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the monash gazette

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The opinions expressed in MonGa Issue #1 2013 belong solely to the writers and are not necessarily endorsed by Monash University Student Association nor Monash University Sunway Campus.

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WE WANT YOU
FOR MUSA SUB COMMITTEE



President's Message

MUSA 2013 set out to rebuild the face of MUSA; raise standards and level of professionalism. We had – to the best of our ability – put much thought in everything we do and how MUSA 2013 operates. The first meeting was the longest in the history of MUSA – 24 hours over the span of 3 days. This was because we tried to refine all our policies to avoid having any loopholes. However, as we continue to operate, we continue to learn and grow to better serve the student community.

MUSA events have generally drawn a big crowd of attendance. The Party had approximately 1000 attendees. We are in the midst of planning for the Ball, and the Ball this time round will be a little different from those of yesteryears.

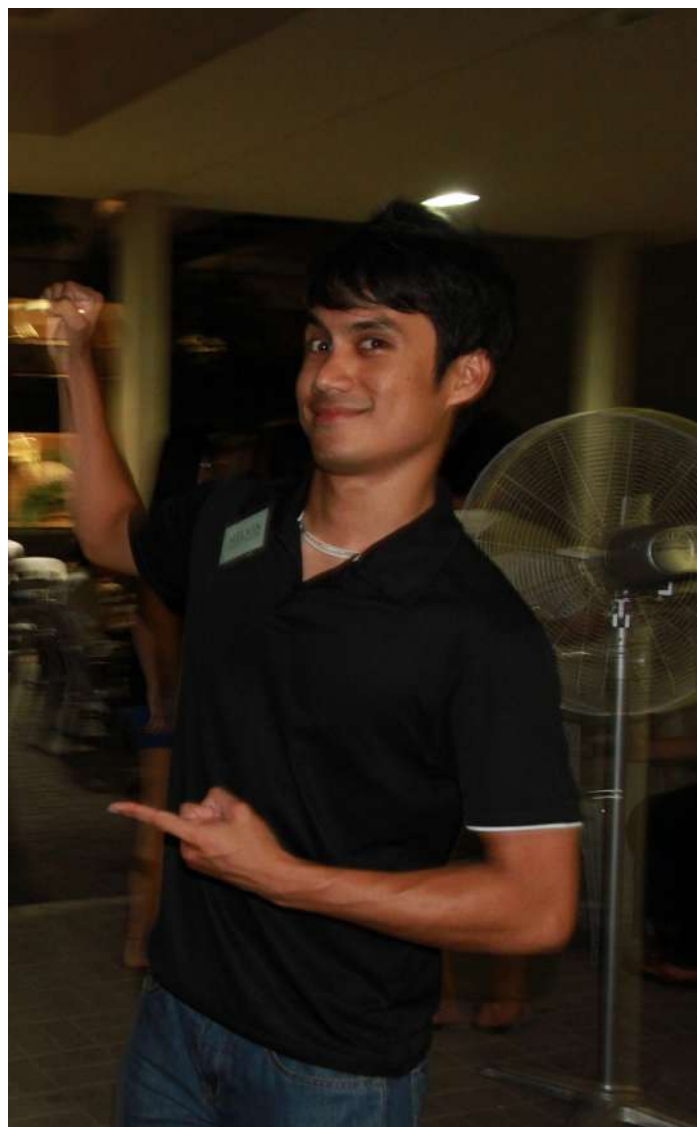
The Clubs & Societies Division has been strict this year. They have closed down a few inactive clubs so as not to deny students from forming new clubs. Examples of new clubs that are gaining popularity amongst students are the Nerf Club and the German Club.

Monash Admin has successfully heard the cry of the students and the result is a direct shuttle bus service from Monash University Sunway to Sunway Pyramid. MUSA has done our part in this process by raising concerns of the students and contributing to the operation of the shuttle bus. This service is in full operation.

MUSA 2013 has worked closely with the Facilities Department in designing a new Student Experience Centre equipped with a fully air-conditioned hall and BBQ area for events, one big dance studio which can be divided into two, badminton courts, bigger gym and a little more parking. It is expected to be completed in September. We cannot wait to move in!

Sincerely,

Melvin Shawn D'Silva
MUSA President 2013



MUSA, as the student body representative of Monash University, will continue to serve students in voicing out our concerns. After all, we're students too.



LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Welcome back to the new semester! You are now holding in your hands a record of most of the events that have transpired in the past semester of 2013. We've tried our best to cover as much as we can; the things we hadn't covered on our companion website the-MonDo.com.

We campaigned in 2012 vowing to carry out the responsibilities of the fourth-estate in recording, reporting and reflecting on the happenings of the campus through the media of MonDo, our website and MonGa, the original hardcopy magazine format. Setting up and running MonDo, keeping it updated with fresh content and running around looking for contributors to cover the various events took up much of our time and thus we apologise that this issue had not been able to come out sooner.

In our daily duties at the office, we've encountered several trials and setbacks that have hopefully helped us to grow in our skills and pushed our limits. From having no usable hardware and software thus working out of our own personal laptops, to the daily grind of brainstorming for new articles and chasing down contributors, we've weathered them all and grown to know more about each other despite only getting together as a team and as friends during the 2012 MUSA elections.

Foremost in what we've learnt so far is that the Editorial role is no easy task and while it was easy to sit around and critique the fruits of previous Editors' labours and thinking up our own ways to do the magazine, the actual work is frustrating and maddening at times.

But immensely rewarding too and we hope you feel the same way upon going through the following pages! If you think you have an article you'd like to see published in the MonDo or the next (and final for our term) issue of MonGa, do drop us an email at musa.editor@monash.edu

Until the next issue,
The Editors
Hanny, Brian, Vinanie, Lestari

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O'WEEK &

*In the time-honoured ways,
the freshmen were informed,
fêted and initiated into the
Monashian fold.*





THE HUNT

Brian Soong and Samantha Tan captured the essence of the week and its culmination in the friendly inter-faculty rivalry of The Hunt.





MID-WEEK PHOTOGRAPHY BY DERRICK LEE

WEEK 1 *By Lestari Hairul*

Not being a particularly sociable person, I'd looked upon the evening's proceedings with dread as I considered backing out at the last minute from my role as a group facilitator. But not wanting to leave my partner, Vinanie, to shepherd and encourage our small tribe of freshman alone (and fearing the wrath of the Publicity Officers), I bravely ventured out of the comfortable sanctuary of the Editors' office to facilitate in the mingling of these bright, young, innocent souls.

Of course, no mingling would have been complete without games to break any awkwardness among strangers. Despite my earlier plan to zip around taking photos and occasionally conversing with those under my charge, I'd ended up enthusiastically encouraging the freshies to go around guessing if they're really Madonna or Batman based on the papers taped to their backs. At the conclusion of the game, everyone got along swimmingly, as we are wont to do when forced to interact with strangers in the name of fun. Camaraderie formed, we moved on to more pressing matters like competing in an intense ping-pong ball-transporting tourney.

Which we won, naturally.

Through a winning combination of wits, brains and some brawn, our group managed to construct a splendid newspaper slide that could aerodynamically propel the balls into the waiting box at the end. We fought hard but even as we defeated each group, we never forgot the flimsiness of the paper and the precarious nature of the ball's trajectory, something the more over-ambitious groups discovered soon enough. We won some vouchers, well the group not us facilitators, and so we went on with what's next on the agenda ... the requisite Tunnel of Love game.

After some sophisticated demonstrations on the part of the facilitators, we got the attendees to pair up guy with girl, and then launched an epic human roller-coaster that should've gone for longer if only our stomachs didn't protest. There were no prizes for this one save for the satisfaction of running headlong under the arms of your peers while dragging your partner/stumbling after them. The evening ended with a delicious buffet and impromptu dancing on the part of the facilitators. And after a bout of cleaning up, we left upon noting with satisfaction that former strangers were still sitting around having non-awkward conversations, now as newfound friends. Mission accomplished.

MINGLE

WEEK 2 *By Vinanie Wijesoma*

“Place your head on his lap. Now, just hold still.”

Following the success of the MUSA Publicity Officers' first Mid-Week Mingle (MWM), held on the 6th of March 2013, several members of the MUSA team and other student volunteers were ready to host the final MWM of the semester.

Because of Subang Jaya's clockwork March rains, the venue of the final MWM moved from the Foyer to the Exam Hall (Building 6, Level 2). The facilitators of the MWM, all of whom have spent at least two semesters at Monash, heaved in anxiety and trepidation in response to the venue change. These sentiments were fully justified considering the fact that the Exam Hall, for many, personifies everything nefarious about Exam Week; bone-chilling temperatures, stress-induced nausea, and an inimitable feeling of dread. But for the Freshies this was just another Hall; it will be another twelve weeks until such sentiments are fully actualised.

The Freshies were split into 10 groups of 10, with two facilitators assigned to each group. One of the five games, entitled “The Blanket Game”, involved a large blanket held by two facilitators and two groups sitting in a row on either side of the blanket. Once the blanket was dropped, the first player to correctly state (yell) the name of the opposing player wins a point for their respective team. This game resulted in a level of noise unprecedented for the Exam Hall. The noise could be likened to a cacophony of screaming freshies and the diminuendo of Flo Rida's Whistle; a sound previously internalised solely in the minds of insomniac-ridden Monashian exam-takers.

For purely subjective reasons, the aptly titled “Missing Chair” game was the highlight of the evening. This game calls for four individuals to sit on separate chairs with their legs facing the left to form a square. Bending backwards, with their legs still firmly planted on the floor, each person's head must rest on the laps/legs of the person behind them. Next, the chairs would be slowly removed from under them, leaving the four individuals in ‘pseudo-suspension’. My team, Group 10, were the last men bending backwards with their pelvis' directed upwards. They lasted a little under 4 minutes! Two people in my group, Shaheel and Alex, attributed this strength to their “Mauritian legs”. I smirked with all the pride of a stage mum.

The night ended with a prize-giving ceremony followed by a plethora of yummy hot dishes from Joshijosh Cafe & Catering, which included spaghetti carbonara, Caesar salad, rice, chicken, spring rolls, and even cakes for dessert. Many of the Freshies left at 8pm, at which point the MWM helpers were bent-double cleaning the aftermath; all in a pursuit to return the Exam Hall back to its barren, hostile state.



In search of Iloilo

“All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveller is unaware.”

-Martin Buber

WORDS BY **EMILY CHOONG** PICTURES BY VINCE CHEONG, MELISSA CHIA, SARAH CHONG, LESTARI HAIRUL & JONATHAN LIM

Like any other study trip organised by pathfinder, Dr Yeoh Seng Guan, the ‘In Search of Iloilo’ team started off as a group of 16 students who gathered for meetings, had little chats to get to know each other and thoroughly looked into the details of the trip prior to our takeoff on the 19th of January 2013 at 1:20am.

Many first footsteps were set in the Philippines, including mine. Hence, it was not surprising that most of us did not know what to expect for the next two weeks of our lives. I felt nervous because this was my first trip to a country I had never visited without my family. More comforting thoughts entered my mind, as I remembered the video done by our student guides, which naturally made me look forward to what the Philippines had to offer.

University of the Philippines Visayas

This was our home for ten days. Warmly welcomed by the *manangs* (*manang* is a term used to address an elder sister and *manong*, an elder brother) of the Gender and Development Program building upon our arrival, we were served a type of Filipino savoury snack consisting of freshly baked bananas and tapioca coated with caramelized brown sugar which disappeared quickly into our mouths. We were then taken on a tour of the building by Professor Dr. Diana S. Aure, who was the person in charge of the building, while at the same time we managed to familiarise ourselves with the other manangs who worked in the building. Living in the Gender and Development Program building was a different experience. The showers had no hot water, the toilet bowls had no seats, and they weren’t even able to flush! We were told beforehand that Iloilo had water piping issues and that we should try to conserve as much as water possible. I recall the words of our pathfinder reminding us that we are coming in as the more privileged bunch and that we should be more sensitive towards the important aspects of the new environment and culture we’ll be living in for the next ten days i.e. table manners, addressing the elderly, political issues, etc. I personally adapted quickly to showering with a big bucket and the cold water was refreshing seeing as how Iloilo was fairly hot during the day. We were very lucky to have had one of the *manangs*, Mama Belle, catering to our needs and because of the other *manangs*’ hospitality and kindness, it felt so much like home.

The university itself is an interesting place to explore. Unlike most public universities in Malaysia, this particular university holds an intense depth of history. The central building, Lozano Hall, caught the attention of many of us because it is a



massive structure right in the middle of the university. It was said that the building used to be the American City Hall and by the time of the Spaniards, it was built to be the Iloilo Municipal hall. The dungeons were used to detain prisoners but when Japan invaded the Philippines, they used the old municipal hall as their Garrison. Many people died in those dungeons; mostly Filipinos who opposed the Japanese government. It felt mysterious and eerie inside the hall because of the building's musty-dusty environment but I was amazed at how much history such a building in a university could hold. Today, a part of the building is designed to become the university library. Can you imagine studying above a dungeon? We weren't surprised when the student guides told us that ghosts have been spotted frequenting the building at night.

