

the vanguards

40

under 40

PERSONALITIES EFFECTING POSITIVE CHANGE,
TRAILBLAZERS CARVING NEW ROADS, INNOVATORS
ENSURING A BETTER TOMORROW, AND GROUNDBREAKERS
RE-SETTING THE RULES OF INDUSTRY – THIS YEAR'S
VANGUARDS ARE TAKING ON THE WORLD

TEXT: ALETHIA TIANG, ZARA ZHUANG, MELAINNE CHIEW AND HILLARY KANG
ART DIRECTION: CLEMENTINUS LIEM

talent balanced with *humility* and *authenticity*

a foremost authority

INSPIRES and INFLUENCES others

delivers **results**

leaders

NG SIER HAN • ISAAC LIU • ELIZABETH TONG • INDRA KANTONO • KELVIN CHEN •
DINESH BALASINGAM • SEAN TAY • DEBORAH IM • JONATHAN SHEN • BALDEV BHINDER

ng sier han, 39

CREATING FINANCIAL SOLUTIONS

Ng Sier Han decided to pursue computer science way before “fintech” was a word. His interest in maths and logic drew him to numerical computation and computational finance. Now he creates financial solutions for DBS’ Financial Institutions Group and oversees negotiations between clients and internal stakeholders to produce bespoke solutions. “I’m a middle child and the middle child is good at trying to get two parties to compromise,” says the 2017 Asian Banker Promising Young Banker in Singapore award winner.

Ng was inspired to join the industry by the energy of the trading floor he witnessed during an internship at DBS in his university days. But the financial crisis of 2007 and 2008 gave him pause. “The challenge was existential,” he recounts. “Amid all the losses suffered by investors and collapses of large financial institutions and sovereign, I was grappling with the question of whether banks added value to society.”

Things have picked up since. Ng leads a team of five and contributes to the very DBS management associates programme he himself had progressed through, helping with recruitment, selecting young leaders, and mentorship. But he remains driven to create solutions across all asset classes in the region. “It’s a combination of the training in engineering and a competitive streak that keeps me chasing the next solution, the next transaction,” he says.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS CHRONO WORLDTIME
FROM JAEGER-LECOULTRE

isaac liu, 35

HEALING WITH A HEART OF GOLD

Isaac Liu's father had never seen his son. Plagued by an illness that robbed the senior Liu of his sight and hearing in his twenties, he never saw him nor anyone else for the rest of his life. But his handicaps did not stop him from being an avid volunteer. Neither did he let them keep him from putting Liu through medical school.

Much like his late father, the 35-year-old paediatrician is passionate about serving above and beyond his station. In 2017, Liu took home the Singapore Youth Award, the nation's highest accolade for youth, in recognition of his tireless work for children.

And whenever he receives praise for his work, the good doctor is quick to demur. "My father passed on his heart of service to me," says Liu. "He rose above his own problems to care for others, and his impact on the people around him left a very deep impression on me."

Liu, who works regular 30-hour shifts, often witnesses the pain of loss in the emergency room but refuses to allow himself to wallow. "As doctors, we can help children who are sick and vulnerable. If we don't put our all into helping them, who else can?"

REVERSO CLASSIC LARGE SMALL SECONDS FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

elizabeth tong, 35

PASSION FOR THE LAW

There was a time Elizabeth Tong contemplated leaving law for good. "Legal practice can be gruelling — it involves long hours and personal sacrifices," she shares. So seven years ago, she took a year off to backpack around the world. It was then she gained a new understanding of the importance of the law. "I had amazing experiences and met amazing people but I also saw some of the world's worst poverty, caused by poor governance and no or weak rule of law."

So she returned to practice. Since then, this corporate and commercial lawyer has picked up a string of accolades. She was singled out as one of 40 rising young lawyers by *Asian Legal Business* and Recommended Lawyer by *The Legal 500 Asia Pacific* in 2015 and 2017.

Currently a director at Drew & Napier, Tong advises clients on transactions and business structures, negotiates contracts and helps them manage legal risks. Her clientele include Visa, SABIC, and the world's largest technology companies. She most recently worked with private equity investor Hellman & Friedman and GIC on Singapore financial regulatory matters in relation to its €1.8-billion acquisition of Allfunds Bank.

Tong also takes time out to lecture on negotiating and drafting at the NUS Faculty of Law, and does volunteer work. "I hope to continue building and developing myself and the people around me, personally and professionally."

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY MEDIUM FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

indra kantono, 34

TOP OF THE TIPLERS

Jigger & Pony's Indra Kantono was born into a family of dreamers. With entrepreneurs for parents, it stood to reason the young Kantono harboured big dreams of starting his own business. In 2012, Kantono launched his first brainchild Jigger & Pony with his wife. The duo would birth five more F&B concepts in the breakneck years that followed.

Any seasoned restaurateur would baulk at having to run six unique and separate F&B concepts synchronously, more so when one hails from a finance background like Kantono, but his people-first approach has won him loyal fans and accolades.

For one, the Jigger & Pony Group takes a personalised approach to recruitment. It focuses on grooming staff with grit, rather than just raw talent. Jigger & Pony principal bartender Boo Jing Heng, who was crowned Diageo Reserve World Class

Singapore Bartender of the Year in 2016, had no prior experience when he first joined the company in 2012. Kantono's tutelage and support enabled Boo (as well as many others in the Jigger & Pony team) to flourish.

"My number one priority at Jigger & Pony is to create the culture we want to have," says Kantono, who describes it as his "daily struggle". Given that Jigger & Pony has ranked among Asia's 50 Best Bars for three years running, we'd say it is well-worth the effort.

GRANDE REVERSO AUTO FROM

JAEGER-LECOULTRE



PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: W.ATELIER

sean tay, 36

BANKING GOOD DEEDS

Choosing a career in finance was largely due to circumstance, Sean Tay shares. The executive director and team head of Core Wealth at the Bank of Singapore would help out his parents (his mother was a hawker and his father, a deliveryman) when he was growing up, and supported his family through jobs in factories and eateries and coaching volleyball.

"I witnessed first-hand what hardship was like for those not well-to-do," says the 2017 Outstanding Young Private Banker Award winner. (Tay is also a two-time recipient of the Bank of Singapore's Pegasus Circle Award, given to the firm's 10 best-performing bankers each year.) "It made me want to take up a career in finance so I could help myself, my family and others save and invest properly."

On top of driving him to groom his team of young bankers, the heart to serve recently earned Tay a District Most Outstanding Young Rotarian award. As president of the Rotary Club of Garden City from 2017 to 2018, he ran charity and community programmes in collaboration with organisations such as Singapore Red Cross and People's Association. Tay makes it a point to bring his two children, aged three and five, with him when he volunteers: "What I want to achieve next is see my children follow in my footsteps of caring for the less fortunate in society."

kelvin chen, 35

BUILDING VISIONS FROM BEHIND THE SCENES

Kelvin Chen was fresh out of university when he managed his first project as an engineer: A sound stage for a theme park. The Associate Mechanical Engineer with Aurecon still remembers the day he saw his design come to fruition and the satisfaction that sent shivers down his spine. He recalls, "It was the best feeling. It made me believe I could achieve anything."

The father-of-three recently brought his children to the theme park and its sound stage that started it all. "I felt very proud to tell them, 'Daddy designed this,'" he says. "Even though I am a mechanical engineer by training, I was very involved with the building design."


