna for an exhibition with my school. I met different artists and saw different types of art, which was different from what I perceived art to be. My exposure to art in school was painting or drawing something realistic. I had never seen performance art or installations. From there, I followed my curiosity and ventured down that path.

I work with acrylic and oil sticks, which create something reminiscent of glazed paintings. I like to remove and add layers to create depth. The fluid movement also makes it therapeutic.

When I paint using spray bottles, it's like playing with chance. The outcome is so unpredictable. It's very satisfying when I get a certain movement with the paint as it's not something I can control. I look up to British painter Cecily Brown, who does chaotic paintings that are still pleasing to the eye.

I never liked putting my work out publicly, especially on

Instagram. I didn't think they were good enough. But a friend of mine told me to keep posting. I was discovered by Seelan Palay from Coda Culture, who sent me a DM on Instagram.

Being a young artist, I can't afford a lot of things – be it a studio space or art materials. It creates limitations. I paint in the kitchen at home. I make do with what I have and it has made me a more experimental person.

People usually say that art is not important and has no future here. They think art is easy. Older people also say that it's not a legitimate profession. Different people have their own opinions.

I don't know if I will be a full-time artist in the long run. I'm afraid that my work won't be well-received. But I'm creating for myself. I don't think about making money. I can take up a part time job – as long as I get to create.

→ Cuturi Gallery. #02-16, Pacific Plaza, 9 Scotts Rd. 📍 Orchard.

“People usually say that art is not important and has no future. They think art is easy”



“I had a full year of hearing negative feedback, especially because my artworks do not photograph well. One comment that really hurt me was, ‘oh, is that it?’”

Faris — Contemporary artist Nakamura

My works focus on that element of discovery. Visually, some parts of my artworks are hidden – there are parts you don’t quite get to see in the 2-D space. They don’t photograph well and force people to come down and experience them. It is an act of negotiation with the artwork and the space the it’s in. You discover new things – sometimes it’s joy, sometimes it’s confusion, and sometimes it’s discomfort because you have to be in positions where you have to press your face against the wall just to see that little bit of detail.

You know it’s your passion and something you really want to do when you’re dead tired and still want to create. That’s how I know art is definitely for me.

As an artist who also works in a museum, I’m still shocked that the public do not understand what contemporary art is. Because it’s not the typical painting, drawing, or sculpture – it’s more than that. Sometimes contemporary art is

not objective. It can be an installation of lights; or it can be an environment that you create. People don’t understand that. Sometimes they say, ‘what I’ve seen is not art’. Seeing the public’s unwillingness to learn and understand what contemporary art is hurts me a lot. My mission is to educate people about contemporary art.

I had a full year of hearing negative feedback, especially because my artworks do not photograph well. Whenever an artist wants to be part of shows, they have to send images of their works first. One sentence that really hurt me was, ‘oh, is that it?’.

For perceptions to change, we have to start educating people from pre-school. Children understand art and are more willing to find out more about what contemporary art is. I think as a whole, we’re lacking art education.

→ The Private Museum. #02-06, 51 Waterloo St. ☎ Bencoolen.

MOST PEOPLE FIND themselves having to separate their passion from their professional life. But not Faris. By day, you can find him in the operations department of the Singapore Art Museum, giving tours at the museum’s temporary exhibits. But, most art aficionados recognise him as a prolific name known for his architecturally driven works – boasting sold-out shows at S.E.A Focus and Richard Koh Fine Arts on his resume.

MALIK IS A walking paradox. For one, the jovial artist is just as fluent in his mother tongue, Malay, as the Chinese calligraphy strokes that flow from his brush. But don’t box him up as a traditional artist, either. He’s an advocate of using virtual reality to revolutionise calligraphy. And his studio? A cosy corner at the back of his mother’s vintage salon in Haji Lane.

I first got into calligraphy in Japan, and learnt from a Japanese teacher who told me not to give up. When I got to Singapore, I had to source out a master. Unfortunately, many were reluctant to teach me as I didn’t speak Mandarin. My master, Ho Sou Ping, had to design a special curriculum just for me. I kept on asking him and he said, ‘if the calling is that strong, maybe I’m obligated to teach.

I count myself lucky because I’ve been under the tutelage of two Cultural Medallion winners. The first is Iskandar Jalil, who had a studio at the Malay Heritage Centre. He taught me ceramics; and formed my most basic understanding of art. I was also the late Lee Wen’s personal assistant.

In my formative years, I did a lot of traditional work. But I’ve made a foray into VR calligraphy, which stems from my desire to push the boundaries and enter the realm of performance and sculpture calligraphy.

Someone in the arts scene once told me: ‘You should be a Grab driver instead of an artist’. I think these sentiments can be toxic, so I don’t focus on them.

Whatever you do, it’s important that you keep your roots in tradition. My mentor once told me that artists who learn traditional art, whether it’s calligraphy or drawing, shouldn’t stay for too long. Otherwise, they’ll be known as a

traditionalist, and it might be hard for them to find their own voice. But if one leaves the traditional too early, the art might become mediocre – because they’re not grounded.

Support from my family and friends have been vital. Sometimes I get anxiety before my performances, but my friends and family members are there for me every step of the way. Most of them are Malay and they don’t understand the craft, but they still try to help.

→ Kreta Ayer Heritage Gallery. 28 Kreta Ayer Rd.
☎ Outram Park.

Malik Mazlan

Calligraphy artist

“Someone in the art scene once told me: ‘You should be a Grab driver instead of an artist’”



Food

Edited by Nicole-Marie Ng

Hide and seek

Shedding light on some of our city's most elusive spots. By Fabian Loo

The Dragon Chamber



Omoté Dining

WE HAVE A lot going on for a country that's commonly referred to as the Little Red Dot. The adjective offers a hint at our physical space; Singapore's one of the most densely populated metropolises – brimming with handsome structures, charming skylines, and endless dining options to feed over five million hungry bellies. But for a tiny country so jam-packed with everything, it can also offer a surprising selection of hidden treats, tucked behind plain doors and secret entrances. You just need to know where to find them.

Omoté Dining

At mealtimes, Omoté draws a steady crowd. Many stand in line for its affordable Japanese fare, in particular, the chirashi don (\$12.80) that's topped with diced seafood. But there's another reason why people keep coming back – and it involves no queuing at all.

Omoté Dining is an exclusive dining space available only to those in the know. According to Lynette Tan from the business development team, the idea was inspired by Japanese restaurants that are hidden along side streets or tucked away in corners.

The secret dining room at the back of the restaurant offers an elegant meal served in a Zen enclave outfitted with minimalist furnishings and ornate Japanese ceramics. "Omoté Dining embraces washouku," explains Lynette, "a form of traditional Japanese cuisine centered around rice and side dishes made with seasonal ingredients." Head chef Nagae Toshiharu uses grains sourced from Niigata prefecture as a base for his set meals, or in the sushi omakase experience. It's an intimate affair typically reserved for Omoté's regular customers, their friends, and now, you.

→ #03-24A, Thomson Plaza, 301 Upper Thomson Rd.
Marymount.



D*** Soup, The Dragon Chamber

The Dragon Chamber

Chinese food is often mystified in Western films. It's portrayed as secretive, elusive, and at times, even a little sketchy, as noted by Norman Hartono. He wanted to incorporate that intrigue into Chinese dining here. "We want to modernise Chinese cuisine and reinvent the way people, especially the younger crowd, perceive it," says the creative director of the Ebb and Flow Group.

The Dragon Chamber might look like a typical kopitiam at first glance, serving wonton mee and roast meats during the day, but it's when the sun sets that it truly comes alive. Camouflaged behind a fridge door is the *real* entrance to the darker, more mysterious restaurant – with old posters and chinoiserie lending an underground vibe reminiscent of gang dens in old Hong Kong.