The Dinagyang Festival

Iloilo City, the “city of many charms”, is part of the Visayas area, located in the central part of the Philippines. The culture of Iloilo is rich in terms of their grand annual festivals. I was especially looking forward to the Dinagyang Festival, a religious and street cultural festival held each year to honour the Santo Niño and Christianization of the natives. It is one of the largest festivals in the country, and is celebrated by all Filipinos annually with a massive parade of performances. It is one of the largest festivals in the country, and is celebrated by all Filipinos annually with a massive parade of performances. It is said that this year's festival had taken a total of two years to plan. Colourful. That would be the word most appropriate to summarise my entire experience at the Dinagyang Festival. Divided into four teams (named after *Bond* films), I was assigned to Team Octopussy, where we had the opportunity to be among the audience at the parade. It wasn't pleasant walking through crowds of people of all ages pushing and shoving their way to get through. However, it was a beautiful sight; not only because of the many street performances by the different tribal representatives but because we witnessed the spirit of the festival, which vibrantly demonstrated the unity of the Filipinos during such celebrations.

We were lucky enough to have been given the opportunity to shadow Tribu Panayanon, which is a team that regularly competes at the Dinagyang Festival. We not only had the

chance to interview a few important people responsible for putting their entire performance together, but we were also given the chance to witness two of their rehearsals: a public non-full dress rehearsal and their final rehearsal the night before the festival. I believe we dug a much deeper hole than we expected as we covered every possible bit of the tribe's preparation and we managed to witness their grand performance at the festival.

Our cup was already full but fate decided to pour in even more water. Luck decided to strike us twice. We were thrilled and overjoyed when Tribu Panayanon was announced the winner of the competition at the Festival. Their victory has opened up the opportunity for them to travel overseas.

Jaro - where the unseen was seen

The Iloilo team was divided into three groups and each group was assigned to three different areas of Jaro: relocation sites, dump sites and urban poor sites. I was assigned to the team visiting the relocation sites and that journey was a rather emotional one for me as I came to a sudden realisation of how privileged my life is. Our very first home visit brought us to tears as we listened to an old man's story about his wife and his life. This couple were given the smallest possible land to live on among the other people in the area. Even being situated at a relocation site did not help them meet their basic needs because the old man was unemployed and could only carry out odd jobs like working at the dump sites. He is unable to take care of his wife who is ill as he has no money for food, let alone for medication.

The couple often have to depend on their neighbours for help. Many of the families at the relocation sites have more than two children. Most of the husbands are away working while the wives stay at home to carry out chores and take care of the children. Some houses are properly built whereas the other make-shift houses are much smaller and are dark due to the absence of electricity. My team and I also noticed how the locals have to walk quite a distance to retrieve their only source of water from a single pump that looked cloudy. It is their only option for survival.

Campaign posters from the upcoming election were visibly put up at every relocation site but the locals said that those running in the election are not the individuals who visit the area. The posters are put up just for show. At a small level I understood how they felt because I related their situation back to my political situation back home.

“I particularly liked how music brought our two worlds closer together...”



Guimaras Island – Getting to know the Ati people

Just a 15-minute boat ride from the Ortiz Pier is the beautiful Guimaras Island. We got to enter the Immaculate Heart of Mary School whereby twenty percent of its population consists of those from the Ati tribe. We managed to visit a settlement where the tribe warmly welcomed us. A session conducted by a mamang manang named Josephine enlightened us on the physical appearances of the tribe members as well as the uniqueness of the Ati tribe’s way of life. A few members of the tribe performed one of their traditional songs as we sat back, relaxed and enjoyed a round of fresh bananas, ciku and yam. Our trip would not have been complete without a performance by ourselves, so we taught the tribe one of our traditional Malay songs, Rasa Sayang. I particularly liked how music brought our two worlds closer together despite the fact that we were not fully able to understand each other’s languages.

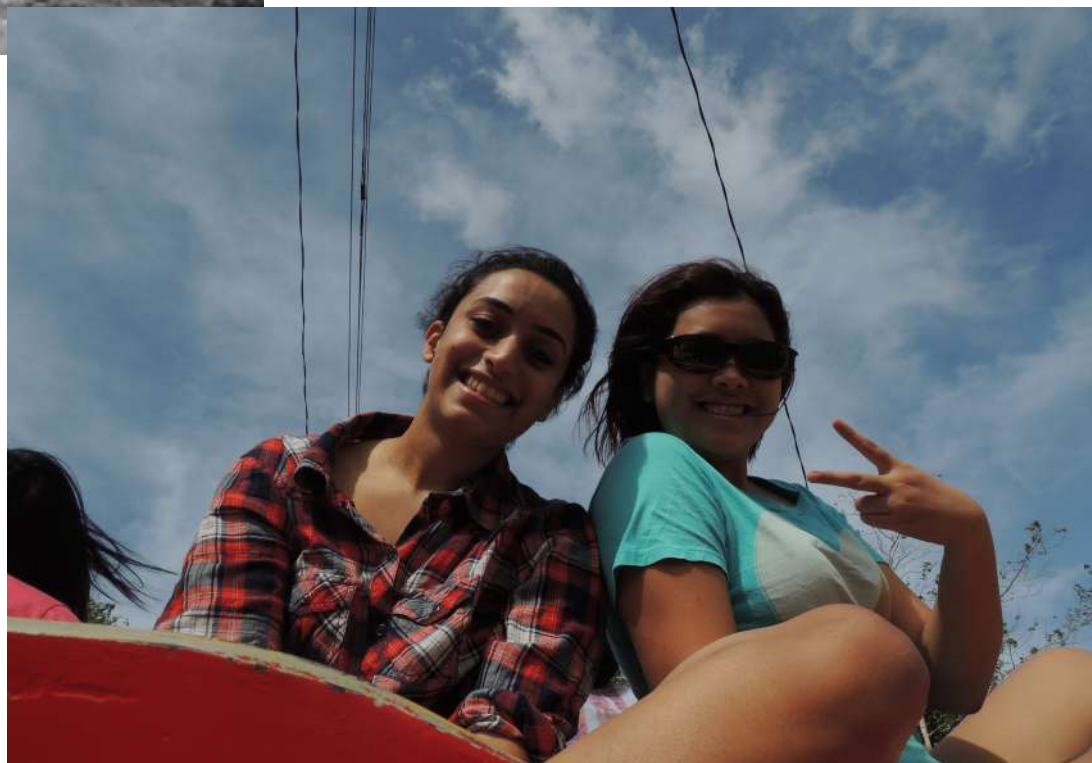




Well, who knew that our study trip would end as such? Generally, this journey was a major eye-opening experience especially for the not-so-avid travellers like myself. Our five student guides, Zherluck, Noraisa, Lucile Lucille, Peter and Paolo, were always full of energy regardless of the time of the day.

With reference to the quote mentioned in the beginning, this particular “destination” was a very special and meaningful one in which we all crossed paths with five wonderful individuals who assisted us through the thick and thin of our study trip. Little did we know that the 4 a.m. farewell on the 29th of January 2013 went harder than we expected. All in all, I can safely say that we have fulfilled our mission not only as students representing Monash University Sunway campus but also as travellers on a journey to explore the undiscovered. Do visit our blog for a more detailed coverage of the ‘In Search of Iloilo’ experience at

<http://insearchofiloilo.blogspot.com>.





Sober Raving.

Monash Sunway style

WORDS BY **VINANIE WIJESOMA** PICTURES BY **DERRICK DEIDEI LEE** and **BRIAN SOONG**

"It's just a bit of rain you (*enter expletive!*)" screamed one of the third-year helpers. "Why are you guys dancing outside Audi 2?! Come on to the Field and dance!" It was not just a bit of rain. It had been raining since 5pm and the drizzle showed no signs of abating. The Welcome Back Party organising committee members were drenched from head to toe and made no qualms about their soaked status. The Monash Party ravers on the other hand were initially not too pleased about getting wet, but as the night got crazier (and wetter), all their inhibitions were stripped, and they ended up dancing non-stop to the beats of Malaysia's very own DJ duo Goldfish and Blink, under the Subang Jaya rain...

Queues, queues, and more queues. Four to be exact; one for the Party Registration and three for the free food for registered ravers. It looked exactly like Orientation week, except this time students weren't lining up to sign four years of their life away to society's onus of being college educated, but instead

they were signing up for a single night of sober raving on Monash's open (wet and muddy) field. We were practically jittering in line...From the cold Subang Jaya rains you might think? No, it was adrenaline and Red Bull coupled with the sound of the drum 'n' bass pulsing through our bodies. We were buzzed. At 7.30pm registration closed and by 7:45pm all the free Party food was gone. 500 burgers from myBurger Lab, 400 slices of pizza from Papa Johns and 210 pitas from Humble Chef had been walloped by the student body in the span of an hour. After the four queues had dissolved, another one quickly formed on the open field for the free Red Bull drinks dispensed from the make-shift Red Bull tent. Like true Monashians, the drizzle didn't deter them from lining up for a free giveaway. Pretty soon, all the party-goers were damp, and nothing was going to stop them from raving in the open.

In the midst of Monash's (arguably) most epic party was a large group of students inside the library thoroughly insulated from the Party ambience. All

that separated us, the Party folk, from them library folk, was a rounded glass window. There were tens of students buried inside the warm of their hoodies staring at the glow from their laptop screens. Some people (read: boys) were pressing their mouses with inimitable intensity, playing DOTA no doubt. Others, with a disturbingly blank canvas for a face, scrolled through their Homepage, mind numbingly engaged in a good old sundown ritual of Facebook-stalking-fun. I was overwhelmed with the desire to tap on the goldfish glass-like window and yell "The Party is happening outside, here and now! It's not happening inside your friend's (who you haven't spoken to/seen in six years) 'Nights Out' album!" Then there were those distressed souls, with their ribcages pushed up against the desk and a permanent furrow etched on their eyebrows, who were painstakingly finishing off (starting?) an assignment due by sunrise. All we had was time...all they needed was a little more of it.

Adjacent to the library is the open Field, where Monash's Welcome Back



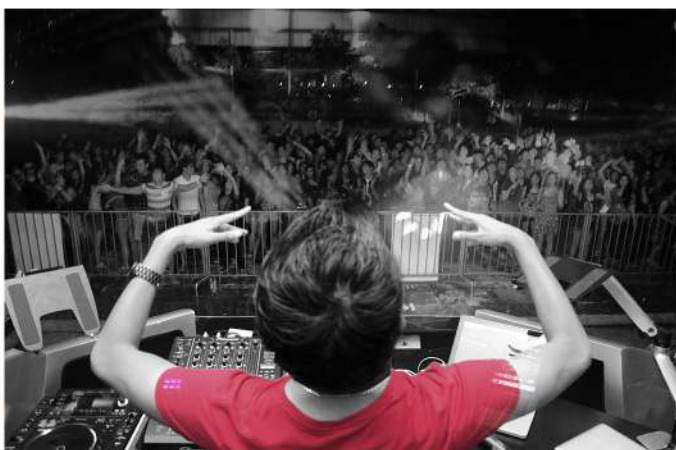
Party was held. A marquee was set up on the open field for the Party complete with a sound system, PA system, and an LED lighting system. Inside the marquee, raised on an 8 ft high platform was the turntable for the two Party acts; Monash's own DJ Slax Dan (aka Daniel Lourdes) and Malaysia's DJ duo Goldfish and Blink, whose popularity had escalated to new heights following the success of their gig at Future Music Festival Asia 2013. Opening act DJ Slax Dan delivered a high-energy set from 7:30pm to 9:40pm, pumping his fist in unison with the crowds' to the music. DJ Slax Dan's dance-floor friendly house style beats got the crowd worked up for the Party's main act, DJ Goldfish and Blink.

On the shameless basis of nepotism, I gained access into the marquee tent, where entry was restricted to the organising committee members. All the members stood before a 3 ft high gate that separated them from the Monash ravers. Equipped with two spray cans filled with pseudo-snow, one on either hand, the committee members sprayed the party-goers, who all screamed in excitement (or maybe in confusion). Some lucky party-goers were even drenched by

***"we came
we raved
we loved"***
-Swedish House Mafia

buckets of water thrown by the committee members! The final minutes of the DJ duo's 75-minute set consisted of hordes of sweaty Monashians raving to the inimitable beats of Swedish House Mafia (SHM). The crowd adored the sounds of SHM and belted out the lyrics to chart-toppers such as "Don't You Worry Child" and "Save The World". At 11pm, the music diminuendoed and the lights came up only to illuminate the sweaty, dismayed faces of the ravers.

The Party officially ended with the two organising heads, Andrea Yap and Muhd. Khalid Ipaldin (MUSA Welfare Officer 2013), getting an impromptu bath by a massive bucket of water, courtesy of their two sub-committee members. It was a token of gratitude, a sort of job well done, for organising Monash's first and best on-campus rave.