This affable chap grew up fascinated by buildings and the invisible framework that holds each beautiful structure together. Though most of what Chen does is behind the scenes, his efforts have not gone unrecognised. In 2017, he clinched the Association of Consulting Engineers (ACES) Young Consulting Engineer of the Year in the Mechanical category, as well as the Nanyang Alumni Service Award 2017 for his work with the School of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering Alumni Association (MAEAA) at his alma mater Nanyang Technological University (NTU).

Chen wants to obtain his Professional Engineer Certification next. "Knowing that what I am doing now has a positive impact on our society makes the job immensely enjoyable," he says. "I am living my dream and new challenges energise me. They keep my passion alive and burning."

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS DATE FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: SEAN ANG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN



Dinesh Balasingam is a hard act to follow. The Chope COO arrives at the studio in a knit sweater and embellished designer boots (one of his colleagues lets on that Balasingam is often the best-dressed at the office) but he's hardly afraid of rolling up these immaculate sleeves and getting his hands dirty. It's something he often does, given that Chope now operates out of eight cities across Asia and has a stable of over 3,000 restaurants.

This one-time theatre hopeful had ambitions of pursuing a career onstage, but a chance encounter led Balasingam to become, in his own words, an "accidental entrepreneur". What began as a year-long opportunity with Chope quickly turned into a seven-year stint from which Balasingam never looked back. In late 2017, Chope raised fresh funding worth US\$13million led by Square Peg Capital.

Never mind he doesn't work under the spotlights — Balasingam still manages to bring some measure of showmanship into his life. In December 2017, he got together with friends for local quartet Squarto to perform Broadway hits at the Esplanade.

Otherwise, Balasingam derives joy from managing the colourful cast of characters that make up Chope. "People are what make an organisation great," he says. "I feel blessed to work with an amazing group of individuals who inspire me and with whom I am excited to collaborate every day."

dinesh balasingam, 29

RESERVING HIS SPOT IN TECH

PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: WATLELIER

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS AUTOMATIC FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

deborah im, 39

LEGALLY SOCIAL

Deborah Im is on a tight schedule. In addition to new motherhood duties — she gave birth to twins, Elijah and Arya, in May — she's also the Deputy Head of Legal, Asia Pacific, at Facebook, where she leads a team of lawyers from across the region, in legal and regulatory matters.

Named one of its 40 Under 40 lawyers by *The Asian Legal Business* in 2017, the multi-hyphenate also serves on the SMU School of Law and Technology Advisory Council and the Board of Directors at the Singapore Chapter of the Association of Corporate Counsel.

Im's road to success has been anything but smooth, however. In 2009, she was laid off during The Great Financial Crisis. Seizing this dent in her step as an opportunity, Im moved to Tokyo, planning to stay only for just a year. She ended up falling in love with Asia; she moved to Hong Kong after that and is now based in Singapore.

Im, who was born in San Francisco but has spent nearly 10 years in Asia, muses: "Looking back, what seemed to be scary and unknown turned out to be an amazing and life-changing blessing and opportunity."

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: EDWARD CHONG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN

When The Golden Duck co-founder Jonathan Shen walks into a room, you look. It is easy to dismiss Shen (with his rugby player's build) as another fraternity boy. But what you don't see are the round-the-clock kitchen shifts that run his hands raw, the unending panic of buoying numbers on thin red lines, and the pressure to stay creative on top of the day-to-day stressors that come with running one's own business — but Shen is quick to deflect praise with his characteristically self-effacing replies and “aw, shucks” chuckles.

The Golden Duck shot to the top of every palate and shelf when it burst onto the scene in 2015. Shen says the company now sells upwards of 10,000 packets of the salted egg yolk snack per week, and were the top-selling potato crisps cross convenience stores in 2017.

But its popularity required some effort. To create the perfect crisp, Shen did more than 30 taste trials and sampled “almost every salted egg dish in Singapore”. He still revisits the recipes to see how they can be improved.

Although the company has a profusion of snack ideas in the pipeline, Shen divulges the team is taking its time to release them, to ensure they become “absolute winners”. “The Golden Duck standard means you never get a pack of passé snacks,” he says. “We want to do what nobody else has done.”

REVERSO CLASSIC LARGE DUOFACE METEORITE FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

jonathan shen, 29

PERFECTING THE SCIENCE OF SNACKS



baldev bhinder, 39

THE LAWYER IN THE TENT



Look him up on Facebook and you won't believe Baldev Bhinder has a serious job. This self-confessed "adrenaline junkie" is a lawyer: "There's a side of me that finds peace in the most remote areas in the world and fairly dangerous situations. I'm constantly looking for the next adventure and it generally involves a tent!"

But back to work, Bhinder is a partner at boutique firm Joseph Tan Jude Benny LLP, where he heads up its Energy, Resources & Infrastructure team. His specialisation in the oil, gas and commodities sectors was something he fell into while working at global firms in the US and UK, where he's amassed more than 12 years of experience. "The work revolves around high-stake deals and we assist in contract drafting, risk management and disputes," he explains. "It requires good commercial knowledge of the commodities markets and geographies."

He has worked on some of the largest global disputes and received many accolades, including 40 Under 40 by *Asian Legal Business*, and Most Promising Legal Luminaries Aged 40 and Under by *Singapore Business Review*. He was also identified as a "future star" in International Arbitration & Construction in Benchmark Litigation's 2018 Asia Pacific Guide.

For Bhinder, the real achievement is when a case is resolved before it gets to a judge. "Sometimes the best gunshot is the one you do not fire. Some careful drafting and good advice can prevent time- and cost-consuming legal battles."

DUOMETRE QUANTIEME LUNAIRE FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**

PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: WATELIER

having the **quality** or **power** of **creating**
originality of thought and expression

HIGHLY EXPRESSIVE

persuasive and **compelling**

creatives

ASHLEY YEO • NATHAN HARTONO • PETRINA LOH • LIM JIAHUI • CLARA YEE • MAX TAN • LAWRENCE LER •
JOANNA DONG • NG PEI-SIAN • KELLY LIM • BRYAN KOH

ashley yeo, 28

A CUT ABOVE THE REST

Ashley Yeo's paper art embodies "small but mighty". Measuring just 3.5cm in all dimensions, the delicate filigree paper cube she submitted for the 2018 edition of the Loewe Craft Prize moved prize presenter Dame Helen Mirren to tears with its sheer minuteness of detail. Taking five weeks to conceptualise, hand-cut with a blade and sculpt (no magnifying tools were employed), *Arbitrary Metrics II* made Yeo one of the competition's 30 finalists, out of nearly 1,900 submissions, and the first Singaporean to do so.

Inspired by the manga *Neighborhood Story* by Ai Yazawa, Yeo made up her mind at 15 to become an artist and took up residencies in Jeju, Fukuoka, Beijing, Svalbard, New York and Los Angeles. An adjunct lecturer at the LASALLE College of the Arts, she devotes half her practice to drawing but paper calls to her with its unique qualities. "It's an unexpected choice; it crumples easily and any small fold means it's damaged," Yeo explains. "I try to preserve its pristine quality and present it in a different way."

The perceived value of works made of paper and the medium's practical shortcomings (paper is mildly vulnerable to humidity) may make them less attractive than paintings, but Yeo remains committed to negotiating the compromise between personal motivations and market expectations. "Collectors usually avoid paper or materials that are fragile, but that's how I find my own place in the craft community," she says. "It's not about selling works, but about honing skills and techniques."