The neon-lit decor is just the beginning. The menu, too, is full of surprises. Uncommon ingredients are celebrated, resulting in dishes like the Dragon Claw (\$55), a crocodile paw braised in a herbal sauce; the theatrical Flaming Pineapple Beef (\$30); and the D*** Soup (\$30), where herbs are double-boiled with the reproductive organ of a male crocodile for over six hours.

It's a meal unlike any served in conventional Chinese restaurants. Norman shares: "The excitement of noticing a new detail or a trying out a new dish keeps the experience fresh."

→ 2 Circular Rd. Clarke Quay.

Tempura Oji

Music lovers should bookmark Tempura Oji – not just for the food, as much as crunching into the deep-fried king tiger prawn (\$19) give out a satisfying sound – but for its slick beats.

The sizzle from the tempura bar frying up spam (\$10) or tempura moriwase (\$19) permeates the space in the day, but as dusk settles, techno tunes and house music starts take over. It's provided by a lineup of local DJs in a concealed bar

Find more food recommendations at [timeout.com/singapore/restaurants](https://www.timeout.com/singapore/restaurants)

located within Tempuja Oji. To gain access, search for an odd-looking beer fridge and walk through the door.

"Creating a hidden bar allows us to break away from the norm," shares Dragg Wong, the co-founder of this two-in-one concept. "It's something meant to be discovered." And those adventurous enough are treated to nightly performances that range from house, soul, and funk – complemented with a selection of signature cocktails that include the Kaffir Sour (\$20), made with ginger-infused whisky, kaffir lime leaves, and homemade ginger marmalade; and The Blind Pig (\$24) served with Roku gin, beetroot marmalade, gula Melaka, and a slice of candied bacon.

"We just want to see happy faces chatting away, enjoying the food, drinks, and experience," says Dragg. So while the combination of batter, booze, and beats in one location is an usual one, the eclectic mix might just be the winning recipe.

→ 51 Kreta Ayer Rd. Outram Park.



Tempura Oji

HAWKER SPOTLIGHT

Original Changi Ten Mile Fried Carrot Cake

Time-tested carrot cake passed through the generations.
By *Fabian Loo*

QUEK SIO TEE has been selling carrot cake for as long as he can remember. In the 1950s, he and his brother peddled around the kampong, selling the dish for just \$0.10.

“It was easier back then,” recalls the 68-year-old. “There wasn’t a need to pay rent, we just went around in our trishaw. Now, you have to sell till the evening to make up for stall rentals.”

The second-generation hawker left the trade briefly, but the passing of his brother spurred him to return. But time has weakened his knees, and he finds it hard to stand for long.

Fortunately, Sio Tee has a protégé.

His daughter, Elenda Quek, decided to leave her job as a teacher to continue take on the family business. “I wanted to make my parents proud,” she says. “This was something that brought us up when we were kids, so it’s important that I continue it.”

Together with her mother and cousins, Elenda now runs six different hawker stalls – all selling the same fried carrot cake (\$4) that the elder Quek used to prepare. You can usually find her at the Old Airport Road branch, manning the wok by herself.

“Finding help and someone who will work in

LOCAL DISH OF THE MONTH



this trade is not easy,” shares the 32-year-old. “The heat, and the long hours – it takes a toll on those who are not used to it.”

Teaching, surprisingly, helped prepare her for the role. She’s no stranger to long hours and standing constantly. She’s also helped out at the stall since young, which acclimatised her to the heat of hawker centres.

Still, it took over four years of learning before Elenda was deemed ready by her father. “He is a perfectionist,” she says. Till now, he insists on

frying their own batch of chilli every week – a condiment that, according to Elenda, sets the family’s carrot cake apart from others.

But there’s something else that keeps people coming back. Elenda explains: “Sometimes when I am in a bad mood and fry a plate of carrot cake, it’s not going to taste as nice as when I am in a good mood.”

“What makes a good plate of carrot cake is that you really put your heart into it.”

→ #01-56, 85 Bedok North St. 4. 📍 Tanah Merah.

3 QUESTIONS with Sio Tee and Elenda

1. Black or white?

Elenda: I prefer the white carrot cake, something more fragrant and savoury. But my dad’s signature is his black carrot cake.

2. What are the essential elements when frying carrot cake?

Sio Tee: You must be generous with the ingredients. Don’t skimp on the garlic and

preserved radish. And you need enough heat to bring out the taste.

3. What would you like to see in our hawker culture?

Elenda: That more youngsters can join the trade, and ensure that the original quality of the food is kept without altering the taste.



Geok Choo, Elenda and Sio Tee

RESTAURANT REVIEW

Allium



THERE’S A LITTLE diner with just 16 seats hidden within Kensington Square. It’s so low-key that you might just walk past it without taking a second glance.

But that means missing out on Allium, a one-month-old restaurant helmed by chef Dillion Ng, the man behind the now-defunct GastroSmiths and The Humble Loaf. His latest venture is an environmentally conscious one: produce comes from sustainable sources, beef is used minimally, and vegetables are plentiful in the brunch menu.

“What would you recommend?” We ask the waitstaff. “Everything,” he replies, after taking a moment to consider. He goes on to explain that the adjacent table is occupied by his family – ordered almost everything and their plates have been wiped clean.

That sets us up with high expectations when served with the forest mushroom and charred rosemary soup (\$14). The base, thinner and runnier than what we’re used to makes up for its lack of creaminess with body and depth. It’s a hint that the chef’s talent lies in his ability to make simplicity shine. And it’s a theory proven when the highlight of the meal arrives.

A humble bowl of congee (\$18), is often deemed too plain and unsurprising to command a place on a restaurant menu. But here, it’s a layered production, naturally sweetened by zucchini and chayote squash, and fortified with umami-rich kelp and vegetable stock. A sprinkling of pine nuts, and the accompanying side of lotus root kinpira, suffused with the nutty aroma of sesame oil, adds a pleasant crunch to the smooth gruel.

Similarly, the fenugreek white wine curry (\$20) places its trust in fresh produce. Okra, thin French green beans, and beancurd are left to stew in a potent slurry, slick with spiciness that lingers on the tongue.

Even if you’re stuffed at the end of the meal, don’t skip over the sourdough waffles (\$15) that are so airy and light, they slip easily from fork to mouth.

That’s the appeal of Allium. It doesn’t blow you away with flamboyance and showmanship. It impresses with deceptively simple, well-thought-out dishes that unfold as you reach for another mouthful – until you realise that just like the table next door, you’ve finished your meal and your plates are clean.

■ *Fabian Loo*

→ #01-11, Kensington Square, 2 Jln Lokam.

📍 Bartley.

IT IS...

A quaint eatery that impresses with its straightforward approach

TRY THIS...

Pine nut and root vegetable congee, served with lotus root



Pine nut and root vegetable congee



Lamb cutlets

Burn



The smell of smoke first greets you when you step inside; almost everything on Burn’s menu is cooked – nay charred – in a custom wood-fired brick oven. Skip the small plates and head straight for the mains. Get the smoky lamb cutlets (\$28) – its time in the oven has removed all trace of gaminess, or sample the Cuban chicken, stuffed between slices of rustic rye (\$17). The oven’s transformative power extends beyond the usual proteins. Even non-vegetarians will love the grilled pumpkin and feta (\$20) and all its tender sweetness.

→ 21 Club St. 📍 Telok Ayer.

Zorba



Transport yourself to the coastal Santorini islands with Zorba’s riverfront locale and azure blue-white decor. Settle in with a glass of Mythos (\$12), a famous lager from Greece, and peruse the menu rooted in traditional Hellenic cuisine. Hot tip: refrain from ordering the platter of dips (\$28) – they make their appearance in the mains anyway. Souvlaki of beef striploin (\$28) comes with a clean and bright tzatziki to slash through the meat’s smoky char. The highly recommended octopus (\$30) would have been perfect if it hadn’t spent too long on the grill – developing unpleasant blackened bits of bitterness. For a light end to the meal, try the Greek yoghurt (\$8) sweetened with honey and garnished with walnuts.