BEATS BE THUMPIN'; MONASHIANS BE JUMPIN'

WORDS AND PHOTOS BY
KHASHAYAR MOHAMMADIE

Beat Sessions was one of this semester's most energetic events. Monash students gathered in the Monash foyer to witness two interesting competitions followed by an hour of DJ Reeve's performance, accompanied by lots of RedBull and Subway sandwiches. Three bands and three DJs from Monash participated in this event in order to express themselves through their music in a night full of Monashian energy!

The first competition was between three very different bands: *Green Chanel*, *Bazingaa* and *None of us have any major problems*. *Green Chanel*, which was the first band to perform, is an instrumental-based band without any vocals, consisting of only three band members. They introduced Middle-Eastern scales and rhythmic patterns into heavy metal music and combined it with other fusion elements to create a sound unique to their own. Even though their work included popular phrases from hard-rock or heavy metal songs, their improvisational performance was very original. The second band was *None of Us Have Any Major Problems*, a vocal-centered band made up of six band members, two of whom are vocalists. They mostly focused on covering popular songs. The last band to perform was *Bazingaa*. Although vocals played an important role in their performance, the contribution of each band member could be noticed, giving a more collaborative feel to





their performance.

After the bands finished their acts, the second competition began which was between the three deejays **Sajeewa**, **Lickuid** and **SlaxDan**. All three DJs performed with astonishing energy, making Monashians jump up and down! The foyer was filled with enthusiastic students singing, dancing and supporting their favorite DJs.

At the end of the competition, students voted for their favorite band and DJ. *None of Us Have Any*



Major Problems was picked as the best performing band while **SlaxDan** won best DJ. DJ Reeve, the winner of RedBull Thr3estyle 2013 DJ competition handed out the prizes to the winners.

The competitions may be over, but the night just began. After the announcement of the winners, Monashians gathered on the dance floor for an hour of DJ Reeve's ecstatic performance. Beat Sessions was an event full of talented performers and energetic Monashians that you really shouldn't have missed!





BRAZILIA NIGHT 18TH APRIL 2011

manash university

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
DERRICK LEE AND
MEI HWA WONG





Nasi Bungkus Cinema: **ORIGINS**

The Nasi Bungkus cinema screens student-made films and hosts screenings by indie filmmakers as part of Monash University Sunway Campus' School of Arts and Social Sciences programme. The ORIGINS film project started out as a competition in 2012 and two of the winning entries were screened at the Plenary Theatre. Khashayar Mohammadie reviews the two films below.

The second film screening from Monash University's *Nasi Bungkus* cinema, was held at the Plenary Theatre on 15 April, 2013. This screening was held for the two short films "*Cassandra*" and "*I Am*" which were made by Monash students under the Filmmaker-in-residence program.

I Am, written and directed by Monash undergraduate Sheril A. Bustaman, tells the story of Amirah, a young Indian girl who has been brought up in a Chinese family. After being mocked by students at her school, Amirah makes an attempt to find her birth parents.

I Am shows the obstacles that Amirah faces on her journey to find her birth parents. The film puts a lot of emphasis on the hardships that Amirah goes through in its 30 minutes of screen time. Amirah's failure and humiliation are shown through long scenes with numerous lines of dialogue that put more emphasis on the characters. The story puts a lot of emphasis on Amirah's past, making the audience think "what if?"

The editing makes the film flow smoothly and lets the audience sink into Amirah's world.

Lengthy shots of Amirah crying with dramatic music in the background make the audience sympathize with her. *I Am* is a drama about facing and accepting the truth, and it is recommended to any fan of drama.

Cassandra, written and directed by Monash undergraduate Lestari Hairul, tells the story of a female librarian (Cassandra) who suddenly comes across a strange lady on Chat Roulette. The stranger offers her a way out of her boring, repetitive life. After the virtual encounter with the lady, Cassandra's life seems to take a strange turn.

Cassandra holds a lot of excitement in its 10 minutes of screen time; it provides a peek into the modern life of a young woman through showing things that a modern woman comes across nowadays. Cassandra's encounters on the Internet are issues that belong only to people living in the 21st century.

The unorthodox framing and camerawork have given *Cassandra* a unique look. The sound effects and dramatic music that have been used throughout the film will keep the audience at the edge of their seats,

awaiting the conclusion in a state of suspense.

Cassandra can be considered a psychological thriller because it stresses the unstable emotional state of Cassandra in a mysterious, dark environment that she is surrounded by. *Cassandra* is a complex yet enjoyable short film that is recommended to any fan of the thriller genre.



*Still from Cassandra featuring Monash graduate
Jun-Elle Lee as the titular character*



DAY OUT WITH THE
PROS:
CANON/NATGEO
WORKSHOP

A group of 20 Monashians were accorded the opportunity of a lifetime when they managed to snag spots for a free photography workshop during the first mid-semester break of the year. In the next few pages, **Loo Han** gives a report with **Brian Soong** for additional photography.

How does spending a morning with an award-winning National Geographic photographer sound? Pretty sweet, *eh?* Meet **Joe Riis**. At only 29, this South Dakota native is a full-time wildlife photojournalist who has dedicated his life to photographing endangered species and ecosystems. He not only has numerous pictures to his name but also has an Emmy Award for outstanding nature cinematography under his belt! Thus, there was no surprise when all 20 seats for the free photography workshop with Joe, in conjunction with Canon's *Celebration of Colours* contest, was snatched up on the first day of registration.

On 3 April 2013, all participants came in early to experience this once-in-a-lifetime event. When Joe arrived, some even had their fan boy/fan girl moment! The session started with a short briefing by Lestari, our very own MUSA Editor, followed by Lisa the NatGeo rep and Joe. Without wasting any time, T-shirts (yay!) were distributed and everyone wore their NatGeo/Canon uniform. The bus left for FRIM Kepong at 9.30am. We had the pleasure of having a casual chat/impromptu interview with Joe on the way there.

Upon arrival, another short briefing on the loaning of cameras and lenses were given by Vincent, the Canon rep, before everyone went to get their gear. I got the Canon 5D Mark III with a 70-200mm telephoto lens. It was incredibly heavy and bulky, but on the bright side, it did make me look like a pro.

A SHORT INTERVIEW WITH JOE RIIS, NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER



What is the most dangerous situation you have been in on your assignments?

J: Driving's the most dangerous! There's a lot of travel with unknown drivers who drive raging fast [sic] and I've been in a couple of close calls in Venezuela last summer and a couple of years ago in Africa. It's such a quick you-can-die moment! As far as animal encounters, most or all animals don't want to attack humans. The only time they do that is when they are provoked, but I did have a close encounter with a hippo in Uganda. There was one night I was walking back from a place where the hippos would eat, and I didn't have any light with me. Unknowingly, I got too close to it, and it almost charged me!

On average, how many photos do you take per day? Do you have any bad photos among them?

J: As far as how many photos I take per day, it depends on what's happening. Usually, to get interesting photos, something interesting has to happen in front of you, and on some days, nothing interesting's happening. On those days, I'll do some macro work and play with lightings and do some landscape. For example, in this Mongolia work next month, I'll probably shoot like 20,000 photos in a month. But, I have a personal thing – that if I can take one picture a day that I can envision be printable in publication, I'm doing very good. That way, I'll end up with 30 decent photos in a month, from which I can choose from. You've got to be very critical of your own work.

When something interesting happens, there's usually just a short time frame to get the picture. So, how do you know what kind of lenses to use – does it come from experience or is there a cheat sheet you can teach us?

J: Typically I have a 70-200mm on either my 60D or 5D MkIII and then I'll have a wide angle on the other one, so I'll have two cameras to shoot with. Usually in moments like these, I try to stay calm and visualize the outcome of the picture before shooting; otherwise, I know I'll miss it! But no, I don't have a cheat sheet, unfortunately!





The original plan was to go up the hiking trail for some hands-on shooting, but unfortunately, the Gods were crying in heaven that day. Heavy downpour saw everyone gathered in a room for an experience sharing session with Joe and Gabby Salazar, another National Geographic photographer.

Gabby took the stage first, focusing on tips and tricks to make your photography stand out. Among the points she mentioned were:

- Look for patterns in nature
- Use dramatic lighting
- Look for strong colours
- Look out for lines leading into the image (To critique her own works, she shuts her eyes tightly and observes where her eyes dart to in a picture right after she opens them)
- Use silhouette
- Use different perspective (High angle, low angle and the subject's eye level)
- Experiment with motion
- Find a natural frame

Next up was Joe.

Joe took a different approach by sharing his personal experience while working on assignments for NatGeo. Stunning photograph after stunning photograph, the audience was in awe simply by looking at his works and the story behind every image. Among his many tips were:

- Find a new perspective to look at the same subject. He usually shoots in 3 different focal lengths
- Find lines that lead the viewers into the center of the image
- Be wary of the subject. He uses a mirror-less camera for species that are sensitive to shutter sounds
- Don't be afraid to get close to the subject. Go for intimate photos
- Photography is about persistence. A great shot can take weeks to accomplish!
- Go shoot in the rain and fog. It adds more attitude to the picture taken
- He also mentioned that photos are unique as a universal language, with no barrier. He uses photography to raise awareness for various social-environmental issues, and he encouraged everyone to do so too, especially in their own hometowns



When the presentations were over, so was the rain! Rejoice! Everyone was really excited to finally try out the new cameras, new lenses and new perspectives, with hands-on guidance from Joe and Gabby. Although time was limited, the participants made the most out of the 30 minutes, looking for patterns and dramatic colours. We headed out into the open field and immediately, Joe got down to the ground to capitalise on the beautiful water droplets left by the rain. Everyone was really excited, some chose to follow Joe and Gabby while others chose to explore the wilderness themselves!

I shadowed Joe for a while, before heading out on my own. Thanks to Canon's top-of-the-line L lens, I was able to transform mundane objects into exciting photos. One of the main marks of a good lens is its wide aperture. With an aperture of $f/2.8$, I was able to photograph this otherwise non-head-turning plant in a completely different light. Notice the beautiful bokeh – defocused background that makes it look like a painting.

When the time was up, participants were so engrossed that they had to be shepherded away from their photo session! With a heap-load of amazingly stunning photographs, the participants were delighted to hear that they were able to print them out, for free! Joe and Gabby were on hand to help critique those photographs and provide useful hints for improvement. Time, it seems was a luxury that we did not have today. The bus arrived and soon it was time to head back.

Just when we thought it was all over, Canon surprised everyone with more goodies! Besides the T-shirt and NatGeo notebook, everyone received a lens cleaning kit, lens pouch and 8GB limited edition EOS pendrive! In the end, everyone took home something, be it a pendrive, a tip or even a dream. Thank you Canon and National Geographic for this extraordinary opportunity!

Joe's Contact:

Website: <http://www.joeriis.com/>

Facebook: [Joe Riis Photography](#)

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/joeriis>

Gabby's Contact:

Website: <http://www.gabbysalazar.com/>

Facebook: [Gabby Salazar Photography](#)



Mesmerized by Dreams

Words by **Zuzana Zulkarnain**

Photography by **Brian Soong** and
Talitha Rahman.

*"Are you prepared to be
mesmerized?"*

The announcer asked the auditorium full of parents, siblings and fellow Monash students. And boy, was I mesmerized. The costumes, the make up, the music and most importantly the dance moves were the highlight of my Saturday night watching the Monash Dance Fusion Club's (MDFC) 5th Annual dance performance, titled *Dreams*.

The concert took place in SJK(C) Chee Wen on 11 May, 2013, from 7pm to 10 pm. The three-hour dance concert covered three types of dance: Samba/Salsa, Contemporary, and Street dance/Jazz. The dances were, as promised, mesmerizing and entertaining. The members of MDFC really did give it their all that night. With only a little over two months to choreograph and practice their dances, the dancers had done a wonderful job. The dance concert was composed of a varied mixture of individual, couple, and group performances. Kudos to all the male dancers for twirling, carrying and lifting the female dancers on top of all the dancing they had to do themselves.

One of many notable events of the night was the launch of the first issue of the MDFC magazine. Each member of the audience received a copy of the magazine along with other goodies in celebration of the concert. The magazine opened with a welcoming note from the current MDFC president, and illustrated the history of the dance club. Did you know that the club initially started with only a little over 30 members? It is impressive to imagine the expansion and success of MDFC, now that they have over 300 active members. More of these facts about the MDFC can be found in the magazine, so be sure to get your hands on them!





On top of that, for anyone interested in joining the club but have no clue about dance, the magazine also illustrates some background information concerning the various types of dance. For example, because the dance concert focused mainly on Samba/Salsa, Contemporary, and Streetdance/Jazz, the magazine provides basic knowledge on these three dances for the audience. It's like killing two birds with one stone; getting entertained and educated.

Although I was mesmerized by my fellow Monash peers dancing the night away in shimmering costumes and makeup, I think I speak for the entire audience when I say that I was in awe with the performances delivered by the younger dancers. This year's dance performance was held in collaboration with a few groups of adorable acts by younger primary school children. Other than that, the dance show also featured a dance group, *Fantastic Four*, whose impressive resume is included in the MDFC magazine.