Music has been Nathan Hartono's love even when he was a child: "No one told me to shut up so I didn't stop. And it got bigger."

"I enjoy all the aspects that make up the life of a musician. These little things shape the person I am today and I'm very grateful for it."

After winning his first competition at 14 and releasing an album a year later, he went on to perform on numerous global stages. But it was in 2016, after appearing in reality singing competition *Sing! China* — where he finished first runner-up — he captured hearts around the world. "The world opened up," he shares. "And I want to take advantage of these opportunities and have an interesting life."

His debut Mandarin single "爱超给电" charted on Spotify, iTunes Singapore and local radio station YES 933, and his highly anticipated Mandarin EP launches later this year.

Besides songwriting and acting, Hartono is also the ambassador for MILO Peng chocolate malt bottled drinks, the Ministry of Education's Committee to Promote Chinese Language Learning, as well as smartphone brand Vivo Singapore. He's been roped in by the Singapore Tourism Board for its new Passion Made Possible campaign too.

REVERSO TRIBUTE SMALL SECONDS FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

nathan hartono, 27

INSPIRING OTHERS THROUGH MUSIC

petrina loh, 36

FIRING UP GOURMANDS AND KITCHENS

Chef-owner of Morsels Petrina Loh talks like she's firing off an order chit to a sweltering kitchen at the height of weekend service. She speaks fast, in a self-assured tone that implies she will not suffer fools.

Loh's no-nonsense, single-minded focus has helped catapult Morsels to the top of every gourmand's mind. Last year, Morsels nabbed Restaurant of the Year at the World Gourmet Summit, in addition to a Chef's Choice award for Loh, beating out a slew of Michelin-starred compatriots in the process.

Her secret is maintaining her signature steel in whatever she does. "Once I set my mind to doing something, I keep my focus and do it — I don't listen to noise," she says.

Even her approach to creativity is handled with the same single-minded focus. Loh makes it a point to understudy a foreign chef overseas every year, because "you can't do fusion food if you don't understand what you're cooking," she confides.

But at the heart of her craft, her stance softens. "Chefs are artists as much as technicians, but I don't believe in merely checking boxes. I love using my hands to create, to give life to things. It feeds my creative soul."

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY MEDIUM FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELI ANILIM; HAIR: RICK YANG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN; LOCATION: SIX SENSES DUXTON



max tan, 34

BEAUTY IN BLACK AND WHITE

Soft-spoken he may be, but Max Tan tells beautiful stories with his clothes — even if they are in black and white. Likewise, the fashion designer, who designs women's ready-to-wear for his namesake label, keeps his own wardrobe monochromatic. He arrives at the studio decked out in a black jumpsuit in his signature aesthetic: Austere with a touch of street-chic.

Max.Tan, which launched in 2009, was barely in its formative years when it started to garner attention. "The campaign for my first collection was featured on the top 10 Spring/Summer 2010 on Stylesight.com (now wgsn.com), alongside Valentino, Miu Miu and Alexander McQueen. It was nerve-racking being in the spotlight with barely a collection under my belt, but that inspired me to continue doing what I like and stay true to my creative vision."

Limiting his designs to a monochromatic palette is challenging, he admits, but the trick is to embrace creativity. "The shapes and designs need to innovate every six months in order to look fresh. Thankfully, I have a small team of creatives that work with me on design development."

Which came in handy when Tan's studio was appointed costume designer for National Day Parade 2017. "I had to use lots of colours," he adds. "I also had to produce more than 200 designs in less than a month. But I was glad to be able to bring a different perspective to how costumes are seen in parades. After the project, I felt I was ready to take on far bigger ones!"

clara yee, 29

ENVISIONING EXPERIENCES

Clara Yee chuckles as she tries to hold her face still for the makeup artist to fill in her eyebrows. "I find it so hard to talk about my work without being expressive," she says with a hearty laugh.

Indeed, Yee is in the business of expression. The creative director and co-founder of design studio In The Wild was also art director for the inaugural edition of Singapore Tourism Board's *Singapore: Inside Out* in 2015. The international art and design showcase travelled through Beijing, London, New York and Singapore. Yee returned for its second edition last year as its creative director. She's also ventured into product design, collaborating with Japanese brands Mother Tool and Hakoyoshi to present lifestyle items under Supermama's KOBO Collection.

Yee says there are no boundaries to what art can achieve. "It is my foray into the arts that helped me open my mind to so much more. Philosophy, maths, engineering, science and fashion — I've been exposed to all this. Work excites me; I know I will encounter a topic vastly different from the last."

Describing the creative process as alchemy as well as a delicate balance of control, methodology, happenstance and instinct, Yee clearly relishes the energy and thrill of generating ideas at breakneck speed while forming connections among them. "It's as if my mind is racing through the galaxies, dodging meteorites and Thanos..." she says. "It's exhilarating, really."

RENDEZ-VOUS MOON MEDIUM FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: SEAN ANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN

lim jiahui, 37

BUILDING AWARD-WINNING SPACES

Architecture was not something Lim Jiahui planned to do — it was a course he chose because he scored well enough to qualify. Fortunately, he enjoyed it. Now a principal architect at CPG Consultants, Lim counts himself fortunate to have been involved in several placemaking developments. One honour, he says, was being part of the team that worked on the National Gallery Singapore, which won numerous accolades including a President's Design Award in 2015.

While his roster of completed projects is now stellar, convincing clients of his design proposals was one skill he had to pick up as a young architect. "People management is an important part of our daily work, something which we need to slowly gain more exposure and experience in. With clear directions and objectives, it is easier to convince others to accept your ideas," he shares.

And there is always room for improvement: "I'm a person who constantly strives to do better and hopefully outdo myself one project after the other. I analyse my completed projects to track where I can make improvements or enhance project execution. This is what motivates me."

So what's next? Lim is the lead architect for a nursing home at Taman Jurong, while his current project, the Technology Centre for Offshore and Marine Singapore's Deepwater Ocean Basin at NUS, has already received a BCA Green Mark Platinum Award.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS
CHRONOGRAPH FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

Lawrence Ler, 39

CHANGING SKYLINES THROUGH DAYDREAMS

Architect Lawrence Ler likes to keep his head firmly in the clouds. Singled out as one of 20 rising young architects by the Urban Redevelopment Authority in 2017, Ler has spearheaded projects such as Henderson Waves Bridge, ITE Headquarters and ITE College Central, as well as ones that reach as far as Kazakhstan — but he never loses his childlike sense of wonder.

It began with his final-year project in university. Ler wanted to create a conceptual “photo-park”, replete with planes that were dislocated in time and space. His classmates thought him impractical; Ler thought he would fail. But he eventually beat out hundreds of entrants to win the coveted RIBA President’s Medal for World’s Best Student Project.

Ler’s first success — and his *magnum opus* — came shortly after graduation. The Henderson Waves Bridge, with its emblematic curves that serve as both shelter and seat, won him the President’s Design Award for Design of the Year, to which Ler earnestly credits his own naivety. “Perhaps because I had so little experience, I wasn’t burdened by issues a seasoned architect would have,” he says.

Ler continues his ethos of creating structures to improve lives and promote sustainability as a design director at international design firm Gensler. But when he needs to dream, he still takes a moment or two to look up at the sky.