→ #01-02, The Riverhouse, 3A River



Octopus

Drink

A mealtime drink

Lift your glass and sip your way through your favourite hawker dishes. By *Fabian Loo*

COCKTAILS OFTEN COME sweet, sour, and at times, salty. But rarely savoury. It's still a peculiar concept in drink-making in Singapore beyond the boundary-pushing bars. Still, a handful of bold players are taking a page from stovetops – drawing inspiration from local dishes and recreating them in cocktails. From char siew to laksa, here are various Singaporean favourites you can sip.



Ah Sam Cold Drink Stall Laksa (\$24)

With a colloquial name like Ah Sam Cold Drink Stall, the menu at this bar, unsurprisingly, draws inspiration from local culture. “We wanted to recreate a hawker drink stall that serves locally inspired cocktails,” says bar manager Sim Sze Wei.

Everything, from the menu to the interior, is delightfully patriotic. Old-school biscuit tins and even the latticed window grills are sourced from dumpsters and flea markets, while signature cocktails, such as Milo Dinosaur and Chrysanthemum Tea, are boozy renditions of familiar beverages found in hawker centres.

But the Laksa (\$24) takes cue from the spicy, coconutty noodle dish. Sze Wei explains: “The focus is on the freshness of the laksa leaves, not so much on the richness.”

To lend a savoury edge, the fat from dried shrimp is first rendered, then infused with vodka. It's then used as a base with other



Laksa, Ah Sam Cold Drink Stall

quintessential herbs and spices: fresh laksa leaves, lemongrass, chilli padi, lime juice, sugar, and a touch of coconut cream. “And we top it off with powdered dried shrimp to give it that extra oomph,” says Sze Wei.

“The challenge was to extract the flavours of laksa without making it too overpowering,” he adds. “In the end, we manage to achieve a balanced drink that's fresh, tasty, and at the same time, very familiar.”

→ 60A Boat Quay. ☎ Clarke Quay.



Mona Lounge My Favourite Roast (\$22)

Get transported to the hedonistic days of 1980s Hong Kong where triads ruled at Mona Lounge. True to its gangland inspiration, this back-room cocktail lounge even requires a secret code to gain access. Once inside, sway to the smooth tunes of Chinese jazz as you sip on Asian-influenced tipples.

The drinks selection, conceived by bar consultant Edwin Poh, is full of surprises. “I

love hawker food,” says Edwin. “And I enjoy the challenge of making food-inspired cocktails.”

From his unique, savoury creations, My Favourite Roast (\$24) is one that draws from char siew rice. According to Edwin, replicating this layered dish, with all its assertive flavours – sweet, salty, savoury, and roasty – wasn't easy. Mirroring ingredients from the actual dish, he makes a blend of chilli padi, calamansi, and Japanese cucumber, mixes in a dash of homemade char siew syrup, and uses Remy Martin VSOP instead of rice. “The sweet element is the key to balancing the drink,” says Edwin. It's then finished with smoke and a slice of pork on the side since its meaty flavours can't be replicated in the drink.

→ 2/F, 25B Boon Tat St. ☎ Telok Ayer.



The Elephant Room Beer Garden (\$22)

Little India is filled with colour, culture, sight, sounds, and for Yugnes Susela, inspiration.

The drinkmaker finds it in jasmine-scented Jothi Store and Flower Shop on Campbell Lane. He sees it in the bustling Tekka Market. He also derives it from the beer garden at Chander Road where foreign workers gather after work for a cold beer and massive plate or biryani.

“It had me reminiscing the good moments I shared with my family and friends in Little India, and how these labourers bring to Singapore a communal togetherness that India is known for,” says the co-owner and head bartender of The Elephant Room. “I just had to capture this story in a cocktail.”

And so, Yugnes spent over three months translating his experiences into a drinks – and the aptly named Beer Garden (\$22).

He starts by making his own biryani whiskey, which blends spicier, punchier Southern biryani spices with the sour, tangy profile of Northern biryani. “It gives the drink real personality,” Yugnes shares. Spices and ghee are thrown into

the mix, before it's fat-washed and barley and brine are added. The final act of carbonation “opens up” the cocktail. And a cured-egg papadum garnish replicates the meal.

“My concoctions are an extension of my experiences and stories,” he explains, which has led to seven bold cocktails that celebrate various parts of Little India and Indian culture. “I hope that people walk away from The Elephant Room



Beer Garden, The Elephant Room

with a better understanding of the culture I am so proud to be a part of.”

→ 20A Teck Lim Rd. ☎ Outram Park.



Nutmeg and Clove This Is Crab! (\$23)

While most find the study of Singapore's history uninspiring, Nutmeg and Clove uses it to create drinks. Its latest menu explores our cultural melting pot, and pays homage to the five races – Chinese, Malay, Indian, Peranakan, Eurasian – and their cuisines.

As owner Colin Chia explains: “What we want is for our customers to understand Singapore a little better through the lens of delicious cocktails.”

Chilli crab, a national favourite, was an obvious choice. But to capture the flavours of the dish in a drink, Colin and his team had to first learn how to cook it. So they went into the hawker centers to learn from the best. The biggest challenge, however, was to retain the core elements of sweet, spicy, and umami – without having it be too loud and “in your face”.

“You don't want it to taste too much like food, so the balance in flavours is the toughest to get right,” says Colin. A complex line-up of ingredients goes into making This Is Crab! (\$23). Fresh and dried chillies, tomatoes, and seaweed are mixed with seafood consommé to lend an umami note. Monkey Shoulder gin lends a hint of complementary fruitiness, and a finishing splash of Port Charlotte whisky imparts a smoky, wok hei perfume.

→ 10A Ann Siang Hill. ☎ Telok Ayer.



This Is Crab!, Nutmeg and Clover

DRINK THIS



Sage 43

Platform owner and bartender Sin Kim Shin shares a simple, low-alcohol cocktail you can imbibe without worrying about flushing red.
By *Fabian Loo*

AT FIRST SIP, the Sarsaparilla 85 is sweet, and slightly spicy. Then the ice melts. But rather than watering down the drink, it alters its taste. Earthy notes start to emerge, and the spiciness intensifies.

“Different flavour profiles emerge after the ice thaws,” explains bartender Sin Kim Shin. Quite the opposite of what you usually expect in a cocktail. Other similar drinks, where the flavour gets altered with time, can also be found at his drinking studio at the end of Amoy Street, Platform.

The focus at this sun-strewn space: low-alcohol beverages. “We are in an Asian country with a lot of light

drinkers,” he shares. “I’m one myself but I want to be able to enjoy more than one drink.”

It’s easy to do so at Platform.

The drinkmaker plays with wines, liquors, and homemade cordials – and adds a touch of carbonation to “bring out the flavour” of drinks that are low in alcoholic content.

He says: “It doesn’t matter if it’s spirit-forward or low-alcohol – as long as it can express the flavours of the ingredients.”

Which is why common ingredients are favoured here – to yield unique combinations that are as surprising as they are refreshing.

The Sage 43 (\$17) is an example, and a personal favourite of Kim Shin. To make it, sage cordial and fino sherry are mixed together with tonic water to lend a herbaceous, dry finish. The drink is created in five minutes, using whatever’s available on hand. “I believe that a good bartender can make a great drink using ingredients that are readily available.”

There’s a more noble reason why commonplace ingredients are heavily featured: he hopes that people can easily recreate these cocktails anywhere. Even the interior of Platform, like the menu, is designed to reflect the same pared down ethos. The bar station is moved out to the walking area, and the countertop is kept spotlessly clean and neat.

“People can easily observe how you create a cocktail,” shares Kim Shin.