All in all, despite some technical difficulties here and there, the dance show did manage to take my breath away. I was impressed to see the dancers pull off such a massive event within a very little time period. But most of all, I was shocked to see some of my very own friends on stage looking like something out of an ABBA music video. I suggest that you watch their next dance show, who knows, maybe your personal friends are also dancing on stage without your knowledge!







MONASH CULTURAL NIGHT: AVALON

WORDS BY LESTARI HAIRUL
PHOTOS BY BRIAN SOONG AND
VINANIE WIJESOMA



MCN was slated to be the event of the semester; when word got out about the massive tent being set up on the green, the anticipation grew to the point where at-the-door ticket sales were scrapped as the seats were all sold out. On the night itself the great white tent was replete with chandeliers, air-conditioning and wedding décor, guests were not left wanting visually. Despite the unfortunate placement of the buffet tables and seating plan that frustrated many spectators at the back, the evening went on splendidly as the excellent entertainment pacified any disgruntled nerves.

While the beautifully-dressed guests streamed in and filled the seats, we set off to mingle with the performers and to find out more about their preparation for the big night. Based on the short chats we managed to grab, many of them had been squeezing in rehearsals in between assignments and classes for the 2 weeks leading up to MCN. Chris and Sarah, the Malaysian duo who performed an acoustic set, had only just started practicing together from the auditions though one could hardly tell from their excellent performance and musical chemistry together.

After obtaining a few more interviews, we were shooed back into the tent by the emcees just in time to catch the opening act. This Sri Lankan band garnered massive cheers particularly as they waved their flags at the end of their set and this was repeated later during a dance performance by their fellow countrymen that outshone all other acts. The massive Sri Lankan contingent was not disappointed as they won first prize again this year; their hard work celebrated by the elation and applause of their peers.

That's not to say that the other countries represented didn't put on a great show of course. Bangladesh and Pakistan each offered up an all-male band, their performances drawing great cheers and hoots from the clumps of fanboys gathered by the buffet tables. While their musical genre differed, I am personally partial to the funk-psychedellic-grunge-metal tones of **Green Chanel** the Pakistani band, their passion and enthusiasm were unmistakably similar as each musician played expertly to the applause and admiration of their respective fans.

Malaysia's acoustic duo was quieter by contrast, though their performance was no less entertaining. Their voices melded well

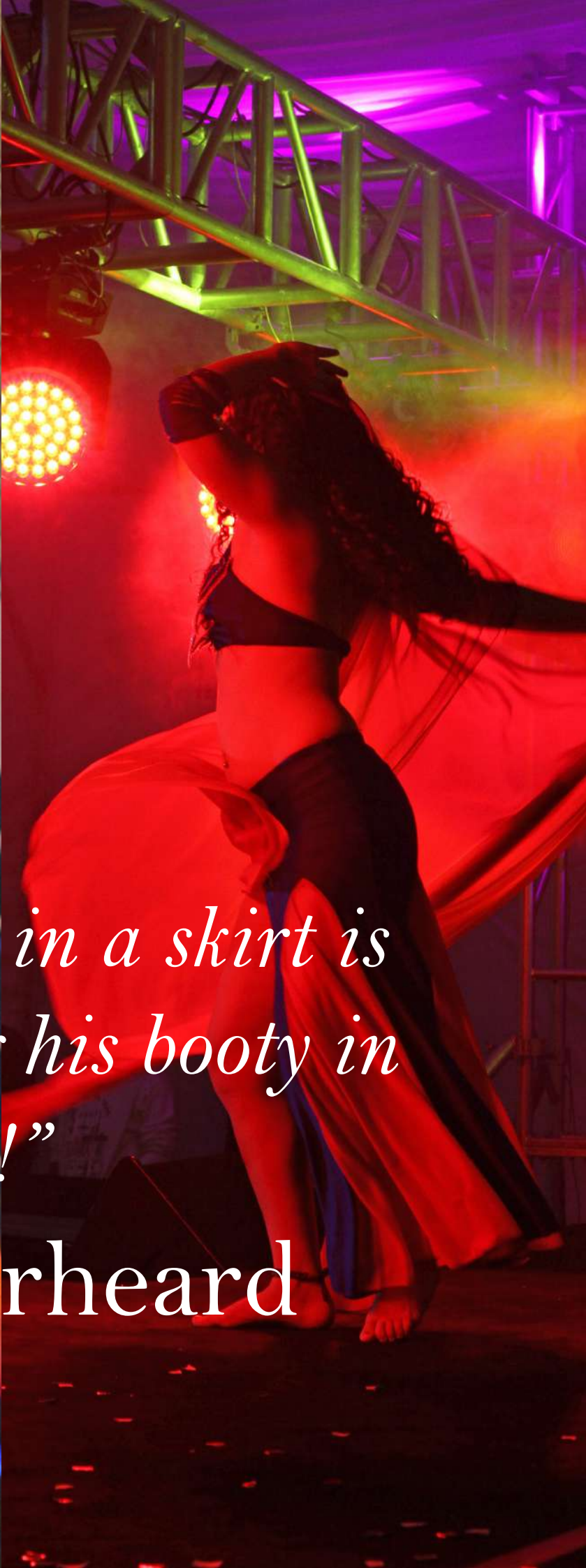
together as they played their set, ending with a goosebumps-inducing rendition of MGMT's "Kids". I got to wondering what Singaporeans would perform if we are so inclined, perhaps nothing 'culturally ethnic' either. Our blended and fused multi-cultural aspect has been set aside in pursuit of progress and anything remotely traditional appears gauche so a decidedly non-traditional act, or really 'Western' one, would have been the obvious choice. Alas, or fortunately, we aren't quite the performing kind.

But moving back to MCN, I've noticed that the efforts at showcasing a unique cultural identity necessarily included a medley of traditional and modern/'Western' elements. Even the traditionally-clad Indonesian 'hand-dance' performers, who sang religious songs, incorporated a bit of the non-traditional in the form of PSY's "Gentleman" at the end of their act. Their compatriots in another dance group put out an even less traditional or exclusively Indonesian act as they danced to Bollywood and Korean songs. Globalisation decidedly has a hand in this and the setting of MCN itself is proof of it as audience members of varied cultural backgrounds clapped, grooved and cheered to the music and dances of people from Botswana to Indonesia, Pakistan to Sri Lanka as they performed in an Australian university that is in Malaysia.

Perhaps the only aspect I found rather tedious performance-wise was the (non-Monashian) male singer who accompanied, and I'd say musically marred, the otherwise perfect fashion show. Even as the floor started shaking from the frenzied dancing of the performers and audience alike at the end of the show, even as my hilarious friend remarked in horror that "a man in a skirt is shaking his booty in [her] face!" and despite the hiccups in stage visibility and food distribution, I think the MUISS MCN committee did an excellent job this year for putting together a wonderfully entertaining spectacle. May there be more years of spirited booty-shaking amidst a sumptuous cultural feast for the senses.










*“a man in a skirt is
shaking his booty in
my face!”*

-- overheard



	Monash Confessions - Sunway Campus Hello, we are online	21:11
	Lestari Hairul Awesome First up, how many of you are there?	21:11
	Monash Confessions - Sunway Campus There's a group of us but the exact number shall not be revealed	21:21

Interview:

Monash Confessions

Sunway Campus

LH: *Why'd you set up the page in the first place and did you all get together to do it one day or were some of you recruited as the page got more likes?*

MCSC: We were together when it happened and it was mainly out of boredom

LH: *How many confessions do you get each day?*

MCSC: About 200 a day
It started off with about 500 a day but it has slowed down a bit now

LH: *And of that number how many get posted up?*

MCSC: Initially we posted about a 100 but now because of the quality of messages coming in and trolls, we only post up about 50

LH: *Whoa, so how do you filter?*

MCSC: There are some posts that are just too vague. Some are just not confessions so they don't go up.. The funny ones do though.

LH: *What do you mean by "some are just not confessions"?*

MCSC: I'll tell the different types of messages we get.

First there's the messages which are just too vague and no one knows who you're referring to. then there's the 'crush' messages. The 'we hate admin' messages and personal hate messages. I feel sorry for the tall, bangladeshi guy who gets majority of the hate mail. We avoid the negative comments cos it doesn't do anyone any good the self-praise messages, car scratching posts, a couple of lost and found messages, inappropriate 'what i did last night' messages. That's a general sense of the messages we get

LH: *Million dollar question: any openings for new admins?*

MCSC: haha not right now.

LH: *What kind of confession do you wish people sent more of?*

MCSC: The more criminal confessions, like the ping-pong table being stolen. And just funnier uni related confessions..

LH: *Is the Confessions HQ in one location?*

MCSC: currently, yes.

LH: *On campus or..?*

MCSC: Campus has too many prying eyes, so no

LH: *That's true.. plus you get chased out after a certain time. So I'm guessing you guys are housemates/roommates?*

MCSC: Sorry, we won't comment on that

LH: *Anything else you'd like to say to your fans?*

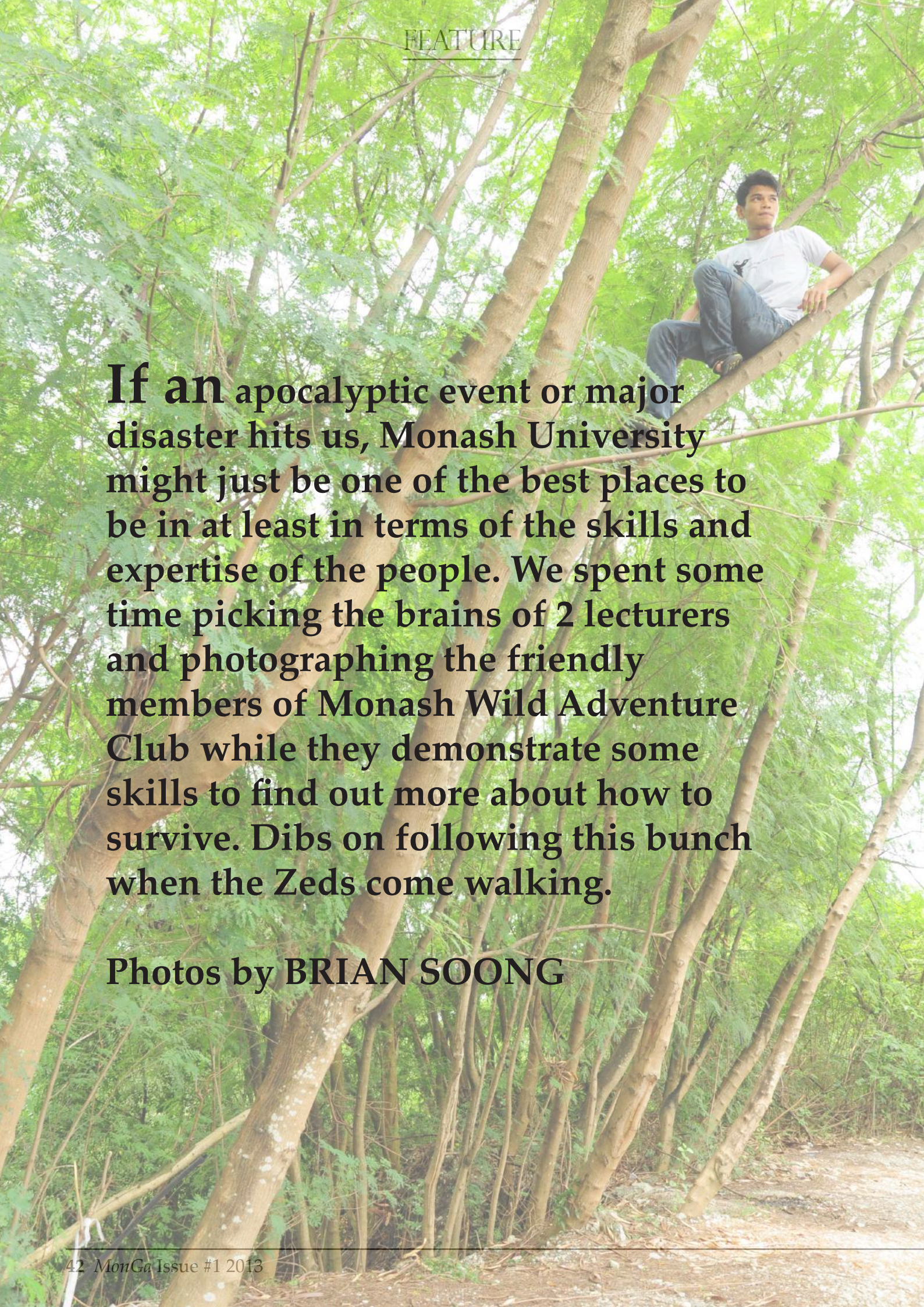
MCSC:

From the admins - We have confessions too, ones looking for a boy toy, ones looking for distraction from his girlfriend, ones looking for food, ones on a mission, ones going on a blind date, ones trying to make her marriage work.

Feature

BY OUR COUNT, WE'VE PROBABLY SURVIVED MORE THAN 10 DOOMSDAY PREDICTIONS SINCE WE'VE COME TO EXISTENCE (90'S BABIES?) AND AS HUMANITY GOES, THERE WILL BE MORE IN THE FUTURE. JUST IN CASE YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO, TAKE A GANDER AT OUR ARTICLES. THE FOLLOWING PAGES DETAIL HOW OUR CONTRIBUTORS INTERPRET THIS ISSUE'S THEME.