MASTER ULTRA THIN PERPETUAL FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: WATELIER

joanna dong, 36

JAZZING IT UP

Turned to the side, Joanna Dong cuts a confident figure, donning her signature quirky asymmetrical aesthetic. Facing the camera, the jazz singer moves like a seasoned pro, filling the studio with her honeyed vocals in between takes. But Dong, whose debut EP *Lullaby Nomad* launched in 2008, insists she's anything but. "I think people see my confidence, but they can't see me shaking underneath."

The charismatic crooner, who finished third in the *Sing! China* contest in 2017, recently headlined her first major concert *So Here I Am* at the Esplanade. "Some people grew up listening to jazz at home, but not me," says Dong, who fell in love with jazz only when she was at university. She regales how she was first drawn to the Lindy Hop dance, which she chanced upon while passing by Chijmes.

"I was besotted," she recalls. "And because it is a dance to swing jazz, it made sense for me to get to know this music."

Soon, Dong joined the NUS Jazz Band and as they say, the rest is history. "I like many music styles, but jazz really spoke to me. The whole point of it is to be in the moment and come up with different ways of singing. That, and the dancing. It helped me grow and become more confident and spontaneous."

These days, Dong divides her time between singing, hosting and, sometimes, acting. But, as she explains, "Singing is my first love."

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY MEDIUM FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

ng pei-sian, 34

MAKING MUSIC MAGIC

Energy is Ng Pei-Sian among strangers. The cellist strides into the studio, with sunshine smile and gangly gait. But the room hushes when he performs on his 1764 Giovanni Antonio Marchi from Bologna and the air dances to the sonorous ambience of Bach's *Cello Suite No 1 in G Major*.

"A million and one things cross my mind when performing on stage. Why are the lights so bright? Why is the conductor not using a score? The music is so beautiful, I want to cry... but sometimes, all I am thinking about is what to eat afterwards," Ng jokes. "I feel incredibly lucky to live and breathe music for my life's work. It is a blessing to be able to share music and give greater meaning to the lives of the people in our community, travel around the world and also educate our next generation of young musicians."

Born in Sydney, the Commonwealth Musician of the Year 2007 and principal cellist of the Singapore Symphony Orchestra performs every week in Singapore or other parts of the region. He is undoubtedly a prodigy, but Ng reckons it is the "sibling rivalry" between him and twin brother Pei-Jee (also a cellist) that motivated him to spend a lot more time practising. All that effort paid off for Ng, who performed alongside Yo-Yo Ma in 2016.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: EDWARD CHONG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN

kelly lim, 27

STITCHING COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

Crochet artist and graphic designer Kelly Lim (pseudonym Kelly Limerick) really, really loves yarn and wool. "I always joke that I want to be buried with it when I die," she quips. She cuts a striking figure with her handmade yarn braids and synthetic dreadfalls, which have appeared in campaigns for brands from Puma to Apple. (From February to May this year, her mug graced a giant LED screen on Orchard Road as part of the Selfies on iPhone X ad.)

Lim has brought crochet and knitting to a wider audience with her large-scale installations and projects, such as yarn-bombing three institutions at the invitation of the National Heritage Board last year. And she's demonstrating through her *kimokawaii* (Japanese for "gross cute") style that these crafts can be wildly versatile in their expression. "What intrigued me about crochet and knitting is how these balls of yarn look like nothing at all, yet can be used to make absolutely anything," she says.

From creating origami and paper flowers and crocheting Hello Kitty figurines, Lim now dreams of organising an art festival on one of Singapore's outer islands, where art exists outside the confines of a traditional gallery. "I want to show there are different kinds of art and each can be appreciated in its own way. Everyone can have his or her own perspective; art should create conversation."

bryan koh, 34

TELLING STORIES THROUGH FOOD

Bryan Koh doesn't say much in person but he speaks volumes through his food. You might already be a fan of his delectable creations by Chalk Farm, which opened in 2013. Last November, he opened Milk Moons, which focuses on Asian flavours.

Koh's love for food started at a young age and he was always encouraged to pursue his passion. "My mother bought me cookbooks and made it a point to explore new foods whenever we travelled," he says. "The first thing I did in the kitchen was to bake, so it was natural to begin my foray into the food scene with cakes."

He's also translated his passion for food into the written word. He published *Milk Pigs & Violet Gold* (2014), a cookbook of Filipino recipes that won Best Book on Food at the National Book Awards of the same year. The follow-up *Milkier Pigs & Violet Gold* (2016) was nominated for Best Food Travel Book at the Gourmand World Cookbook Awards. He also dipped his fingers into Burmese cuisine with *0451 Mornings are for Mont Hin Gar* (2015) which snagged 3rd Best Asian Cookbook at the Gourmand Cookbook Awards.

"I am interested in food cultures in other countries. Food is the lens, the prism, through which I view the world," he says.

Come October, Koh will release another scrumptious offering, *Bekwoh, Stories & Recipes from Peninsula Malaysia's East Coast*, a 260-pager on cuisine from Kelantan, Terengganu and Pahang.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS AUTOMATIC FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

A DISRUPTER

taking **action** in **innovative** ways

galvanises people around an issue

builds scalable SOLUTIONS and
PRACTICES

change makers

SHERRY AW • ANBARASI BOOPAL • DAWN TAN • BENJAMIN SWAN • JEFFREY LU • ESTHER WANG •
JULIUS TAN • GILLIAN TEE • STEPHANIE DICKSON

sherry aw, 37

COMBATING THE EFFECTS OF BRAIN DISEASES

Fruit flies may be mild pests to most of us, but to Sherry Aw they hold the key to understanding human neurodegenerative diseases such as Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. The independent fellow at the Institute of Molecular and Cell Biology at A*STAR researches how gene mutations that cause neurodegenerative diseases induce brain cell death, tremours, reduced lifespan and walking defects in flies. Aw is also a co-inventor on two patents, one for a method to track and analyse leg movement in fruit flies and the other for a molecular sensor that detects microRNA.

Though good in science at school, Aw fell in love with biology in particular only in university after her academic mentor encouraged her to conduct lab research. The 2017 L'Oréal-UNESCO Singapore For Women in Science National Fellowship in Life Sciences awardee attributes her passion for her research to curiosity, "because these diseases have a growing impact in our ageing societies".

And the process of research gives Aw much joy. "Science is fascinating! I love that I'm constantly discovering new things and occasionally, when the stars align, I get to understand, for the first time, something no one else knew."

She adds, "I love thinking of creative and original ways to ask a question, designing the experiment, carrying it out and then analysing and interpreting the data. Plus, the opportunity to contribute to our clinical understanding of disease is a big motivating factor."



anbarasi boopal, 35

GIVING ANIMALS A VOICE

Animals have been close to Anbarasi Boopal's heart since her childhood, so it's no surprise she desires to lend them a helping hand. As deputy chief executive at the Animal Concerns Research and Education Society (Acres), she is involved in training and managing the team, planning programmes, and liaising with external agencies. "Our work involves coming across a lot of cruelty, suffering and pain, as well as talking to individuals who may not have thought about the animals in their lives," she shares.

Which is why Boopal hopes to educate the public on animal cruelty and how they can play their part to help. "There is an urgent need to change mindsets and the way we see nature," she says. "We hope more people will be aware of how they can help animals directly through their lifestyle choices — from the food we eat and clothes we wear to entertainment we enjoy — by saying no to animal cruelty."