“Sometimes for cocktail-making, you don’t need to think too much,” he adds. “The simplest ingredients and recipes can create the most amazing flavour profiles.”

→ #01-01, 19 Amoy St. ☎ Telok Ayer.

MAKE IT YOURSELF



Sage leaf cordial

10g sage leaf, 500ml water, 250g white sugar



Cocktail batch

250ml sage leaf cordial, 300ml Tio Pepe Fino Sherry



Sage 43

50ml cocktail batch, 120ml Fever Tree Light Tonic

1 To make sage leaf cordial: Slow cook sage leaves with 500ml of water for 10 minutes. Strain, then top up with hot water till 500ml. Dissolve 250g white sugar in the mixture. Bottle and label for future use.



2 To make cocktail batch: Combine 250ml of sage cordial with 300ml Tio Pepe Fino Sherry.



3 To make Sage 43: Pour 50ml of cocktail batch and 120ml Fever Tree Light Tonic over a tall glass with ice. Garnish with a seedless grape.



BAR REVIEW

Barbary Coast



ATHEMED COCKTAIL joint along Boat Quay is usually a recipe for disaster. But not when industry powerhouses Michael Callahan and Celia Schoonraad are at the helm – the former is the founding bartender and co-owner of 28 HongKong Street while the latter has done global bartending stints across Europe, Australia and America. Needless to say, if anyone can make this two-storey space that spans three shophouses work, it’s these two.

Barbary Coast is inspired by the San Francisco district of the same name back in the mid-1800s, where miners flocked in during the gold rush and sailors docked on its shores. This gave rise to two types of bars that capture the essence of the coast. On the first floor, there’s Deadfall, an accessible, no-nonsense spot with exposed brick walls and raw concrete floors; greasy pub grub (\$12 to \$15) including a plate of nachos with refillable

cheese; and most importantly, \$14 colour-coded cocktails, \$12 glasses of wine and draft beer from \$6. All sorts of people, pirates and pooches are welcomed here – and if you’re lucky, you might even spot Callahan’s puppy.

The second storey could not be more different, with mismatched floral wallpaper, glittering chandeliers over plush velvet settees and private booths where a push of a button brings forth a bottle of Billecart-Salmon champagne (\$100). The cocktails are equally charming, with something for every taste – sip on the Low High Brow (\$22), for a sour and fizzy start to the

evening, or the Tea with Raspberries and Cream (\$25) for something sweet. They all make good drinking with a cheese and charcuterie board available in various sizes (\$50/\$95/\$145).

Barbary Coast achieves what it promises, transporting you to old-world San Francisco – regardless of which version you choose to live out. It does so with style, without bogging you down with kitsch or gimmicks – like the miners of yore, this spot strikes gold. ■ *Nicole-Marie Ng*
→ 16 N Canal Rd. ☎ Clarke Quay.



IT IS...

A gorgeous two-storey watering hole inspired by 1800s San Francisco

TRY THIS...

The Tea with Raspberries and Cream (\$25) with a board of cheese and charcuterie

Live Twice ★★★★★



Saying goodbye is never easy. Late last year, the Jigger & Pony Group shut down Flagship to the dismay of Old Fashioned purists everywhere. It twisted the knife in deeper by replacing it with Live Twice, a bar that’s a world apart from its grungy, divey past.

At its head is Leow Yingying, a Diageo World Class winner who’s been with the group since 2017. The quietly confident bartender stirs up drinks that are fresh, polished and playfully experimental without unnecessary bells and whistles. Garnishes are kept simple – if they appear at all – and the cocktails’ crystalline clarity is emphasised by elegant glassware. There are 14 drinks on the menu, with the first half inspired by classics you’d find in a Japanese craft cocktail bar. There you’ll find the Vesper (\$25), a dangerously deceptive tippie befitting of its *James Bond Casino Royale* origins. On the other side of the menu are creations named after geisha such as Spring Riot (\$25), a blend of Roku Gin, Merlet Crème de Pêche, house-distilled sakura soda and daikon.

→ 20 Bukit Pasoh Rd. ☎ Chinatown.

Bee’s Island Drinkery ★★☆☆☆

Millennial pink wallpaper, ceiling planters and Tiki cocktails – all the right ingredients to create that island-paradise vibe. Bee’s Island Drinkery is a pop-up bar that acts as a colourful front for The Nomads, a sleek kitchen space dishing out Central Asian cuisine. In theory, the concepts are to work in tandem – with the restaurant providing bar snacks and the bar shaking up drinks for the tasting menu – and for them to feel completely different.

However within Bee’s Island Drinkery, the disparity is already apparent. The food fares better than the cocktails, with generous portions of smoked-kissed leeks (\$6), oyster mushrooms (\$10) and charred Wagyu rib fingers (\$15) dressed in all manner of deliciousness coming straight from the charcoal grill. But given the too-low bar stools and narrow countertop that doesn’t shield from possible accidents – it’s hard to successfully navigate each morsel from plate to mouth without fear of drips or runaway nosh.

The drinks are tropical, fruity and criminally diluted. The Tropicana (\$18), a combination of Monkey 47 dry gin, yellow watermelon juice and Midori melon liqueur is watered down from the first sip, as is the Beach Please (\$18), a twist on a Pina Colada that comes in a massive urn filled to the brim with ice. The most flavourful cocktail comes in the form of the Pineapple Negroni (\$18) mixed with coconut- and pineapple-infused rum, Campari and martini rosso – but even then, Bee’s Island Drinkery is yet to find its wings.

→ 72 Telok Ayer St. ☎ Telok Ayer.



Shopping & Style

Edited by Delfina Utomo

You grow girl

Leaf your best life by welcoming indoor plants into the home. By *Delfina Utomo*

FOR EVERY HIGH-RISE building or skyscraper we have in Singapore, there is some greenery in the form of a park or a row of trees. Integrating verdant landscapes into a metropolis setting has put us on the map. Let's stretch this even further by letting in some nature to our personal space. Not only does it lend a pop of colour to the room, these magical living (and breathing) green things clean the air so you can breathe easy.



Easi Grow

A TILLY A DAY

 Air plants are the way to go for busy people

It started as a hobby, which grew into an obsession, and now, Wan Ting is the proud owner of A Tilly A Day. Rock up to the store in Waterway Point and you'll find serenity in the natural greenery. The shop gets its name from tillensia – the scientific name for air plants, her biggest passion. Discover how diverse the range of air plants are: from the bulbous and onion-looking to the leafy and flowering sorts. And the absolute best part of air plants is that it basically survives on nothing, besides some water misting and the occasional bath.

Tell us about your obsession with air plants. I love plants but was never good at keeping them alive – until I had air plants. I joined many Facebook hobby groups where I would get tips on how to care for air plants and I began putting in more effort in gardening. My passion started when the

air plants I had started growing and giving me babies. Soon one became 10 and that made me feel so excited, like I had done something right.

What do people always get wrong about plants?


That they are very difficult to maintain. People should also make an effort to know more about the plant type and the conditions it needs to thrive. Every plant is different. For some, its needs are very minimal. For more finicky ones, it's all about balance – not too much sunlight which means a lot of shifting it around. But remember, taking care of plants should be enjoyable and you shouldn't feel like a slave to your plants.

What do you love about plants?

I think for me it's the feeling of putting some time into your hobby and then seeing results. I always feel calmer when I'm working on my plants. It's a form of therapy for me.

→ #02-03, 83 Punggol Central. 📍 Punggol.

TUMBLEWEED

 To build your dream jungle home

There's no doubt that Tumbleweed is the prettiest plant store in town. Its maximalist display of ferns, giant cacti and other lush leafy greens inspires anyone looking to spruce up their space.

Growing up in Hong Kong, store owner Denise Law fully understands that you need to balance the hectic pace of the city with something that slows you down. It might also surprise you to know that plants in the store are easy to maintain and suited for the indoor life. Elevate the look even more by pairing your plant with one of its pastel-coloured pots, hand-painted vases and woven baskets to recreate the homey-tropical look.