A young man with dark hair, wearing a white t-shirt and blue jeans, is sitting on a thick, light-brown tree branch. He is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background is a dense forest of tall, thin trees with green foliage. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

If an apocalyptic event or major disaster hits us, Monash University might just be one of the best places to be in at least in terms of the skills and expertise of the people. We spent some time picking the brains of 2 lecturers and photographing the friendly members of Monash Wild Adventure Club while they demonstrate some skills to find out more about how to survive. Dibs on following this bunch when the Zeds come walking.

Photos by BRIAN SOONG



“And with a nourished stomach, long more may you live”:

Interview: A Food Science Lecturer

Words and interview by HANNY KEE

Dr. Siow Fee Long, a lecturer from the School of Science, has research interests in food processing and the changes in food quality; microencapsulation and controlled release; as well as food product development. While going through the interview, she had a vibrant disposition with a refreshingly direct edge. Thus, I decided to jump straight into the first question after exchanging greetings and formalities.

“In brief terms, what is the food science and technology discipline all about? How does it apply to the society as a whole?” I asked. Dr. Siow told me that it was an interdisciplinary field, consisting of elements of biology, chemistry and physics in terms of using technology in the processing, production and preservation of food. She then added that the discipline was concerned in preparing the food from its plant or animal sources to the self. It is applied to society by making sure that there is enough food that can be kept for later use. With these measures, problems like world

hunger can be solved and in which food freshness can be maintained. It also enables researches to develop and discover new food sources, not only for the starving masses in the Third World, but also easily consumed and speedily produce foods for the fast-paced corporate employees in developed countries.

Knowing this, I decided to delve deeper and asked Dr. Siow, “What do you think is the biggest issue facing the food industry today, and what can it lead to in the long run? Can they be solved or mitigated?” “I think that the biggest challenge is to retain the amount of experienced practitioners in the field,” Dr. Siow told me. “Graduates hop from jobs to jobs because they are not happy with the isolated workplaces and the lack of dynamism in the field.” She also elaborated that most Food Science graduates were females, and they were not comfortable in working in areas in the outskirts, where the food industry was concentrated geographically. “That’s why the food industry has a shortage of talents

in the long run. They will move out of the industry when they know that the work is too static, or they realize that the workplaces do not suit them. Another challenge would be the attempts to phase out Genetically Modified Organisms due to numerous reasons. In the future, we will be faced with expensive foodstuff because the world supply of food will decrease due to the non-stop increase of mouths to feed." Her voice then turned grave and serious. "The only way we can solve both problems is to discover ways of retaining fresh blood in the industry, so that we have more heads to come out [sic] with new solutions to these old problems."

With that in mind, I inquired further, getting into the theme of the feature for MonGa, "What would happen to the food science industry in the event of a huge catastrophe i.e nuclear warfare or natural disasters that would wipe out most of the human population?" Dr. Siow raised an eyebrow. She told me it was an unorthodox question, but she answered it nonetheless. "The food science industry will survive no matter what, in fact it will play an even more important role than before," she told me matter-of-factly. "Even without the advanced technology we have now, we can still revert to ancient methods of food production like fermentation. We can use salt to produce dried foods to keep them longer, as well as vinegar to pickle them to last through the seasons. As long as there are survivors, all we have to do is to 'go back to the basics' and learn what our ancestors taught us."



"We must learn more about technology to provide food of better quality and learn to control variables that will affect it [food quality]," Dr. Siow continued. "We must first rebuild the technology if we survive an apocalypse to its current level before we can reach new heights."

Satisfied with what she had told me, I thanked her and ended the interview. It was ultimately an interesting experience, knowing that when the future ahead of us is bleak, we can always look back to find the wisdom of the ancients to recover and rebuild the world.



Dr Rajendran Parthiban is a senior lecturer in the School of Engineering at Monash University Sunway campus. He completed both his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in engineering at The University of Melbourne by 1997. He was in the work field for 2 years before completing his Ph.D at the same university by 2004. He is also currently involved in the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE). The article below, a transcript of the interview conducted by EMILY CHOONG, will enlighten the readers on how he would survive a zombie apocalypse based on his field of study.

Thus Spoke the Engineer: An Interview

As a survivor of the zombie apocalypse, I believe that future civilization will still be able to gain access to telecommunication. Let's assume that certain equipment will stay intact. The restoration process can go on so long as we can identify optical fibre locations in parts of the ground. We will be able to make lasers to send light signals from one point to another. If that is successful, we can send more small parts of light in various frequencies. After that, we can move on to making switches and routers which will help us rebuild our telecommunication-based networks. That is the basic framework for the entire network which will enable us to send data from one point to another. From a wireless network point of view, we can still use light for telecommunication so long as we have some LEDs (light-emitting diodes) and circuit elements to control the light from the LED. I would personally set up both WiFi and LiFi and then see which one appears to be better than the other.

In the event I were trapped under a building, I would go for the old fashioned way of communication – using Morse code to connect with the people outside, provided there would be a bit of wire. The tapping of the codes will send the message out and hopefully someone else will be able to understand the same Morse code.

If the World Wide Web was affected by the apocalypse, the setting up [of the internet] will not happen overnight and will take plenty of investment depending on how much fibre is left and also how much of it can be used again. Two parts need to be set up: hardware parts, which form the nuts and bolts of the network, and software parts, which consist of protocols. It can take up to a year just to set up one portion of it.


From a social point of view, communication between people will be done mostly through the Web and if technology is inaccessible for a while, people are allowed to have more face-to-face connections, which

will revitalize that part of humanity. Based on past research, you cannot completely replace a face-to-face connection. People may think it gives them happiness but ultimately face-to-face connections are much better than virtual connections. As much as we would like to rebuild the internet, we might want to consider revitalizing some of the old things that we have perhaps completely forgotten about because of technology. That part of humanity can finally return to assist people in valuing the beauty of face-to-face connections which is something technology cannot take away.

I personally encountered a similar situation back in Sri Lanka in 2004 when the Tsunami hit. During that period of time, so many things were destroyed. It was a horrible experience seeing dead bodies around and several people feeling helpless. But there was one thing I saw before the government bodies and NGOs came to help: people got together to help each other. In times of these sorts of crisis, you will feel the need to do something for others. The unity of the people gave me confidence that such connections can be rekindled.







Homo
Coprophagus
Somnambulus
Viral Infections

Paliative Care and
Treatment Guidelines

Prepared by
Reuben Singaraveloo
Isaac Lee

Photographed by
Lestari Hairul

Abstract

During the apocalypse, no importance was given to any medical intervention of the Homo Coprophagus Somnambulus (HCS) viral infections. Regrettably, this error was compounded by the fact that zombies were obliterated beyond all recognition upon sighting. Currently, more attention is being given to developing prophylactic measures in this post-apocalyptic climate as irreversible neurological impairment is certain after 15 minutes of zombification.



Zombie Physiology 101

The virus attacks the body's central nervous and musculoskeletal systems but shuts down all the other systems, which the virus considers unnecessary. It is theorized that the virus is able to undergo self-sustaining oxidative phosphorylation to maintain musculoskeletal function, despite a lack of respiratory and cardiac function. The corpse is driven by the virus in order to ensure its survival through replication- transmission via biting a non-infected organism. Although a superficial bite is sufficient to spread the virus, the inhibitory functions of the central nervous system are limited resulting in large amounts of flesh consumption and an unnatural strength to tear limbs apart. Ultimately, muscle tone of an infected victim would remain even after zombification. Higher rates of survival from zombie attacks are reported in developing countries, strangely in towns with large concentration of fast food establishments.

Last Aid

Post-vaccination, medical care for infected (blood borne) mostly consisted of palliative and terminal care for the pre-zombified victim. The Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has reported many cases where bitten or infected individuals were unskilfully executed by severely damaging the brain to prevent





zombification.

The public is urged be aware of the guidelines to appropriately dispose of a zombie. The brain stem of the victim **MUST** be severed. A 3cm deep cut at the back of the neck is sufficient to cut the brain stem. Decapitating the zombie works too. This is to prevent any neural signalling from the brain to the muscles of the body. If carried out properly, the zombie would lose all muscle tone and collapse like a rag doll. It is also imperative to burn (preferably cremate) to prevent any further viral spread.

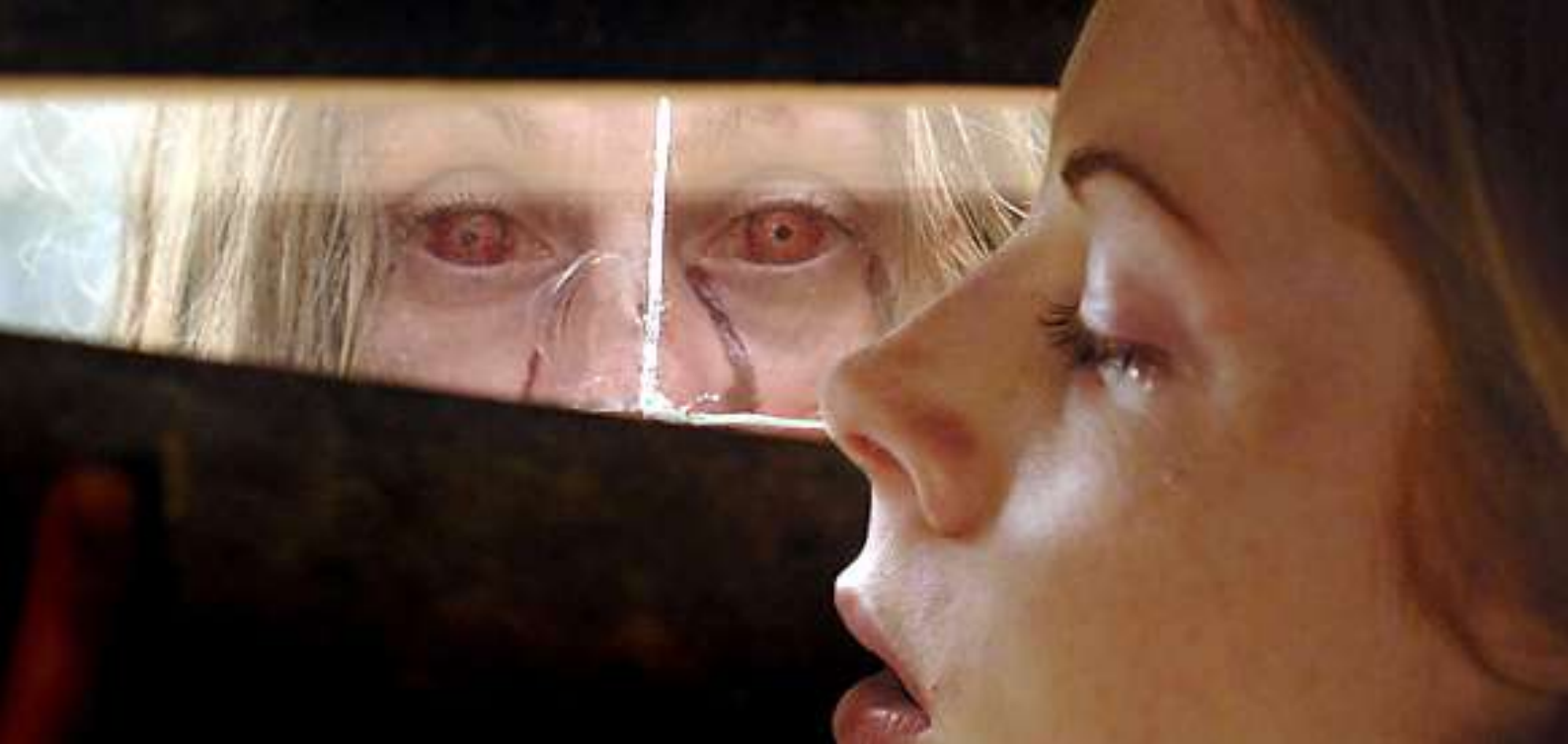
The public is advised to keep a healthy distance away from the zombie after severing the brain stem due to several symptoms that may endanger the surrounding people, e.g. flailing seizures, rigor mortis, chorea (see Harlem Shake) and intracranial expulsion (rare).



The 1%

At present, there is no cure or any form of treatment for HSC viral infections. However, there is an inherent natural immunity present in 1/100 of the population, who are unable to contract the virus despite having blood borne contact with a zombie. A vaccine for most blood types has been produced and is currently being circulated to major medical centres around the world. Upon infection, the immune population (known as the “One %”) may still exhibit typical signs of a regular HCS viral infection (headaches, joint pain, fever, rash, chills, abdominal pain, tachycardia, etc.). They should be brought to the nearest makeshift CDC Medical Centre* immediately for treatment and observation- preferably restrained... just in case.