Since joining Acres 12 years ago, Boopal has never looked back. Seeing the positive impact it has made on these creatures is worth it, she reveals. In 2017, the organisation helped over 3,600 animals in Singapore: "We managed to repatriate wild animals rescued from the illegal wildlife trade. Our animal crime investigation unit had successful operations jointly with enforcement agency AVA, apprehending several offenders who sold, trafficked or tried to trap wild animals for the illegal pet trade."



PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: EDWARD CHONG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: THE HOUSE OF W.ATELIER

REVERSO CLASSIC MEDIUM DUETTO FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

dawn tan, 36

LIGHTING THE WAY TO SCIENCE
AND ENGINEERING



Fascinated by natural phenomena and intellectual challenges since young — an encyclopaedic tome on science and maths was the first book she picked out — Dawn Tan grew to love engineering for its bridging of theory and application.

She was especially drawn to the field of light. As assistant professor in engineering product development at Singapore University of Technology and Design, Tan works on nonlinear optics, with the goal of creating efficient amplifiers and light sources applied to Internet data transmission and high-performance computers. For her research on photonics, Tan won the L'Oréal-UNESCO

Singapore For Women in Science National Fellowship in Physical and Engineering Science in 2017. She now leads a research group studying photonic devices and systems at SUTD.

But Tan hasn't been immune to self-doubt. She references MIT professor of humanities, sociology and anthropology Susan Silbey, who shared men and women are equally successful in engineering, but the latter are more likely to doubt their problem-solving abilities. "This insight is so powerful and it's something I draw strength from," Tan says. "Women need to fight their inclination to doubt their abilities."

All this contributes to Tan's passion for promoting engineering among women — she co-organised and chaired the 2018 SUTD Conference on Women in Technology and Design, and serves on the Singapore Computer Society's Women in Technology interest group committee, as well as others — like her two daughters.

"I want them to grow up in an environment where they see strong women from all fields or walks of life," she says, "so they won't be hindered in pursuing any field they desire."

REVERSO ONE DUETTO MOON FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

benjamin swan, 37

BUILDING GREEN CASTLES IN THE SKY

Never in former engineer Benjamin Swan's wildest dreams did he consider being a farmer, but here he is today, the co-founder of Sustenir Agriculture, a patented farming system that grows high-quality produce with modern technology.

"I love that we are doing our part to offset the impact of traditional farming on the planet," he says. "One of our sayings at Sustenir is 'growing impossible food in impossible places' and I guess that sums up our attitude when it comes to dealing with adversity."

The high-tech, vertical farming facility uses a combination of advanced methods in a controlled environment, which cuts production time by half. The non-native crops, which include kale, arugula leaves, cherry tomatoes and recently, Singapore's first

locally grown strawberries, are tightly packed in tiers, surrounded by the glow of LEDs. Other than being the first ISO 22000-certified indoor farm in Singapore, Sustenir Agriculture also became the first of its kind to present at the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome in 2016.

The idea came to Swan when he chanced upon an article for vertical farming and he pondered over how it could be improved, especially for land-scarce Singapore. That same evening, he experimented with designs on his computer, eventually inventing the now-patented growing system.

Jumping from a stable career to starting afresh as a farmer in a sunrise industry was a huge risk but as Swan shows, it was well-worth the effort.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS AUTOMATIC
FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**

A portrait of Jeffrey Lu, a man with dark hair, wearing a blue patterned blazer over a light blue shirt and grey trousers. He is sitting on a patterned surface, looking towards the camera with a slight smile. He is wearing a watch on his left wrist and a ring on his left hand.

jeffrey lu, 33

FIGHTING DISEASES THROUGH
SCIENCE AND TECH

Jeffrey Lu comes from a family of technologists and entrepreneurs — his father, uncle and brother founded several semiconductor companies in countries including Taiwan, China and the US. It was as if he was born into the industry.

Lu is the CEO of Engine BioSciences, a company he co-founded that aims to discover and develop new therapies for diseases. Starting a business in a highly specialised field like life sciences forced him to work even harder to achieve what he has today.

"I've had to pick up knowledge, skills and vocabulary to be credible. [With Engine Bio] I hope that some of these efforts will yield fruit, especially in products and services that can help patients with diseases that require new and better treatments," he says.

And the company has garnered success. Earlier this year, it closed its seed round with US\$10 million in funds raised. "As CEO, I set the vision and strategy for the company, lead operations and ensure it is financed for our mission."

Lu also holds positions in other companies. He is a co-founder at NestBio Ventures and Goodman Capital; a senior advisor at D3Capital (all venture capitalist firms), and a board director at Enleofen Bio, which develops anti-fibrotic therapies for diseases.

REVERSO CLASSIC DUOFACE FROM **JAEGGER-LECOULTRE**

Joytangle founder Esther Wang's phone is filled with pictures of smiling children. Though the geotags vary, ranging from UK to Uganda, several constants remain. In each image, the children are clad in hospital scrubs, surrounded by a heart-rending array of medical devices, but their attention is temporarily removed from their grim circumstances by a blue, smiling rabbit.

The Rabbit Ray is no mere toy. Equipped with miniature, faux-medical equipment, it allows children to simulate vaccinations, insert intravenous plugs and drips, and even draw fake blood from its arm. It is Wang's bid to help young patients understand the medical procedures they undergo and consequently, lessen their anxiety — to that end, Wang founded her health-education company Joytangle to bring the Rabbit Ray to more children around the world.

"What does an injection mean to a kid? What does chemotherapy mean? These big words mean nothing to them," says Wang, who keeps the pictures as a reminder of the good her work does. "You need to use a different language in order to reach out to them."

Today, Rabbit Ray is used by leading hospitals internationally, including Johns Hopkins Children's Center in the US and Great Ormond Street Hospital in UK. The blue rabbit has travelled to more countries than Wang has ever been, but the knowledge that children in hospitals the world over are a little less frightened with Rabbit Ray in hand is all she needs.

RENDEZ-VOUS PERPETUAL CALENDAR FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN; LOCATION: SIX SENSES DUXTON

esther wang, 30

COMFORTING SICK KIDS WORLDWIDE

julius tan, 29

EMPOWERING BUSINESSES AND CONSUMERS

Julius Tan, co-founder and CEO of Electrify.sg, a marketplace for retail electricity, is charged up and ready to make his mark on the emergent industry. Since launching its platform last July, Electrify.sg reports it has helped small and medium enterprises save more than \$1 million in electricity bills. The year-old company raised US\$30million under 10 days during an initial coin offering to upgrade the marketplace to one built on blockchain, and recently signed partnerships with Japan's Tokyo Electric Power Company and China's Narada Power.

The decentralised peer-to-peer trading platform enables companies to purchase electricity directly from independent producers and retailers, cutting out middlemen and reducing cost. Tan and his team are launching the platform for residential consumers in the second half of this year, so anyone with a solar panel "can become his own power company," he says.

Tan, who worked as a research engineer at the Solar Energy Research Institute of Singapore and then an energy trader, hopes at least 25 percent of Singapore's power needs will be fulfilled by renewable sources within a decade. "The area I'm most interested in is energy, from conventional power generation to renewables, from generation to grid management," he says of his motivations. "And solar power in particular, because I think it's fundamentally important we move towards a renewables-based future."