When did you decide to open a plant shop?

I had the idea in 2017. I had been living in Singapore for about a year. I'd been struck by Singapore's commitment to plant life as part of its urban planning.

But what I thought was missing was a platform to inspire individuals to develop their love of plants in their homes and at work.

We love the vibe of the store, what inspires your aesthetics?


I read a lot of philosophy. I am interested in big picture ideas that change the way I see the world. In terms of fashion and design I like people who blend out-of-the-box visuals with function. My favourite brands and artists include Balenciaga, Dorte Mandrup and M.C. Escher. At Tumbleweed, we follow fashion and design trends closely and our layout usually incorporates trending ideas but overall, the space should make you feel good – and inspired to bring more plants into your place too!

What would you like to see more in Singapore?

I'd like to see more 'wild' spaces in Singapore. Rewilding is all the rage and I think this showsthat people have got to the point where they want to just let nature be.

→ 33 Tembeling Rd. 📍 Paya Lebar.

EASI GROW

 Start small with succulents and miniature arrangements

Beautiful plants like ferns and palms require lots of care but succulents don't. If you plan on bringing plants into your life but you're iffy about sticking to watering schedules, start with a succulent. Like air plants, the range of succulent types is extensive. At Easi Grow, you'll learn about the different species of succulent, from the common aloe vera to ones that look like livingstones. Located in Ann Siang, the store is a green respite in the city for plant lovers. We catch up with its owner Chan Weng Seng for more tips.

What's your favourite plant?

The peace lily. It is the easiest plant to grow indoors and has great benefits, especially as an air purifier. I'd also recommend it to new plant parents!

Why should people have plants in their homes?

Having plants beautifies the environment, minimises stress, cleans and improves moisture in the air and also reduces noise.

→ 33 Erskine Rd. 📍 Chinatown.



TOP TIPS FROM THE PLANT PEOPLE



Don't water by a fixed schedule. Water by referencing how your plants look and how the soil feels. It takes a bit more effort to learn but it's worth it. Overwatering is the number one houseplant killer.



Plants have very varied needs. You need to understand what plant you have and what will make it happy. A standard routine won't fit them all.



Ventilation is important. Try to give your plants some air flow from a fan or window or by moving them outside occasionally.



Good soil makes a big difference to plant health. We recommend repotting in fresh soil at least every 12 months.



If you see bugs, act quickly to remove them. They can multiply very quickly and spread between plants.

POWER PLANTS



Monstera Deliciosa: loves Singapore's climate and is one of the most photogenic plants around.



Philodendrons: jungle plants that are happy in shade and come in plenty of different species with interesting leaves.



Aglaonemas: beautiful bright colours, easy to keep and have documented air purifying properties.



Sansevierias: one of the best air purifiers with really interesting leaf shapes and textures.



Air plants: great for busy people who can't stick to watering schedules – which means it's suitable for almost every Singaporean!



Air plant

Discover more cool shops at [timeout.com/singapore/shopping-style](https://www.timeout.com/singapore/shopping-style)

Travel

Edited by Dewi Nurjuwita

Castlepoint, Wairarapa



Rise and shine New Zealand

It doesn't matter where you go in New Zealand,
it's always worth waking up for the sunrise

NEW ZEALAND IS one of the first few places in the world to see the sun each day, so it's no wonder why Kiwis are morning people. Coupled with New Zealand's immense natural beauty, jumping out of bed to see the sunrise has never been more appealing.

To fully immerse yourself in the New Zealand way of life, take the time to experience both the North and South Islands bright and early. With Singapore Airlines' direct flights to Auckland, Wellington and Christchurch, you can embark on adventures of a lifetime from dawn till dusk.

AUCKLAND

 **Fly non-stop to Auckland with Singapore Airlines in 9 hours 50 mins**

New Zealand's largest city, Auckland, is framed by two harbours and surrounded by farmland. For most, the mention of

Auckland brings to mind its fine wine (think Kumeu River's Chardonnay), beautiful beaches, and a thriving dining scene. Not only that, you'll also meet many people from all walks of life in this bustling, multi-cultural hub.

BREAKFAST: Federal Delicatessen

Bite into a warm bagel filled with cured meat or lox, or sip on a bottomless cup of coffee at Al Brown's **Federal Delicatessen**. The institution brings a taste of old-school New York to Auckland. Try The Best Ugly (salmon lox, cream cheese, dill, capers, and red onions) and the Griddle Cakes, if you're craving for a sweet.

→ 86 Federal St, Auckland CBD, Auckland 1010.

DO: Skydive Auckland

Jumpstart your day with the highest

tandem skydive in New Zealand at **Skydive Auckland**, where you can jump from 20,000 feet. After freefalling, you'll enjoy the stunning views of both the east and west coasts of New Zealand. If you're not ready to take that huge of a plunge, you can also choose to tandem skydive from 16,000 feet, 13,000 feet or 9,000 feet.

→ 73 Green Rd, Parakai 0874.

ROADTRIP: Waitomo

The **Waitomo Glowworm Caves** are a must-visit on every visitor's bucket list – and there's no better time to go than when you're in Auckland. Just two hours and twenty minutes away from the CBD, the village is known for the beauty of its subterranean landscapes. Start your tour of the caves on foot before hopping on a boat to experience the world-famous ride under thousands of glowworms.

→ 39 Waitomo Village Rd, Waitomo.

WELLINGTON

 **Fly direct to Wellington with Singapore Airlines in 12 hours 25 mins**

Resting between rolling hills and a rugged coastline on the southern end of the North Island, **Wellington** is one of the most scenic capital cities in the world. You'll sense a buzzing creative energy in Wellington – with a strong art scene, hidden bars, award-winning restaurants and amazing coffee.

BREAKFAST: Olive

Wellington has so many breakfast spots to choose from but if you find yourself in the eclectic Cuba Street, head on to **Olive**, which serves up Mediterranean-inspired dishes. With

everything from Persian guacamole on toast to smoked lamb backstrap on the menu, you won't be limited to just pancakes and toast.

→ 170 Cuba St, Wellington.

DO: Wellington Walking Gourmet

The best way to get to know a city is to dive into its gastronomic scene. Explore New Zealand's culinary, café and coffee capital by joining a small walking group tour courtesy of Zest Food Tours. Starting in the morning, the Walking Gourmet culinary experience takes you to key cafés and restaurants in Wellington's city centre before concluding with a delicious, light lunch complemented with regional wines or craft beer.

→ 111 Wakefield St, Te Aro, Wellington 6011.

ROADTRIP: Wairarapa Region

From Wellington, drive an hour and a half to the scenic Wairarapa region. It makes for a relaxing day trip away from the city, with three forest parks, a huge coastline lined with lighthouses, and a core part of the classic New Zealand Wine Trail passing right through. Start your day at Cape Palliser and climb 250 steps to the lighthouse for a stunning view of the sunrise.

CHRISTCHURCH

 **Fly non-stop to Christchurch with Singapore Airlines in 9 hours 50 mins**

The gateway to the beautiful South Island, **Christchurch** has recently experienced a resurgence, with chic restaurants, urban bars, hip cafes, and design-led boutique hotels. While most tend to overlook the city as just the gateway to the North Island's famed natural landmarks, it's worth staying a little longer.

Sponsored feature

BREAKFAST: Hello Sunday Cafe

Spread across two rooms of a restored old post office building, **Hello Sunday Cafe** has some of the best brunch options in town. There's a strong focus on well-being, with nourishing brunches and homemade foods on offer. A highlight on the menu is the beef cheek hash, made with slow-braised beef with potato, pickled cucumber, poached eggs and sriracha hollandaise.

→ 6 Elgin St, Sydenham, Christchurch 8023.