*All hospitals are currently under quarantine and regarded as Red Zones (restricted - high zombie concentration)



Of the apocalypse and humanity's fascination with it

By Jimmy Liew

At the time this article was written, yours truly had just recently returned home from Sunway Pyramid after being treated to 2 hours of *Oblivion* goodness. Director Joseph Kosinski of *Tron: Legacy* fame manages to make a post-alien-invasion 2077 Earth look amazing, with ultramodern gadgets surely to make geeks wet as well as an innovative way of using some famous wrecked New York and Washington landmarks. Tom Cruise's performance as a repairman was solid and manages to carry the show. As Kosinski continually shifts the direction of the story, I couldn't help but to be amazed at some of the twists pulled off, living up to his credentials of the many past sci-fi classics he created.

Since ancient times, humans have always been fascinated by how the apocalypse might come about. Popular literature of yesteryear had always mentioned the likely scenarios for an apocalypse, including the divinations of Revelations in The New Testament as well as the *al-Quran*. The

famed seer Nostradamus' most famous work, *Les Propheties*, foreshadows many likely scenarios of how the world might end. An invasion by Martians operating giant tripods that wield death rays occupies the plot in H.G. Well's 1898 science fiction novel *The War of the Worlds*. Despite the medium that the apocalypse is depicted in, no matter ink or the silver screen, the apocalypse sells.

Everyone has their own version of how the apocalypse might happen. Environmentalists fear global warming and polar ice caps melting. For newsreaders, it's the possibility of the nuclear fallout resulting from a nuclear strike on South Korea, if that doesn't happen then it's the likelihood of a financial meltdown with Europe leading the way. To Christians, the apocalypse is tantamount to Conquest, War, Famine and Death riding into the sunset. As usual, Hollywood exaggerates all these possible circumstances and adds a little sugar and spice but forlornly never anything nice: aliens, war,



FEATURE

nuclear fallout, meteors, climate change, tectonic plate movements and last but not least Mayan prophecies.

For as long as we can remember, humans have asked the question – Are we alone in the universe? This question was explored in German director Roland Emmerich's 1996 work, *Independence Day*. Two days before the Land of the Free's Independence Day, David Levinson (Jeff Goldblum), a broadcast technician and computer genius, discovers that the signal his computer has been receiving was actually the USA's satellite system being used by vicious extra-terrestrials to coordinate an attack on Earth.

These dwellers of outer space proceed to blow up the White House and Empire State Building as well as all important infrastructures across the country. All hope lies in a plan devised by the President (Bill Pullman) which requires ace fighter pilot Captain Steven Hiller (Will Smith) to deliver a nuke into the heart of the alien

mother ship. This military science fiction disaster film initiated the comeback of big budget disaster and science fiction films in the mid to late 90s.

From time to time, Hollywood has this weird quirk where similar movies are released just within months of each other (*Antz* and *A Bug's Life*, anyone?). 1998 was the year that brought us the double whammy of *Armageddon* and *Deep Impact*, both bringing the illustration of a possible meteor impact to life on the silver screen. The same synopsis can thus sum up both films: A rock from outer space large enough to destroy planets is on a collision course with Earth.

To save humanity, the US of A leads an international space effort to change the trajectory of the object by detonating a nuclear bomb deep in the core of said space rock. Despite the operational redundancies, there are actually some differences with the films. As with the promotional posters, *Deep Impact* focuses on the disaster itself while *Armageddon* focuses on Bruce

Willis, playing an oil rigger, and his heroics. Tellingly, *Armageddon* fared significantly better than *Deep Impact* in the box office as Bruce Willis has always been a crowd puller.

One should note that a lot has occurred in the domain of apocalyptic film and television in the last decade or so. Zombies in particular seem to rule the wastelands of a post-apocalyptic earth trying to scavenge whatever is left of humanity (*28 Days Later*, *Dawn of the Dead*). The apocalypse genre has shifted away from the high adventure of *Road Warrior* in the 90s into the realms of horror.

Humanity's outlook on the world appears bleaker and darker than ever before, perhaps best exemplified by the most realistic portrayal of a post-apocalyptic world, the British made *28 Days Later* which single-handedly brought back to life the popular flesh eating abominations of days gone by. The plot paints the collapse of society in London following the unintentional release of a highly contagious



O B L I V I O N

virus and how four survivors try to make do with the cards they've been dealt with. While stories that feature a small band of warriors trying to survive isn't anything new or fresh, director Danny Boyle has managed to perfect it and moviegoers loved it so much that a sequel followed – *28 Weeks Later*.

As the noughties drew to a close, the last day of the Mayan calendar drew ever closer. The Mayan theory postulates that the end of the 1525 year Mesoamerican Long Count calendar will bring about the demise of humankind on 21 December, 2012. This has caused popular culture to be saturated with media associated with the event itself despite the debunking of the theory by various scientists, NASA, archaeologists and even the Mayans themselves. All this culminated in the release of Roland Emmerich's fittingly named movie *2012*. A limo driver, played by John Cusack, attempts to bring his children, ex-wife and her boyfriend to seek sanctuary from the coming disaster. We get to immerse ourselves in Emmerich's world which accurately portrays the threat to human existence, crumbling cities as well as the fall of social order due to all sorts of cataclysmic events like earthquakes, tidal waves and volcanoes in 2012.

21 December, 2012 has come and gone, proving the Mayan prophecies false, which is sure to disappoint many end-of-the-world enthusiasts who were secretly hoping for it to come to fruition. However 2013 will still see an abundance of apocalypse related movies hitting the big screen. Besides *Oblivion*, *After Earth* and *World War Z* are the other movies that piqued my interest. Real life father and son duo of Will Smith and Jaden Smith star in *After Earth*, helmed by acclaimed director M. Night Shyamalan. Kitai Raige (Jaden Smith) and Cypher Raige (Will Smith) crash land on Earth in the distant future, where perils lurk every corner. The pair must work together in order to survive this hazardous post-apocalyptic version of our planet. Perhaps the twist to this M. Night Shyamalan film might be that it is actually worth watching. With an ungodly number of zombies, the highly ambitious *World War Z* stars Brad Pitt as an ex-UN investigator trying to find the root of



the problem behind the walking dead (big fan, if you know what I mean). Hopefully, the adaptation of the extraordinary novel by Max Brooks does it justice.

Although literature and film on the apocalypse have effectively become pop culture cliché, it never ceases to amaze the masses. People have been trying to predict possible dates for the apocalypse since the dawn of time. But as each day of reckoning comes and goes with yet another sunrise, our captivation with Judgement Day remains. Come what may, it looks like apocalyptic-themed media are here to stay. Oh, if anyone is wondering how to survive any impending apocalypse, Hollywood's answer is to be ordinary. Think John Cussack's limo driver, Tom Cruise's repairman and Bruce Willis' oil rigger.

P.S: If this article manages to pique your interest in anything apocalypse related, 'acquiring' AMC's hit series *The Walking Dead* might just quench that thirst for a while.

"It's just horrible, what people are capable of doing to one another."

-- 28 Days Later The Aftermath (graphic novel)



How did **MUSA 2013** survive the Apocalypse?

We ambushed the members of MUSA 2013 and sought the answers behind their continued existence. All save for three managed to thrive (but they fell during the valiant cause of training hard for the wonderful Dreams Dance Concert) and here's pictorial evidence of their survival. Photographed by **LESTARI HAIRUL**, additional photography by **BRIAN SOONG**



The Dancers (who didn't survive)

*(L-R) Donovan Kwan, Science Rep;
Michelle Soong, Business Rep; Shalane Gan,
Wom*n's Officer*



Clockwise from top left

Aaron Seth, Arts Rep

Amanda Ong, Engineering Rep

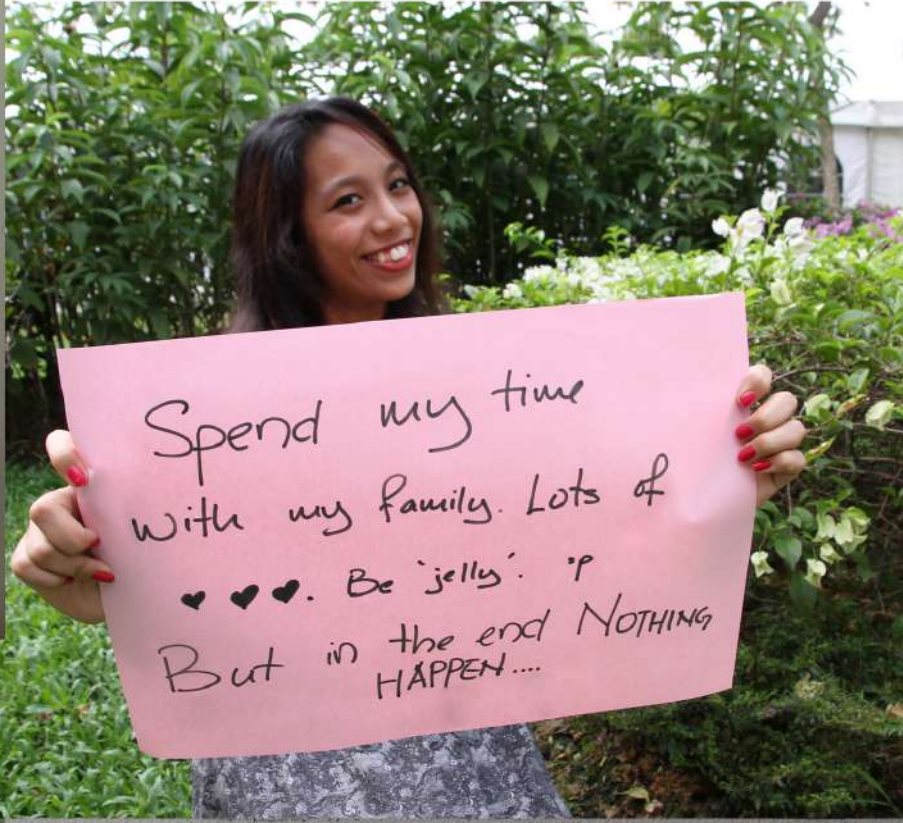
Ayman Shams, Head of Clubs & Societies

Aina Nordin, Activities Chairperson





Knew about
APOCALYPSE
#survived after
APOCALYPSE!

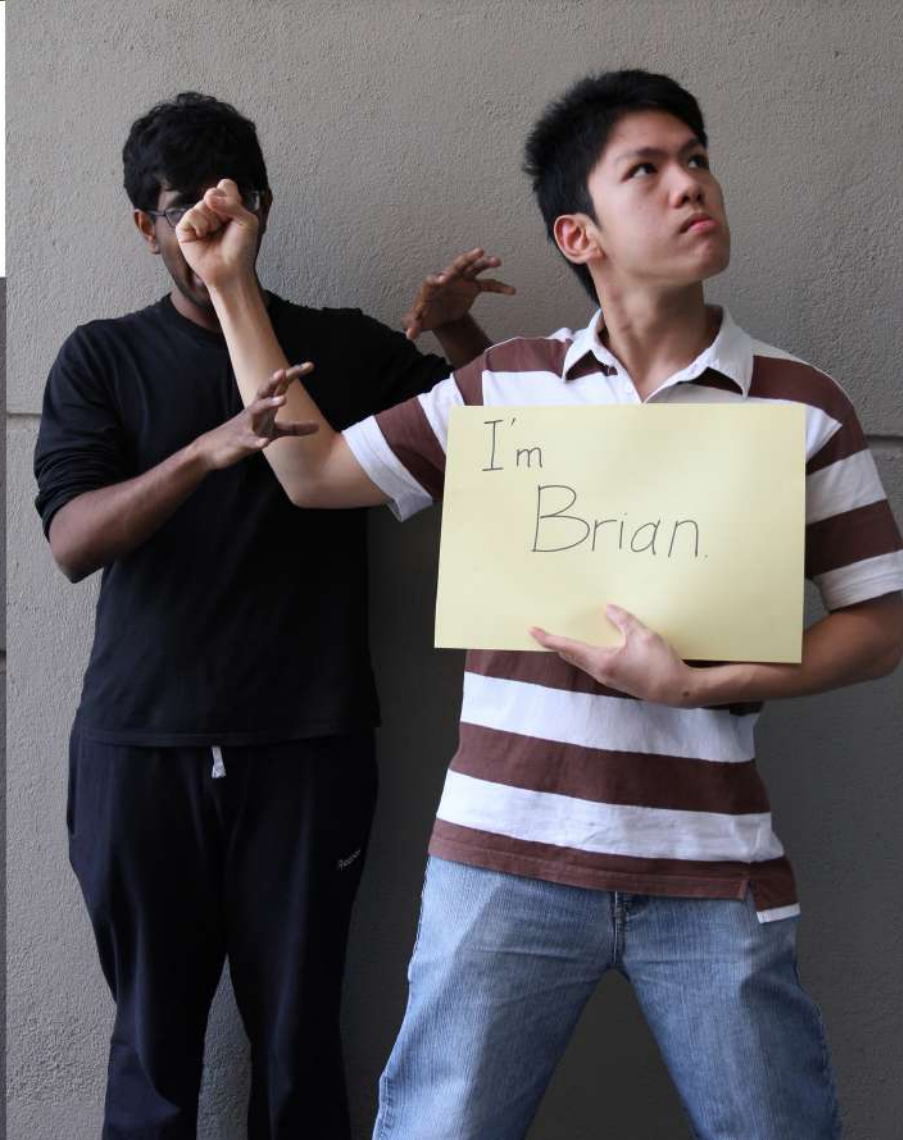


Spend my time
with my family. Lots of
♥♥♥. Be 'jelly'. 'P
But in the end NOTHING
HAPPEN....