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: EDWARD CHONG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN

gillian tee, 36

REVITALISING ELDERCARE THROUGH TECH

Gillian Tee can't sit still. Whether she is animatedly describing the impetus for *Homage*, her million-dollar one-stop senior home care app with impassioned gestures, or making moves amid the tech hotbed that is Silicon Valley, Tee's life seems defined by a constant, tireless need for action.

"I'm happiest when I'm working," Tee shares between breaths. Her inexhaustible persona belies a tender side: After a breakneck 15-year career overseas that saw her catapult through the ranks of the tech circuit in New York and Silicon Valley (where she co-founded *Rocketrip*, an app that helps reduce business travel costs, which raised US\$18 million in funding), Tee came to the sobering realisation that her mother was growing old in Singapore — without her.

Homage is Tee's deeply personal tribute to the caregivers who doted on her as she was growing up, from the Malaysian nanny who raised her till she was 10 to Tee's own ageing mother (whom she felt woefully under-equipped to care for after those years abroad). She desired to provide professional and convenient healthcare for seniors like them.

Though Tee is no longer part of Silicon Valley, she finds no lack of excitement in Singapore. In July, *Homage* secured US\$4 million in Series A funding that was co-led by Golden Gate Ventures and HealthXCapital. Tee revels in the opportunity to revolutionise a once-staid industry but mostly, she enjoys being close to her mother once more.



PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN; LOCATION: SIX SENSES DUX TON

REVERSO CLASSIC SMALL DUETTO FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

stephanie dickson, 30

MAKING GREEN LIVING THE NORM

Being eco-conscious is more than just a buzzword to Stephanie Dickson, the founder of Green is the New Black Asia (GITNB), Asia's first conscious festival. "My work is all about making sustainability mainstream, accessible and a little sexy," she shares. "We do this through our biannual Conscious Festivals in Singapore and Hong Kong, and our media platform where we connect responsible brands with individuals who care."

After four years of planning fashion weeks, Dickson realised how she personally contributed

to the detriment of the planet. Wanting to make a difference, she went all out to discover brands on the mission to do good. Launching GITNB meant she could help others understand and become greener. The Conscious Festivals have welcomed more than 10,000 attendees and developed its #LittleGreenSteps programme for brands and events. She also hosts a weekly video series on GITNB TV, where she interviews conscious-preneurs.

But she's not resting on her laurels; she plans to expand her efforts to other parts of Asia and

around the world. "We will continue to evolve and grow to meet the needs of the conscious community, so we can support, connect and inspire all to take positive action."

Dickson is also the founder of The Wedge Asia, which connects conscious brands and people through events, and endeavours to build a community for those who want to live more consciously.

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY SMALL FROM JAEGER-LECOULTRE

strength, power, influence

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ashish manchharam, 39

PRESERVING HERITAGE THROUGH SHOPHOUSES

Ashish Manchharam's childhood was shaped by the colour and candour of Kampung Glam's eclectic shophouses, so it was difficult for him to imagine growing up anywhere else. The founder of 8M Real Estate therefore set out to preserve these very buildings. But conservation is not merely gazetting buildings like architectural taxidermy; he aims to reintegrate them into Singapore's modern landscape.

Today, 8M has a staggering \$400-million portfolio that comprises 31 shophouses, including Ann Siang House, now a hotel oozing with old-world charm and which was acquired for a cool \$52 million. But to Manchharam, the real value of the properties he redevelops lies in their history.

He is not unlike the shophouses he laboriously makes over: Peeking from beneath his finely cut shirtsleeve is a well-loved rubber wristband with the phrase, "#StopBullying". If the faded accessory is incongruent with Manchharam's inscrutable image, he does not mind. "It's my daughter's personal campaign," he says proudly. "I've been wearing it for months. I'm her biggest supporter."

While other real estate developers look to change a city's entire skyline, Manchharam is more than content to ensure the shophouses of his younger years last long into the future — with all their charm and heritage intact, and then some.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS CHRONOGRAPH FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



yvon bock, 39

FEEDING THE FUTURE

To entrepreneur and mother-of-four Yvon Bock, Hegen is her fifth “baby”. Launched in 2015, the home-grown baby care start-up has earned rave reviews for its bottles and an admirable 4.9 rating on China’s Tmall online marketplace. Last November, it became the first Singaporean company to feature in Alibaba’s 11.11 global shopping festival. Bock is targeting to expand its presence to 35 markets by 2022.

Formerly in asset management, Bock was inspired to create an integrated system when she became left with more than 10 separate baby care products after breastfeeding her children over a span of 11 years. “Family made me want to start something to advocate what I think is important in life,” she explains. She and her team spent four years creating more than 200 prototypes, eventually settling on an asymmetrical teat design and a soft-square bottle that encouraged babies to latch on. The all-in-one express-store-feed system with interchangeable adapters, feeding collars and storage lids won a Life Category Gold Award at the Good Design Awards 2018.

When she’s not in town cheering on her three sons at their rugby matches — she says she’s too chill to be a tiger mum — Bock runs seminars throughout Asia to discuss breastfeeding, bonding and parenting. “It’s not just a business for me,” she says. “It’s about supporting and growing with a community.”

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**



tin pei ling, 35

A HEART FOR SERVICE

Tin Pei Ling grew up living with her paternal grandmother and observed how her parents took meticulous care of her. “I believe that influenced my values when it comes to family and elders — respect and compassion,” Tin says. Her father’s generosity towards vulnerable neighbours was another source of inspiration: “In ways big or small, we can choose to help others in need.”

This Member of Parliament for MacPherson SMC shows the same concern and devotion to residents she encounters during her weekly meet-the-people sessions, neighbourhood visits and community events. Issues related to the elderly, women, children, youth and mental health are high on her agenda: In February, she moved a motion during parliament to boost support for seniors. Last April, she called for measures to aid working women in gaining parity and caring for their families.

Appointed CEO of non-profit organisation Business China in May, Tin will focus on strengthening a network of talents with knowledge of Singapore and China. Otherwise, her three-year-old son (“my pride and joy,” she calls him) and the imminent arrival of her second child keep her plenty occupied.

Tin has come a long way since her “baptism by fire” when she was first fielded in General Election 2011. “Without a publicly available track record then, I had to work even harder to establish myself. I hope for the day when one would not be judged by his or her age. Attitude — the willingness to learn, try new things and be better than who we were — is the better predictor of success.”

shamir rahim, 37

OPERATION ORGANISATION

VersaFleet started as a side project for founder and CEO Shamir Rahim, who was determined to automate logistics planning for his family's business.

It took off, much to his surprise, and grew rapidly. The transport management start-up systemises logistics operations in real-time, seamlessly managing driver routes, monitoring delivery statuses and scheduling thousands of jobs instantly. The team made it to the top 3 at the recent Coca-Cola

The Bridge Challenge, and won the Smart Logistics category.

In between ploughing through 100-hour work weeks at his start-up, Rahim is dad to three young boys and serves the community in various capacities. The president of the Singapore Malay Chamber of Commerce and Industry's Board of Directors is also a member of the Singapore Business Federation Council and its Digitalisation Issues Committee.

A trained molecular biologist, he compares his entrepreneurial inclination to a "strange addiction". "It's like an urge to pick up a brush and paint," he muses. "I spent many years in medical technology, but it was always a matter of time before I incorporated my first company. In fact, my family's first reaction when I announced it was, 'Finally!'"