DO: Christchurch Adventure Park

Drive 20 minutes from Christchurch CBD and you'll find yourself at the new **Christchurch Adventure Park**, nestled within the stunning Port Hills. The adventure park is home to the longest chairlift in New Zealand, taking sightseers, riders and their bikes to the top of Port Hills with stunning views across the city. Here, you can fuel your adrenaline rush and fly through a series of high-speed zip lines, race on an epic mountain bike ride with sweeping views of the Southern Alps and the Pacific Ocean, or simply go sightseeing.

→ 225 Worsleys Rd, Canterbury 8022.

ROADTRIP: Hanmer Springs

For once-in-a-lifetime experiences, head to **Hanmer Springs**, a resort town in the Canterbury region of New Zealand's South Island. Hop onto a jetboat and brace yourself for an adrenaline-pumping ride, 24km along the Waiau River, which ends with the famous Hamilton jet spin.

→ 42 Amuri Ave, Hanmer Springs 7334.



HOW TO GET THERE:

Whether you're going to Auckland, Wellington or Christchurch, fly in comfort with Singapore Airlines.

The award-winning carrier boasts plush seats with extra legroom, delicious meals on board, and Krisworld, an inflight entertainment system with over 1,800 on-demand entertainment options. From February 17, Singapore Airlines is offering promotional fares from \$768, so get booking. Sale ends March 19.

Book your vacation now at
singaporeair.com/newzealand.

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Art

Edited by Dewi Nurjuwita

Art in 2020

New exhibitions around town to check out this year. By Aiko Tun

THE CONTEMPORARY ARTS scene in Singapore has flourished in terms of public accessibility and appreciation. We have home-grown local talents who create works deeply reflective of our multilingual and multicultural society – ranging from the classical and the traditional, to the modern and contemporary. Then there are international arts sensations who have come down to our island nation to display their pieces. The arts narrative in Singapore is definitely something to look out for as we step into a new decade.

EXHIBITIONS

Above and Beyond by Mishell Leong

Till Mar 30

Expect nothing less than spectacular from this self-taught artist's very first solo show. Mishell Leong draws inspiration from her childhood memories and the kaleidoscope of colours of tropical Malaysia. Known for her bold and highly textured work, Leong's art pieces reflect her love for life and exude vibrant positivity and joy. *Above and Beyond* is testament to her rigour and determination, as she pushes herself to delve deeper into her emotions and influences. → Royal Plaza on Scotts, 25 Scotts Rd. 📍 Orchard.

Latiff Mohidin: Pago Pago

Mar 27-Sep 27

Peer through the lens of this Malaysian



Black Magic, Above and Beyond by Mishell Leong



Coda Culture

modernist painter and poet during the formative period of his practice during the 1960s as he journeyed across Europe and Southeast Asia. An upcoming installation in National Gallery Singapore, *Pago Pago* is made up of sketches, paintings, sculptures, prints and poetry – inviting visitors to explore the early ages of regional avant-garde. It seamlessly weaves through varying art forms, and with each visual strand and poetic fragment, we see interdependence – a manifestation of Mohidin's associative mind and perspective.

→ 1 St Andrew's Rd. 📍 City Hall.

GALLERIES

Coda Culture

Since its inception in January 2018, this independent art space founded by Singapore artist Seelan Palay aims to provide a space where home-grown artists can practice with freedom and autonomy. The gallery has just moved into a fresh

new location in the thriving Aliwal precinct. Ingrained within its four walls is a strong unwavering sense of experimentation as the gallery pushes its artists to strive for greater heights in terms of techniques and concepts. → 67 Aliwal St. 📍 Bugis.

Cuturi Gallery

With a mission of increasing the public's appreciation of and accessibility to art, Cuturi Gallery openly challenges the norms of traditional, run-of-the-mill galleries. "We often hear people say that they don't understand art, and hence, are not interested in the arts. We're trying to break that notion by showing that you don't need to know anything about the arts to appreciate the craft. With experience, your perception will change," says founder Kevin Troyano Cuturi. The gallery showcases works from world-renowned artists like French painter Lionel Sabatte and emerging local artists. → #02-16, Pacific Plaza, 9 Scotts Rd. 📍 Orchard.

Discover more art galleries and exhibitions at [timeout.com/singapore/arts-entertainment](https://www.timeout.com/singapore/arts-entertainment)



Chua Soo Bin: Truths & Legends



INKredible Weekend Festival

Sponsored feature

paintings by modern Chinese masters Ren Bonian, Xu Beihong, and Qi Baishi – as well as works made by artists in Singapore in the 1930s through the 1980s.

→ 1 Empress Pl, Asian Civilisations Museum. 📍 City Hall.

Chua Soo Bin: Truths & Legends

Till Sep 6

Look at the world through the lens of the remarkable photographer and Cultural Medallion award recipient, Chua Soo Bin. Featuring about 100 photographic works and archival materials, the exhibition highlights the camera master's ability to capture definitive portraits and sensitive images, as well as his position in the rise of photography in Singapore. The exhibition also showcases a selection of ink paintings and portraits of 14 established Chinese ink masters, giving you a glimpse of the nuances of their daily lives.

→ 1 St Andrew's Rd, National Gallery Singapore. 📍 City Hall.

Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden

Commission: Cao Fei

Till Oct 25

Head up to the Ng Teng Fong Roof Garden at the National Gallery Singapore to marvel at *浮槎 Fú Chá*, a large-scale kinetic sculptural installation by Cao Fei, one of China's leading contemporary artists. She is known for works like *RMB City: A Second Life City Planning* (2007), which reimagines the future of China's cities in an online virtual world, and *Second Life and Asia One* (2018), an examination of technology's effect on human relations.

→ 1 St Andrew's Rd, National Gallery Singapore. 📍 City Hall.

In partnership with



*Please visit the respective institutions' websites for the latest updates.

Civic minded

The best arts programmes in the Civic District this February, March and April

IMMERSE YOURSELF IN the beauty of the arts in the Civic District. Nestled on the banks of the Singapore River, the thriving precinct is home to some of Singapore's most monumental cultural institutions – from the National Gallery Singapore and Asian Civilisations Museum to The Arts House, the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall and Esplanade – Theatres by the Bay.

Arts in the Civic District highlights arts and culture activities in the precinct every month, featuring both free and ticketed performances, exhibitions, and programmes. To make planning your visit to the Civic District more seamless, we've curated a list of arts programmes – from timeless art exhibitions by esteemed artists to free lunchtime concerts by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra. There's bound to be something for the whole family.

INKredible Weekend Festival

Till Mar 1

The Asian Civilisations Museum brings a super-sized cultural bonanza to celebrate the season of Chinese Art. Look forward to catching an interactive performance on the *Eight Immortals*,

or the fascinating tai chi quan, a traditional martial art form. Additionally, don't miss the chance to make your own paper using coloured pulp or join in guided tours of the *Living with Ink* exhibition.

→ 1 Empress Pl, Asian Civilisations Museum. 📍 City Hall.

Textures

Mar 13-15

First launched in 2018, this annual literary festival celebrates Singapore literature and the community that drives it. Gain a deeper appreciation of literary works by homegrown talents with a wide range of performances, workshops and installations.

→ 1 Old Parliament Ln, The Arts House. 📍 City Hall.

Living with Ink: The Collection of Dr Tan Tsze Chor

Till Mar 22

Peep at the massive art collection of this businessman and calligrapher which features over 130 treasured Chinese paintings, porcelain, and scholars' objects donated to the museum since 2000 by the Tan family. This includes

→ For more arts and culture programmes happening in the Civic District, visit the National Arts Council's official site nac.gov.sg/artsweekendcivildistrict.