Clockwise from top left
Dexter Teh,
Activities Chairperson
Connie Devi, Science Rep
Brian Soong, Editor
Charmaine Cheng, Publicity Officer



I was with
Bruce Wayne



I'm
Brian.

Jonathan Doraisamy,
Business Rep



Hanny Kee, Editor

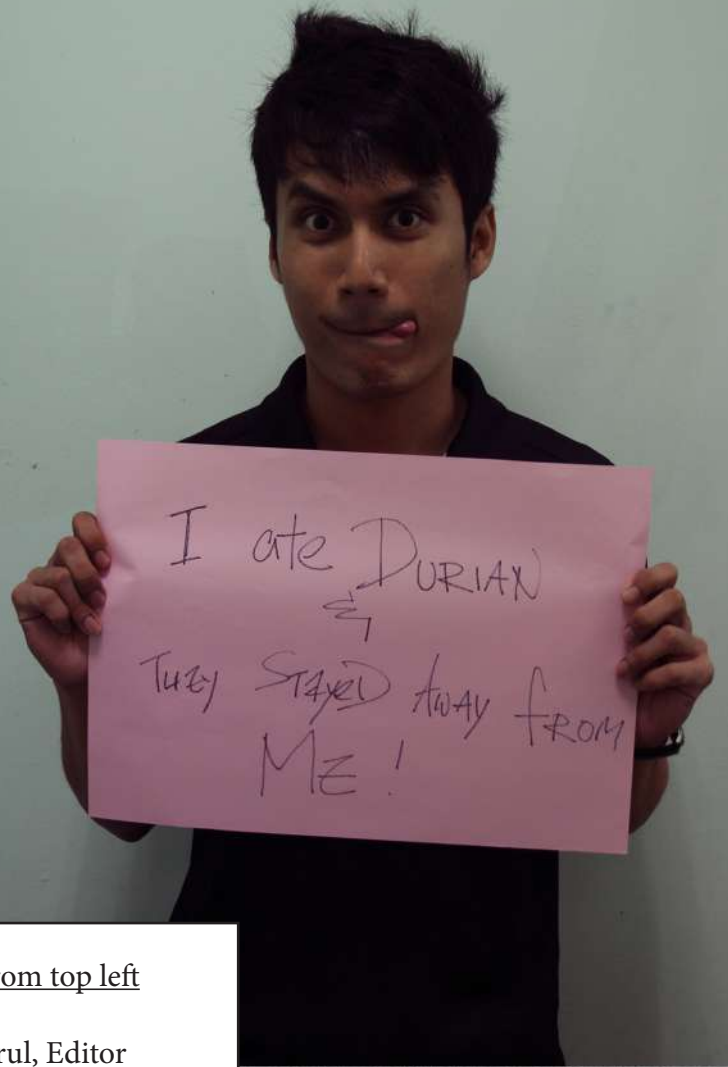


Teo Ding Xian,
Medicine Rep



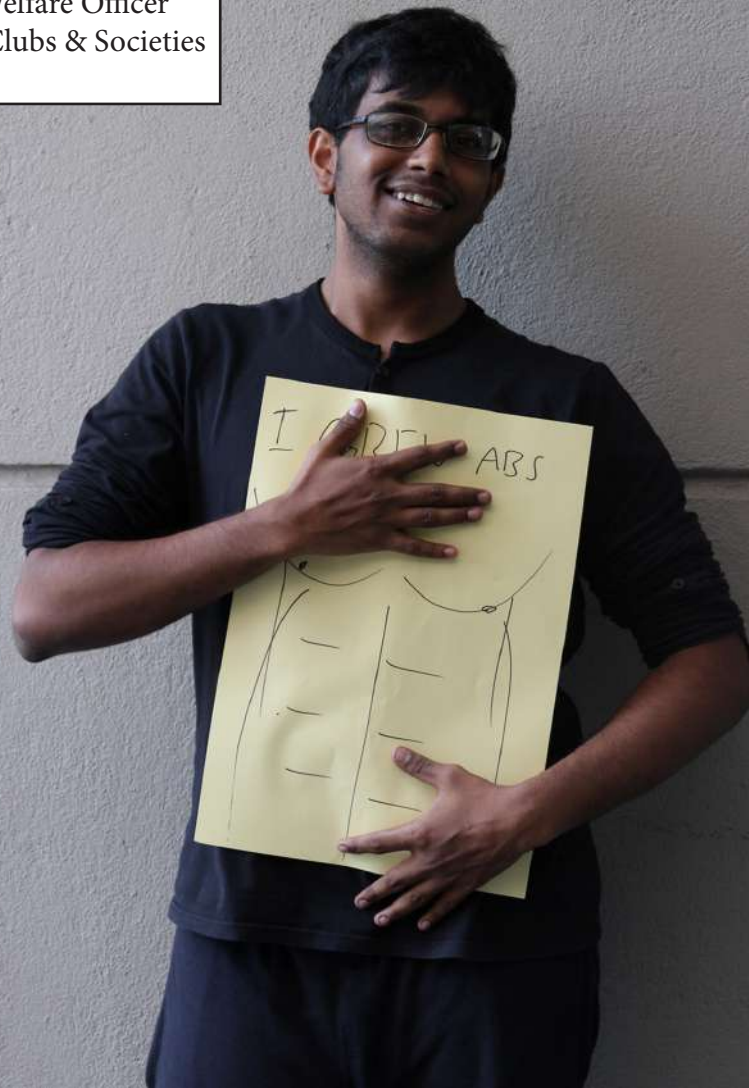
Eugene Chia, IT Rep





Clockwise from top left

Lestari Hairul, Editor
Melvin D'Silva, President
Khalid Ipaldin, Welfare Officer
Jon Khoo, Head of Clubs & Societies





This page clockwise from top-left
Rishwa Raj, MUPA President
Nicholas Siew, Engineering Rep
Reuben Singaraveloo, Medicine Rep
Nisshanthan Dhanapalan, Vice-President

Facing page, clockwise from top-left
Rushanka Ratnayake, Arts Rep
Sheryl Sim, Vice-President
Chong Chern Sam, General Secretary
Lam See Yuem, Treasurer
(inset) Abu Zayed, Welfare Officer



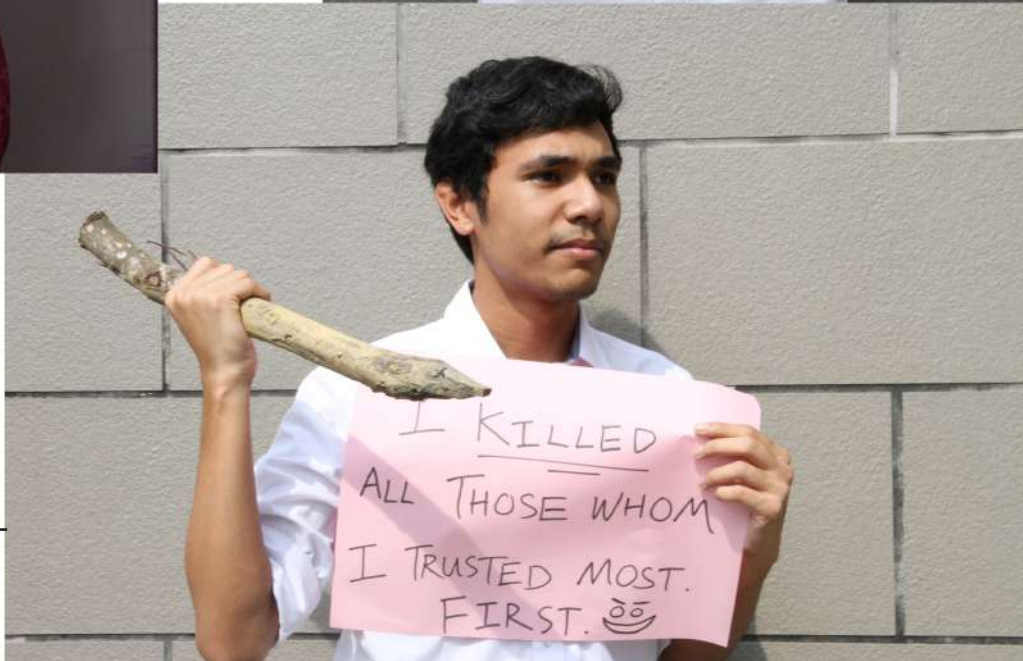
I was on board
UNSC INFINITY
(laughing at those "poor" people down there)...



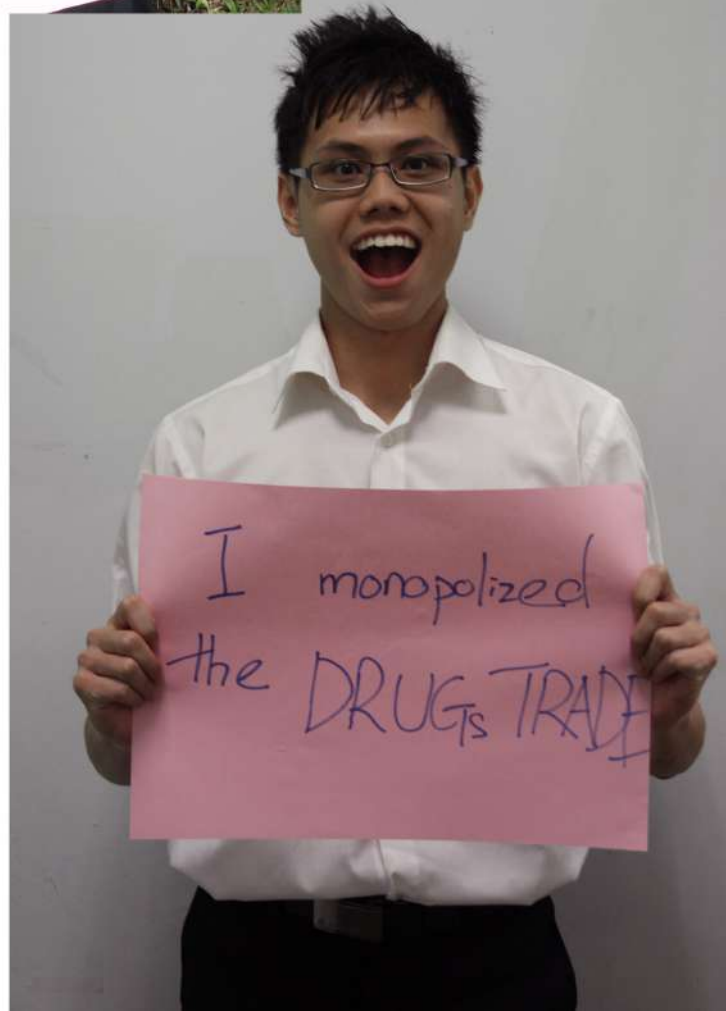
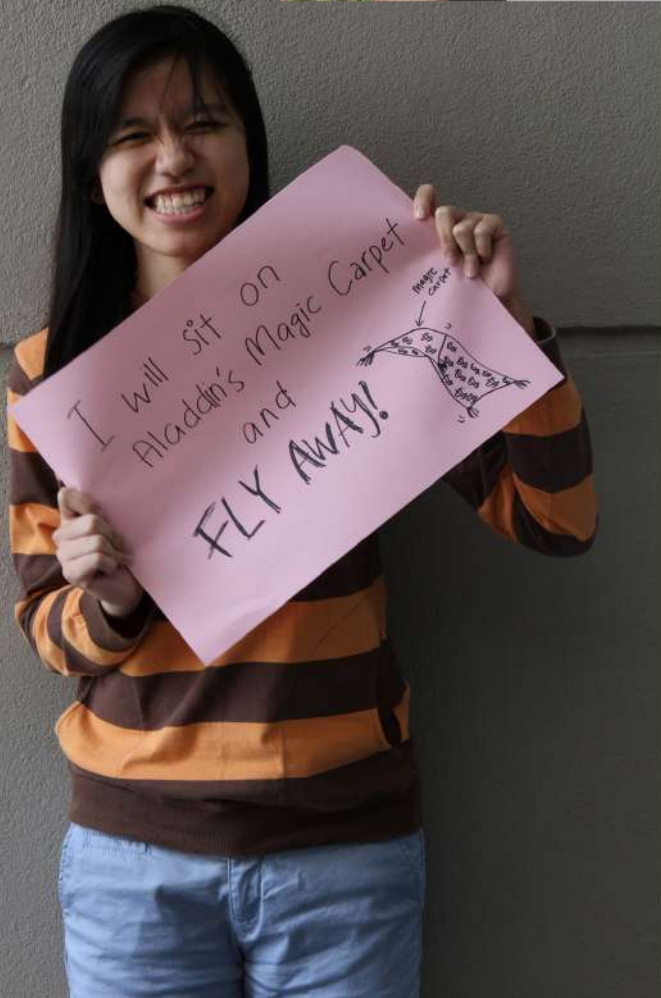
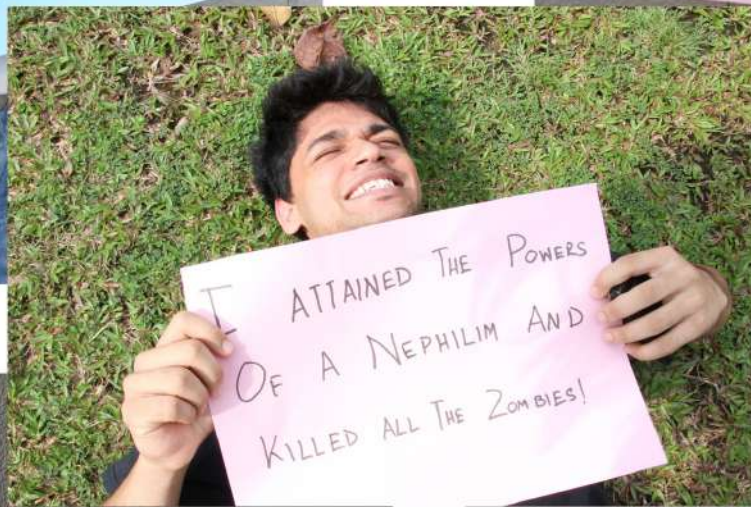
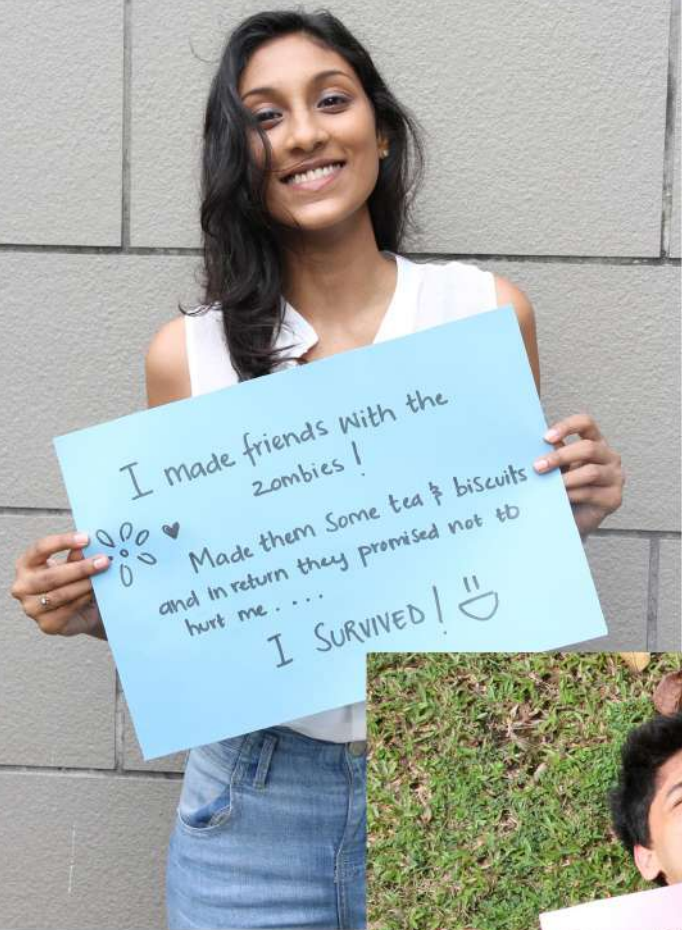
I Became A 
 Vampire...