REVERSO CLASSIC LARGE DUOFACE SMALL SECONDS FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE

elaine kim, 36

IN THE BUSINESS OF SOLUTIONS

She practises palliative care and looks after terminally ill patients at the St Luke's Hospital, but being a doctor is only one aspect of who Elaine Kim is. This mother-of-three is also a serial entrepreneur, having co-founded Crib and Trehaus. The former is a social enterprise that helps equip women entrepreneurs through networking and training in business skills, while the latter,

where she serves as CEO, is the first co-working space designed for working parents.

Going into medicine was always on the cards, since she hails from a family of doctors. Yet, the world of business and entrepreneurship always intrigued her. "Every time I saw a problem, if I could find a solution through business, I'd do it," she says.

Choosing one over the other to study in university was tough. "But I saw that being a doctor allowed me to make a huge difference to people's lives. I figured I could become a doctor first and do business after."

Trehaus rose from a direct need to cater to the needs of working parents, giving them the flexibility to prioritise both work and family. "Here, you can work with like-minded individuals who are very driven and successful but are also parents."

Trehaus will establish another location in Singapore and is in talks to open in Kuala Lumpur and Jakarta. It is also expanding its services into education and will provide preschool and childcare education for children up to six years old.

RENDEZ-VOUS NIGHT & DAY SMALL FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**



PHOTOGRAPHY: MICKY WONG; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: EDWARD CHONG; PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: HUI XIAN; LOCATION: THE HOUSE OF W. ATELIER



kelvin teo, 31

LENDING OPPORTUNITIES

One would be surprised Kelvin Teo sees himself as a natural follower than a leader. The co-founder and CEO of Funding Societies, a peer-to-peer lending platform, moves and talks like a front runner: Decisive, sure, and even slightly self-critical.

Teo and Reynold Wijaya were doing their MBA at Harvard University when the idea for Funding Societies struck. "We knew financing for small and medium-sized enterprises is a big problem. It resonated with us and we considered ourselves the best team to solve it in Southeast Asia. It felt like a calling, so we did it."

The duo took their idea a day at a time, until they met their team in Singapore for the first time after six months of communicating over Skype. They soon bagged Best Startup at Tech in Asia and raised their seed funding. He smiles: "We knew we were no longer just dreaming, we had believers."

In April, the company successfully closed their Series B round of financing, led by SoftBank Ventures Korea, raising US\$25 million.

Just two years ago, Funding Societies was on the verge of closing. Hit by a sudden change in regulation laws as it neared completion of its Series A fundraising, the startup lost 90 percent of its business. "If our Series A investor Sequoia pulled out, we would close down. Fortunately, Sequoia trusted us and we turned around."

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS CHRONOGRAPH FROM
JAEGER-LECOULTRE



nelson loh, 38

SHAKING UP THE AESTHETICS SCENE

Nelson Loh established his career first in investment banking. But it was entrepreneurship that called out to him. "My cousin Terence Loh and I have always wanted to start our own business and do something different," he shares. It was when he paid for his mother's aesthetics bill — "I couldn't believe every visit cost \$3,000 to \$5,000" — that he decided to delve into the industry "with a craving to disrupt the whole sector to make it more affordable to the masses." In 2010, the Novena Global Lifecare was born.

Novena's portfolio of brands includes NOVU Aesthetics, Equal Beauty and Novena Lifesciences, with more than 100 clinics across China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, South Korea and Malaysia. "We plan to open at least 100 clinics in China and 50 aesthetics clinics in Spain over the next two years," Loh shares.

The company is also working with universities and labs in the region to create "an extensive database on Asian genetics for predictive developmental and healthcare management".

Loh, a graduate of the Harvard Business School YPO President Management programme, also founded venture fund DORR Group. He believes in giving back; he's helped build multiple childcare centres, set up a sports scholarship fund for underprivileged athletes, and sponsors the Singapore Muay Thai National Team. His Luo Haocai Cambridge Scholarship also enables local undergraduates to pursue further education at Cambridge University's Girton College.

JAEGER-LECOULTRE POLARIS CHRONOGRAPH WORLDTIME
FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**

PHOTOGRAPHY: JOEL LOW; MAKE-UP: ELAIN LIM; HAIR: RICK YANG;
PHOTOGRAPHY ASSISTANCE: ALFIE PAN; LOCATION: SIX SENSES DUXTON



jenny tay, 32

DIGNITY AFTER LIFE

"Rich or poor, everyone deserves a dignified funeral. That's our legacy," says Jenny Tay, managing director of Direct Funeral Services. The daughter of undertaker Roland Tay joined her father's business after a brief career in advertising and event management, despite her interest from an early age.

Tay admits, "Taking over a family business can be tough as you have big shoes to fill. I started from the ground up, visiting the embalming room regularly to learn how to do make-up for the departed. My job is not for the faint-hearted as we deal with grief and death every day."

Taking a step further, Tay co-founded Direct Life Foundation two years ago to connect volunteers with elderly people who live alone. The foundation conducts regular events, including free haircuts, concerts and excursions to places of interests around Singapore.

Seeing death every day has helped Tay cherish life more — this new mother has taken skydiving and other extreme sports off her bucket list. "My work is very meaningful as we help the family through the entire grieving process. Now, I count my blessings every morning when I wake up. Facing death every day allows me to consider how to lead a meaningful life."

jaelle ang, 38

THE GREAT INDOORS

Natural daylight, plush furniture, designer lights and a swanky bar — one would be excused for mistaking The Great Room offices for a posh hotel lobby. True enough, the handsomely furnished co-working space is a modern take on the stately but often empty spaces that lavish the grand mansions of the golden age. Except its formal rooms, including the reception, study and dining hall, are filled with good company and great vibes, regales co-founder and CEO Jaelle Ang.

In the two years since its launch, The Great Room has already ventured outside Singapore, establishing partnerships that will see it open outposts in Bangkok and Hong Kong.

This real estate developer, who is involved in the development of luxury hotels such as Capella Bangkok and Four Seasons Hotel Bangkok through her work at Country Group Development, was dissatisfied with the contrast between world-class hotel environs and those of traditional office spaces. "I saw how work environments were bland and uninspiring even though many spend most of their waking hours in the office. I felt compelled to change how we work and play."

Ang likens herself to Jonathan Hill's "Illegal Architect" in the exploratory critique, especially in relation to The Great Room. It is user experience before designer aesthetic, she says. "Every day I learn how other businesses function and how elevated environments help win the war for great talents."

Despite her achievements, Ang's fire burns bright: "As an eternal optimist, I'd say I've had many memorable moments in my meandering career but the most hasn't arrived. I look forward to opening and challenging the status quo about work and play in more cities in Asia-Pacific."

If being a mum is the world's hardest job, Lim Hui Nan has her work cut out for her. Barely a month out of the maternity ward, she is back at work overseeing her veritable empire: Alongside her husband Howard Lo, the mother-of-two manages a legion of 11 F&B concepts, including Standing Sushi Bar and Tanuki Raw, under the imprimatur of Empire Eats.

Lim wears many hats, but none come tailor-made. Aside from mushrooming new outposts of existing concepts and developing new ones for an F&B scene prone to malaise, she also had to manage a constellation of restaurants. She constantly battles "mum guilt", but a scrupulous need for structure helps her to manage the finer details of the business with poise.