Theatre

Edited by Dewi Nurjuwita



Facing Waterloo

This play uncovers the secrets behind one of Singapore's oldest streets. By Dewi Nurjuwita

“There have been so many stories created on this street, I think we can come up with four or five instalments and still barely scratch the surface”

WATERLOO STREET IS the meeting point of Singapore's creative talent. It is home to both major institutions and independent art galleries – from the Singapore Art Museum (currently under renovation) to Centre 42 and the tech-forward Stamford Arts Centre. But as one of the

oldest streets in Singapore, it is also home to stories often forgotten. And who better to bring them to light once more than one of the street's long-time residents?

The Theatre Practice has called Waterloo home for more than 30 years and has been a driving force in the local theatre scene since its inception. In 2018, it introduced its play, *Four Horse Road*, a love letter/ode to where it stands. “When we moved to this new venue more than three years ago from The Stamford Arts Centre, we decided to go further. We didn't just want to engage the community around us; but also the stories and history of the surrounding area which happens to be an early vibrant part of Singapore,” says Artistic Director Kuo Jian Hong. “There were a lot of untold stories and interesting characters that have walked through the area. We thought that we should start excavating some of these things in the past.”

Performed in a “promenade theatre” format, the play sees the audience walking from space to space along Waterloo Street. There are six groups every night, with each experiencing the play differently. There are 11 stories per night but you only cover eight on each route. Before you head on to the play, we've gathered some interesting little nuggets that you may or may not have heard about the storied street – so you can impress your fellow theatre-goer with your new wealth of knowledge.

What's in a name?

One of the earliest streets to be constructed in Singapore, Waterloo Street was initially called Church Street after a resident councillor, Thomas Church. However, the municipal council changed its name in 1858 to commemorate the 1815 Battle of Waterloo – giving birth to its current name.

“When we started this process, I worked with playwright John Lim, who studied at Catholic High School, which used to be on Waterloo Street,” shares Jian Hong. “John has a fondness for this area; and he's one of those people who's always interested in the stories of the past. With history, the more you know, the more mysteries they bring. I see this as a process of not just us excavating the past, but also trying to construct and imagine the relationships of these stories from the perspective of the 21st century.”

A multicultural community

Long before it became a meeting point for creatives, Waterloo Street was known for its multicultural community. Even now, you'll find Sri Krishnan Temple standing right beside the Kwan Im Thong Hood Cho Temple – both located in the same street as the Church of Saints Peter and Paul and the Maghain Aboth Synagogue. It's a testament to how different cultures and religions co-existed, and continue to thrive.

Old buildings, new life

Jian Hong shares: “Because of our rapid, highly condensed growth as a city-state, a lot of things have changed. There are a lot of contributions made by people that have been demolished. But you can still find many footprints that were left behind.”

One of the most famous transformations is the former St Joseph's Institution (1867-1988), which is currently occupied by the Singapore Art Museum. Waterloo Street's colourful shophouses and old cultural institutions have also been earmarked for conservation and repurposed under the National Arts Council's Arts Housing Scheme. An iconic 19th-century yellow building, one of the few remaining examples of gothic architecture in Singapore, is home to Objectifs now. But in its past life, it was once our first Straits Chinese Methodist Church.

→ 58 Waterloo St, Pratic Tuckshop. ☎ Bencoolen. From \$58.

DON'T MISS THESE SHOWS

Other upcoming theatre performances to catch

First Fleet Feb 14-23

Jointly presented by Nine Years Theatre and Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, *First Fleet* is an immersive play inspired by Thomas Keneally's novel *The Playmaker*. The story takes place in 1787, when the First Fleet of the British Empire set sail for Australia with a group of convicts aboard to establish a penal colony. This immersive play invites the audience to sit in the same space as the actors, taking them along for the ride.

→ Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre, 1 Straits Blvd.
☎ Tanjong Pagar. Sistic.com.sg/events/fleet0220.



↑ The Son Feb 20-Mar 7

Pangdemonium opens its 2020 Season with *The Son*, written by internationally acclaimed novelist and playwright Florian Zeller. The play follows the story of a family struggling to save a loved one; and is a timely exploration of mental health issues among youth.

→ #03-01, National Library Building, Drama Centre, 100 Victoria St.
☎ Bugis. Pangdemonium.com/production/the-son.

Hurstville: The Heir Mar 1-Apr 20

Taking cues from Punchdrunk's wildly famous *Sleep No More*, *Hurstville: The Heir* transforms a four-storey shophouse in Chinatown into the titular village, a haven for the downtrodden amidst the economic downturn of the great depression. The production takes you back in time to the 1930s, at the very height of the great depression, where you uncover secret rooms and even have one-on-one experiences if you're lucky.

→ 265 South Bridge Rd.
☎ Telok Ayer. Underground.sg.

Discover more theatre performances at [timeout.com/singapore/arts-entertainment](https://www.timeout.com/singapore/arts-entertainment)

Music & Nightlife

Edited by Delfina Utomo



Bgourd

Get in character

They say everyone puts on a mask – that’s certainly true for these musicians.

By Delfina Utomo

ALL PERFORMERS DON on a mask of sorts but these musicians literally put one on. Alter egos aren’t uncommon when it comes to music, it’s a way to draw a line between the person and a persona. But is this a help or a hindrance in an age where relatability is king? We chat with a couple of local artists to find out.

Bgourd

LOOK A full green bodysuit because Bgourd is short for bittergourd

SOUND East Coast rap vibes with a local (and nerdy) feel

Why would anyone perform as a bittergourd, of all vegetables? The up-and-coming rap artist Bgourd has the perfect answer. Like the vegetable, he says that his music is an acquired taste. Before every performance, he puts on a

full body smooth green suit which only leaves his eyes, nose and mouth uncovered. Before you write him off for his look, his fast-paced rhythmic style is akin to New York-esque rap and delves deeper into more intellectual content.

Where do you get your ideas from?

My rap is observational and based off things that I’m currently reading or studying. For example, one of the bars in my song is “looking at cockfights in Bali beach” – that was from my school reading about the cultural impact of cockfighting in Indonesia, which also made me think of how ruthless life in Singapore can be. I’m actually a computer science student.

What’s something you’ve observed recently that grinds your gears?

The lack of diverse representation in the local

music scene. I have an issue with the ‘majority’ believing or acting like the scene is their property – which we’ve seen a lot of quite recently. With my shows in the future, I want to make sure that we all represent the scene the best way we can.

What is something you’d like to rap about someday?

I would like to write about computers. I have some bars about finance but I’m a tech student so maybe one day I can write about Elon Musk.

Jasmine Sokko

LOOK A bejewelled, futuristic mask which covers half her face

SOUND Catchy electro pop

Discover more gigs in Singapore at [timeout.com/singapore/music-nightlife](https://www.timeout.com/singapore/music-nightlife)



Jasmine Sokko

“I started with a mask because I wanted people to focus on my music first before anything else.”

PHOTO: WARREN TEY

Just a few years back, Jasmine Sokko was an up-and-coming local artist getting her start. Her first single *1057* received recognition beyond Singapore and now she’s one of our top streaming artists. Jasmine has also garnered a huge fanbase in China after being on – and winning – electronic music reality talent competition, *Rave Now* – and she’s done this all without revealing her entire face.

How did you come up with the persona of Jasmine Sokko?

I would like to tell you I had a grand plan. But really, there wasn’t any. Rather, it was a careful accumulation of decisions. I started with a mask because I wanted people to focus on my music first before anything else. Along the way, the character developed with each and every shift of my own world view and the creative individuals I had the honour of working with.

What is the most ‘Hannah Montana’ moment you’ve had as Jasmine Sokko?

It was the first class of the semester and I sat beside a new classmate who shared that his favorite song was by an artist called Jasmine Sokko and I just went “Who’s that?”. No, he still doesn’t know and he never will!

What is something you’re super passionate about?