joined them. earn their
TRUST. That was the
PLAN!



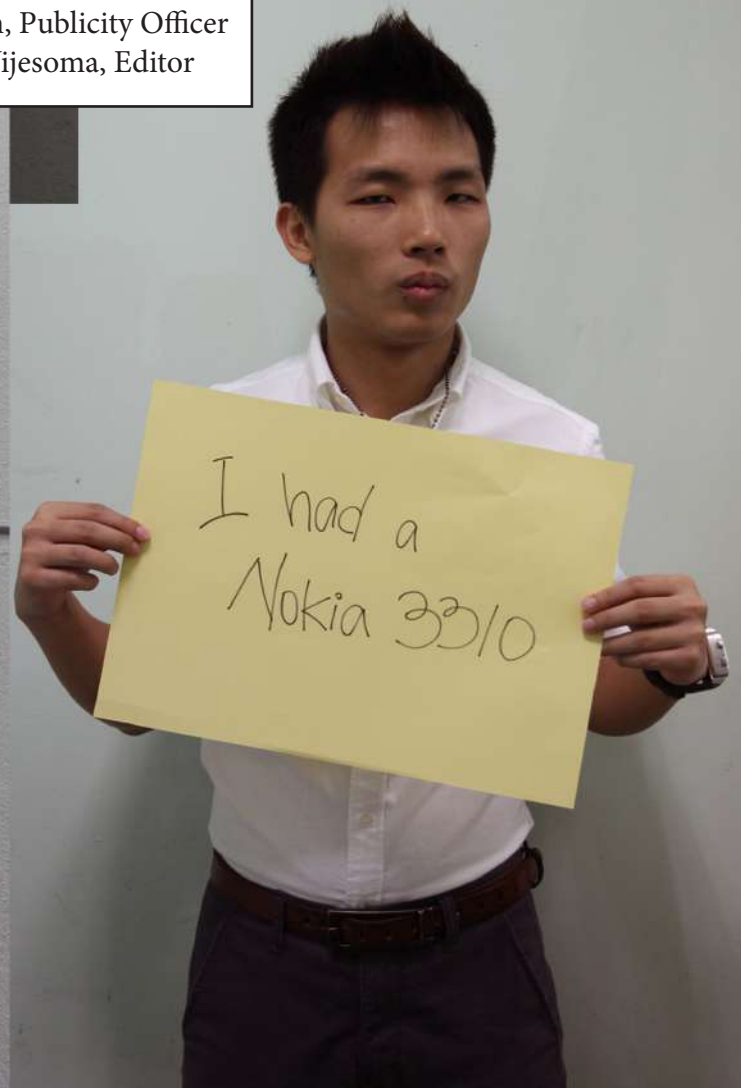
I KILLED
ALL THOSE WHOM
I TRUSTED MOST.
FIRST. ☹️





Clockwise from top-left

Khoo Tien Earn, Treasurer
Thamindri Aluvihare, Wom*n's
Officer
Ng Wei Chun, Publicity Officer
Vinanie Wijesoma, Editor





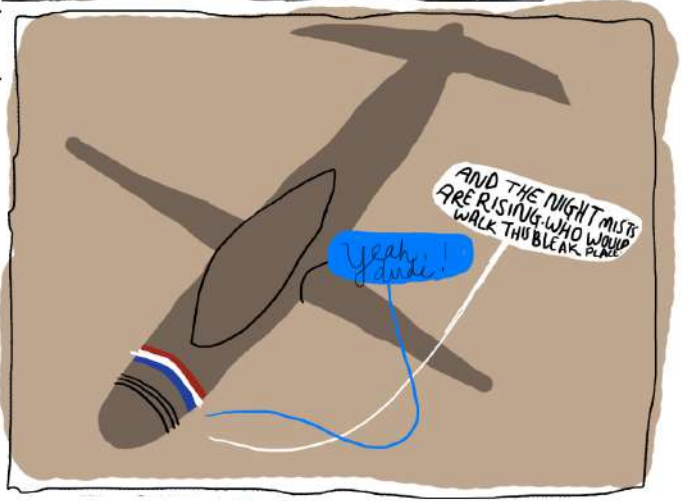
*The Sun was falling East,
The Clocks were turning back,
Our Wardrobes, were Empty.
Our shining Trophies of Mind,
Silver satellites and sailing Space Stations,
Coming Back Home, for the Last Time;
Shooting starlit spirals aimed for the Core
Pulling Air, in their Spectacular, Passionate Propulsion -
Down to the Deepest Depths of the Unknown Ocean.
Thoughts, were never the same;
Timelessness was Revealed, again.
There was Love, in Pain -
And Nothing was in vain.
Differences dissolved, Conflicts Resolved,
Every Colour of the Rainbow was vibrating on Low,
Friend and Foe were in the Ebb and Flow,
Sinking and Swimming, Screaming and Singing -
Now its Time to Know the Silent Symphony's Glow.
Sunbeams are to dance, with the Empty Space
That fills, Eleven Worlds - without and within;
Refracting the Melodies of Light.
Stitching Singularity into Sight.*

-- Adam Radhi

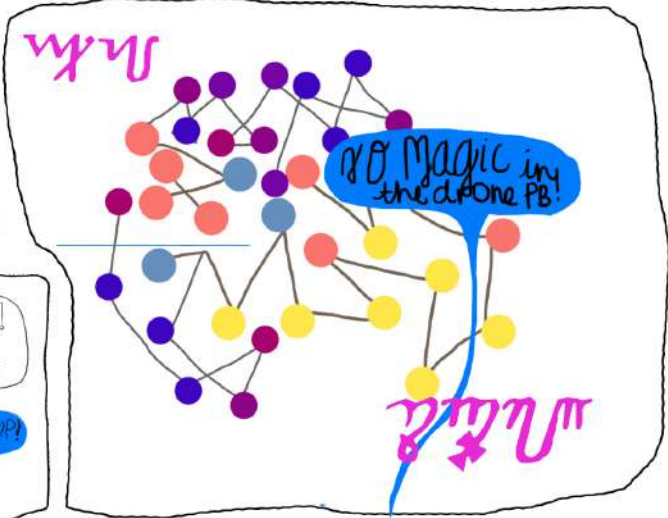
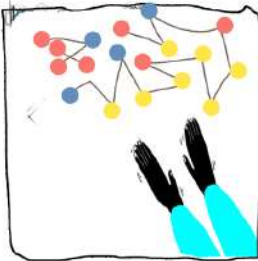
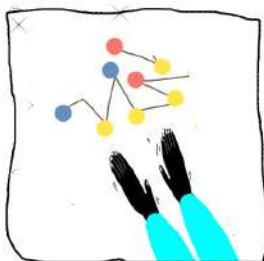
'92. OH!

A COMIC BY: YEE I-LING

PORK BEAST in: '92. Oh! Amy Yee I-Ling 12.16.2012 '92 Oh in OUR MARVELOUS DRONE WE EAT BLEACHED FIGS. WE WATCH THE OUTSIDE TURN ORANGE. WE YODLE. WE WANT EVERYONE



Who would walk in this bleak place?



BOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOM!

THE DRONE EXPLODES





Professor Anthony Guo and Pro Vice Chancellor Helen Bartlett were officiating the launch of ELP with the cutting of the cake.

Engineering Leadership Programme (ELP)

By Jamie Yeap

ELP is a one-year program that is designed by the School of Engineering, to educate the high-performing undergraduate Engineering students in key areas of leadership. It is designed to help the students to improve and develop skills such as interpersonal and communicative skills so as to smoothen

their transition from student to engineering professional. The program includes a retreat, a series of expert-led workshops, field trips to companies, industry leadership engagement evenings and culminates in a participant-organized leadership summit.

Recently Concluded Activities

The launch was held on the 29th of March 2013, coordinated by Ms. Felicity Brown and Ir. Dennis Ong. Professor Anthony Guo, the head of School of Engineering and Pro-Vice Chancellor Helen Bartlett officiated the launch of the program.

A retreat for the participants was conducted at the Outbac Broga Outdoor Teambuilding Adventure Camp, nestled between the borders of Selangor and Negeri Sembilan.

The aim of the retreat was to encourage team building and to improve interactions among the participants.



SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING


participants to put on their thinking caps and brainstorm for the leadership summit that they are going to organize in November.

Upcoming events

There will be a series of Evening Leadership talks stretching throughout the whole year to educate the participants in becoming an effective leader.

There will also be a series of workshop that allow the participants to engage in activities that will focus on the development of soft skills and creative thinking. In the next mid-semester break, there will be field trips to 2 companies, which will give students an insight to the industry.

All these activities lead to a leadership summit in November, which serves as a platform for the participants to apply everything that they have learned throughout the program and a chance for them to display their leadership skills.



Several activities were carried out such as wall climbing, raft building, hiking, obstacle course, Leap of Faith and crate stacking.

They were specifically tailored to improve a certain aspect of the team dynamics, allowing the group to display their leadership skills and at the same time enhancing their ability to work together effectively under pressure.

After the retreat, two workshops were conducted to help the participants understand themselves better. The workshops were also carried out to drive the



A low-angle photograph of a group of young people standing on a concrete ledge. They are holding hands and looking upwards with expressions of awe and excitement. The central figure is a man in a dark t-shirt and white shorts, wearing sunglasses and looking up. To his right, a woman in a red floral top is also looking up. In the foreground, a woman in a black top is looking towards the group. The background is a bright, overcast sky. The text 'THE-MONDO.COM' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

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