"When I entered the business, it was

with a razor-sharp focus on what had to be fixed internally," says Lim, who opens her first overseas restaurant, Monroe, in Kuala Lumpur at the end of this year. "But as someone who loves being hands-on, it's a challenge to keep myself from wanting to step in and fix something myself."

To unwind from the barrage of responsibilities, Lim turns to baking. "The exact science of it appeals very much to my affinity for discipline," she says.

MASTER ULTRA THIN MOON FROM **JAEGER-LECOULTRE**

lim hui nan, 35

IN THE BUSINESS OF FOOD AND FUN

the vanguards

2011 BERNISE ANG • COLIN SEAH • GILLIAN TAN • IRENE CHUA • KRISHNA RAMACHANDRA • LEE GUAN WEI • MAHDEV MOHAN • MELISA TEO • TAN MIN-LIANG • TINA KOH • ADRIAN LEE • ALFIAN SA'AT • ANDRE CHIANG • BILLY ONG • BOO JUNFENG • CHRISTOPHER LONG • DARIUS CHEUNG • DINESH NAIR • DIYVA MODI • EMMA YONG • FELIX LOW • FOO

YUN YING • FRANCOIS DOTTA • JANE LEE • JOHN CLANG • JONATHAN LOH YUIN-HAN • KEITH LOH • KELVIN CHEW • KISHIN RK • LEONARD TAN • MARISSA TEO • MELISSA ARATANI KWEE • MICHAEL HAN • NOOR EFFENDY IBRAHIM • ONG KER-SHING • OW YEW HENG •

TEO YIK YING • TOM ZALLER • VERNON LEE • WILSON ANG **2012** CAROLYN LAM • EN LEE • GRACE CHEW • JASON POMEROY • MARCUS ANG • MARCUS LIM • TINGJUN ZHANG • TJIN LEE • VINITA RAMANI MOHAN • ALLAN LIM • ANASTASIA LING • EDUARDO SAVERIN

• EDWARD CHIA • ELAINA OLIVIA CHONG • EMAN LIM • GUY HOH • GWENDOLYN REGINA TAN • HANS TAN • JANICE WONG • JASON SIM • JOSEPHUS TAN • JOSHUA KANGMING TAN • JUNE YAP • KEVIN FOONG • KUIK SHIAO-YIN • LEOW KAH SHIN • LIM HEEM WEI • LOUIS NG • NICHOLAS FANG • NOORUL FATHA AS'ART • PATRICIA NG • RYAN LEE • SAM TAN • SIM CHI YIN • SUNAINA GILL • WEE TENG WEN • YANG

JI WEI • YENN WONG • YEO SZE LING **2013** ADRIAN TAN • ANTHONY CHEN • JULIANA CHAN • MARLENE LEE • MARTIN TAN • NG SHIN EIN • PRISCILLA SHUNMUGAM • ELAINE HENG • RAMESH SELVARAJ • YUNG ONG • ADRIAN ONG • ANDREW TAN • CHEW JUN RU •

CHRISTINA CHAN • CLOVIS LIM • DARREN GAN • DONNA ONG • EDWIN NEO • ESTHER LOO • GABRIEL NG • HUNN WAI • IAIN TAN • JJ LIN • JOSEPH SCHOOLING • JOVAN YAP • KARA THORNTON • LAURENTIA TAN • LEE LI LIAN • LIM YEW SOON • PAM SIOW • SAURAV

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CHEONG • ELIZABETH KONG • GRACE SAI • EDGAR KIEU • MOHAMED JINNA • KARL CHONG • LI JINGMEI • ROYSTON TAY • MOHAMED FAIZAL MOHAMED ABDUL KADIR • NURULASYIQAH TAHA • ROSHNI SELVAM • ANDREW TANG • ABIGAIL SIN • TEE KHOON TANG • CHEN

ZHANGYI • ZAINI OSMAN • JACKIE LEE CHOON YAU • CHRISTOPHER DE SOUZA • PAUL TAN • PANG KOK KEONG • WAN YUE • KEVIN SEAH • NICHOLAS CHAN • JOLENE CHONG • GEN NEO • STEFANIE SUN • ZUL OTHMAN • PEARRY TEO • PAT LAW • ASEEM KUMAR THAKUR •

KWOK JIA CHUAN • JONATHAN NG • NOEL HIDALGO TAN • SELENA YOUNG • DAWN NG **2015** NICHOLAS NG • HAZLINA HALIM • DARREN TAN • LOIS WAN • REHAN AMARASURIYA • LIM KEXIN • DAVID CHEANG • ALAN CHOO • MELISSA JANE FULLWOOD • TAY SU-LYN

• DENISE LEE • ASH SINGH • ALEXANDER LING • QUAH ZHENG WEN • ROYSTON TAN • RHONDA WONG • LENNY WEE • HO TZU NYEN • LARRY PEH • ANNE CHENG • JONATHAN YANG • BRIAN GOTHONG TAN • CLEMENT ZHENG • IAN GREGORY TAN • BENJAMIN TEE • GOH

YIPING • RUTH LING • JAMES CHAN • JEREMY AU • JENNIFER HENG • NATASHA LATIFF • FELICIA TAN • IAN TEO • ROSHNI MAHTANI • NICHOLAS YE • CHEW JIA WEI • TAN YINGLAN • LAM SHUMEI • THADDEUS YEO • JULIEN ROYER **2016** FRANKLIN TANG • RACHEL LIM

• DANIEL TAN • ALEXIS HOROWITZ-BURDICK • DARRELL ANG • NEO MEI LIN • JAIKANTH SHANKAR • VELDA TAN • MATTHEW PELOSO • STACY SWEE • POCKET SUN • WONG KAH CHUN • PHUA BO WEN • ELICIA LEE • KRISTEN TAN • ANDERS TAN • NEO JIE SHI • YUEY TAN •

ANGELA LEE • BALLI KAUR JASWAL • CHERYL KOH • PAULINE NG • JACQUELINE CHANG • SAM YAM • MARCUS TAN • LILY GOH • REBEKAH LIN • TAM WAI JIA • KHOR CHIEA CHUEN • AARON TAN • BEH HWEE SZE • DARREN CHEN • KOH SWEE YEN • RACHEL WANG • REMY CHOO

• ZHULKARNAIN ABDUL RAHIM • BRANDON LIU • CYRIL WONG • LYN ROSMARIN • VINNIE LAURIA **2017** JEFFERY SUNG • MERYL KOH • DANNY TAN • CHOO YILIN • LAWRENCE HOLMEFJORD-SARABI • ANDIE ANG • BRIAN CHUA • GINA HENG • VIKNA RAJAH • CHARLOTTE

LIM • ETHAN KOH • POOJA NANSI • HENRY CHAN • DIVIAN NAIR • KEVIN MARTENS WONG • ELIZABETH TAN • LUCAS NG • JASMINE SER • QIN YUNQUAN • KAREN TAN • NICHOLAS GOH • DIAN RASID • LAI CHANG WEN • JOHN TAN • SUN SHEAU HUEI • DJ KOFLOW (WAYNE

LIU) • JASMINE SOKKO • ALVIN TAN • DENNIS TAY • SHAO HUILIN • CHRISTEL QUEK • QUEK SIU RUI • LEE HAOMING • AMANDA LEE KOE • BJORN LOW • GAVIN TAN • CHUA KHAI LIN • SHARON YEE • KATHY XU • JEFFREY LIU