I’ve been pondering the implications of driverless cars and how drivers, parking lots and traffic lights could be redundant in near future. It isn’t technology that eliminates jobs, but the shortsightedness of businesses to cut costs and fatten profits. I wish tech implementations would take more social aspects into account. I’ve also been reading *Invisible Women* by Caroline Criado Perez. She wrote “There is no such thing as a woman who doesn’t work. There is only a woman who isn’t paid for her work”. It made me realize that my mom has been taking care of the family so that the rest of us can run our lives smoothly without having to worry about when to get shampoo. *proceeds to hug mom*

The CB Dogs

Look: Singaporean bad boys with gaudy silk shirts, gold chains and lots and lots of rings

Sound: In-your-face punk

You might think that in prim and proper Singapore, punk has no place. Rebellious, crass and exciting, punk music lashes out and releases emotions like anger and frustration like no other genre. If you’re coming for a gig by The CB Dogs, be prepared for an onslaught of obscenities, shouting and stage antics by a group of boys in uncle-style silk shirts and ostentatious gold jewellery.

What’s your story? How did you guys decide to start CB Dogs?

We felt that Singapore bands had no balls and felt very fake with their accents. No matter how ang moh they try to sound, usually got one two words sound damn off and embarrassing. Also, bands in Singapore got zero stage presence and dress like stupid hipsters so we decided if no one was going to do it, we were.

How different is your stage persona from your real self?

We not ah bengs but we actually talk like that as a joke in real life. Somehow we found it very funny and stuck with it so only the outfit is different. Outside, we wear PE shorts and white t-shirts.



LOCAL MUSIC WATCHLIST

2020’s the year for these musicians

Halal Sol

Putting organic in electronic, Halal Sol mixes deep house with jazz-inspired beats. Don’t be surprised if he whips out his saxophone mid set and moves into groovy territory. Though already a favourite in the local underground electronic scene, he’s going to be in the limelight a lot more in 2020.

Islandeer

Filling up the indie rock slot is Islandeer, a duo that plays easy-breezy jangly pop-rock that feels at home on the radio. The band has performed at events like Urban Ventures and music venues like *Scape and Lithe House and they’re set for a busy year ahead with more gigs on the calendar.

10vacations

We could all do with more dreamy lo-fi pop in our hectic lives. Get pensive with the lulling vocals and lush acoustic instrumentations of solo dream-pop project, 10vacations. She’s already opened for English acoustic songstress Lucy Rose but expect her to helm more shows this year.

Film

Edited by Cam Khalid

PHOTO: UNITED INTERNATIONAL PICTURES



No Time to Die



The King's Man

PHOTO: DISNEY

2020 vision

Grab the popcorn – here are the most anticipated films of the year.
By *Cam Khalid*

A NEW DECADE comes a fresh list of titles to compete for your filmgoing dollar. Barely into 2020 and we've already got our fix of Oscar-nominated films such as *1917* and *Jojo Rabbit*. And if the films coming out later this year are as outstanding as the ones released in January, you best bet we've got our popcorn ready. From a Christopher Nolan comeback to highly anticipated sequels, prequels, remakes and another 007 movie, here are the ones to jot down in your cinema calendar (dates may be subject to change).

The Lighthouse

IN CINEMAS Now playing

WHY WATCH R.Patz gets into mermaid/vintage horror territory in all its black-and-white-boxy-ratio glory. Robert Eggers returns with another gothic thriller featuring two lighthouse keepers losing their marbles as they get stuck on a remote New England island.

Onward

IN CINEMAS Mar 5

WHY WATCH It's from the brains behind *Toy Story* and *The Incredibles*. You can't go wrong with another magical

Disney-Pixar gem. This one follows two teen elf brothers who cast a spell to bring their dad back from the dead.

Mulan

IN CINEMAS Mar 26

WHY WATCH This live-action remake is nothing like the animated classic. Mulan gets down to business to become one of China's greatest warriors ever. We can't wait to see greats like Donnie Yen, Gong Li and Jet Li share the screen.

No Time to Die

IN CINEMAS Apr 9

WHY WATCH Daniel Craig's last James Bond gig. And there's no time to say no to another 007 film, especially when it features script work by Phoebe Waller-Bridge, the award-winning brains behind *Fleabag* and *Killing Eve*. The mission this time is to defeat technologically advanced baddies and rescue a kidnapped scientist.

The SpongeBob Movie: Sponge on the Run

IN CINEMAS May 21

WHY WATCH Keanu Reeves plays some kind of god. Besties SpongeBob and Patrick embark for The



PHOTO: WARNER BROS.

Wonder Woman 1984

Lost City of Atlantis to crack the case of Gary the Snail's kidnapping, to bring him home.

Wonder Woman 1984

IN CINEMAS Jun 4

WHY WATCH Perms, neon and New Order music in the DC cinematic universe.

The Princess of the Amazons blasts to the past (or future if from the WWI-set origin story) to confront a villainess with superhuman powers before she wreaks havoc on the world.

Top Gun: Maverick

IN CINEMAS Jun 25

WHY WATCH Highly-anticipated sequel of the 34-year-old classic.

Tom Cruise is back on the – as Kenny Loggins would sing – “highway to the danger zone”. Things start to hit turbulence when he has to confront his deepest fears to engage in a mission that calls for the ultimate sacrifice.

Tenet

IN CINEMAS Jul 16

WHY WATCH Another Christopher Nolan epic – 'nuff said.

It's a big year for R.Patz (or R.Batz as he is the next Batman). He's starring alongside John David Washington in this time-travel spy feature where the latter tries to stop a third world war.

The King's Man

IN CINEMAS Sep 17

WHY WATCH It's the prequel to the Kingsman film series. Catch the OG King's Man race against time to stop the world's terrible tyrants from exterminating millions of civilians.

Eternals

IN CINEMAS Oct 29

WHY WATCH Crucial if you've been keeping up with the Marvel Cinematic Universe. Your film schedule wouldn't be complete without a mega Marvel movie.

UPCOMING REGIONAL FILMS TO LOOK OUT FOR

From horror to romance,
Asia's got 'em all



A Fool in Love, Love Like a Fool (Taiwan)

In cinemas now

What would you do when you meet a mermaid? Find out the main protagonist's next move when he starts catching feelings for the mermaid who heavily resembles the character in his favourite picture books.

Impetigore (Indonesia)

In cinemas now

Before its Singapore screening, the horror flick made its international debut at the Sundance Film Festival earlier this year. *Impetigore* brings 'gore' to the village when a city girl returns with her best friend to claim an inheritance from her rich family.

Happy Old Year (Thailand)

In cinemas now

A woman goes all Marie Kondo on her house in an attempt to convert it into a home office. But it's not as easy as it seems when she stumbles upon belongings of her ex-boyfriend.



EVERYONE'S INSTAGRAMMING...

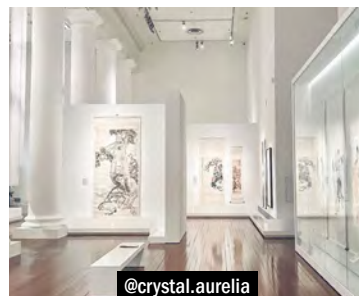
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Asian Civilisations Museum



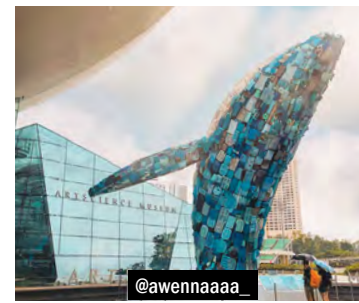
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Gardens by the Bay



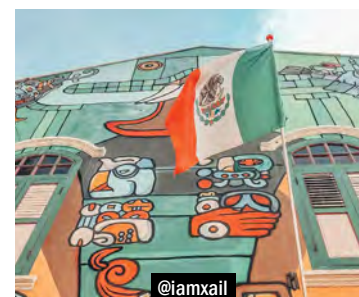
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