

# THE neweurasian

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JANUARY - MARCH 2018



## FEMALE VOICES IN THE ARTS

The next generation of  
Eurasian actors, writers and musicians

### PLUS

#### EA EDUCATION SCHEMES

Do you qualify for financial help?

#### SO THIS IS CHRISTMAS

A round-up of the year-end festivities

#### THE OFFICE OF THE FUTURE

Martin Gabriel on how technology will change the workplace

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## THE neweurasian

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## President's Message

A new year dawns, and I would like to wish all of you a very happy and fulfilling 2018. After a busy and productive schedule last year, we plan to continue building on the strong momentum we have generated, particularly in strengthening the Eurasian identity and with our youth outreach and development activities. Over the last year, the EA has invested heavily in these areas and has partnered with various organisations to promote the Eurasian community.

Our youth wing has been increasingly active. Last year it established a Mentorship Programme to help young Eurasians with both their personal and academic development, which has received extremely positive feedback and is being expanded this year (see page 14). It also held two dialogue sessions where young people shared their thoughts about the Eurasian identity and multiculturalism in Singapore with national opinion leaders. A number of workshops were also organised in leadership development and to help our young people better plan for their future. I am pleased to see more of them joining us in the various activities organised by EA and I certainly look forward to them taking on a more active role in helping to strengthen and lead our community in the future.

Another highlight of previous months was the Eurasian Christmas Festival (page 16), which gave us an opportunity to showcase Eurasian culture with the wider society. I would like to thank our guest of honour, Christopher de Souza MP, for supporting us in showcasing our Christmas traditions with residents at Ulu Pandan and I am sure they enjoyed learning about the Eurasian community in Singapore and how we celebrate the festive season. We also launched the second edition of *The Eurasian Heritage Dictionary* at the event and I would like to thank both authors, Valerie Scully and Catherine Zuzarte, for their efforts in helping to revive an important heritage language.

Social occasions are an important part of reaching out and bringing us together as a community. These gatherings draw members of the Eurasian community and friends from across Singapore and even beyond. We closed the year with several events – among them the Christmas Dinner and Dance, Children's Christmas Treat, FSS Christmas Lunch and the New Year's Eve Dinner and Dance, which was held at the Orchard Hotel.

Our cover story for this issue (page 9) is about Eurasian women in the Singapore arts scene and how art has always been an intrinsic aspect of the Eurasian culture. With the pressures of school and career, and the pursuit of material success, we often do not find enough space in our lives for the arts. We have had the chance to speak to a poet, singer, author and actor and their stories show why it's important to use art to reflect our diverse communities and the role that the arts play in strengthening communities and all aspects of society.

Another key focus for this year will be our preparations for the celebration of EA's centenary in 2019. As you will have seen in recent news, this coincides with the Singapore Bicentennial commemoration, marking the 200th anniversary of Raffles' arrival in Singapore. In addition to the work that has started to revamp our Eurasian Heritage Centre, we are also planning a slew of events to mark our centennial and will be leveraging on the Singapore Bicentennial programme to strengthen our outreach. It is a significant milestone for the EA to reach our 100th year and we hope to engage as many Eurasians as possible to help us organise and participate in the various events. More information about this will be available soon.

Last, but not least, I would like to thank our general manager Lester Low for serving us in the EA Secretariat for more than 10 years (page 4). Lester has been a tremendous support to the Management Committee over the years and his diligence and efforts have allowed us to roll out all our initiatives successfully. My sincere appreciation, too, to the Board of Trustees, Management Committee, EA Secretariat team and our numerous volunteers and donors for all their support, dedication and hard work through 2017.

The EA hopes to receive your continuous support and wishes you all a successful year ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Lester Low', written in a cursive style.

## Dinner With the President

The four self-help groups jointly hosted a dinner at the Landmark Hotel for President Halimah Yacob on 16 October. The occasion enabled them to provide her with a better understanding of the SHGs' role in supporting their respective communities and the various initiatives on which they collaborate. Representatives of the different SHGs also staged cultural performances.

In a statement to the press, the President commended the SHGs for working on joint projects such as their tuition classes and after-school care centres that are open to all races. She said: "It shows that our self-help groups not only reach out to their own communities, but they provide common spaces through providing services that benefit all the communities, and in that manner, they also help to promote the different races coming together in order to support each other."



EA President Benett Theseira (left) and the three other SHG heads present a picture depicting multi-cultural fabric designs to President Halimah Yacob

## Ties that Bind the Nation

More than 2,500 people gathered for the annual Orange Ribbon Walk on 11 November for a 3.8 km stroll along Singapore's best-loved landmarks. Organised by OnePeople.sg, the event rallied people from diverse racial and religious groups to support its 'Rise Against Racism' campaign.

Josephine Teo, Minister in the Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister for Manpower and Home Affairs, was guest of honour and Dr Janil Puthuchery, chairman of OnePeople.sg, hosted the event. EA President Benett Theseira and First Vice President Alexius Pereira represented the EA. A special Eurasian heritage booth was also set up to create awareness of the Eurasian culture.



Josephine Teo, Janil Puthuchery (seventh and eight from left respectively) with Benett Theseira (third from right) and other members of the community

## A Decade of Good Work

The EA's general manager, Lester Low, was presented with a certificate of appreciation at a special lunch attended by management committee members and staff at Park Royal Hotel on 10 October in recognition of his 10 years of committed service to the association.



Lester (left) with EA President Benett Theseira

## OnePeople.sg's Birthday Celebrations

OnePeople.sg celebrated its 10th anniversary by hosting a charity dinner at the Shangri-La Hotel on 1 November, with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong as the guest of honour. At the event, Yvonne Pereira, the EA's Second Vice President and the EA representative on the OPSG's board, was presented with a plaque in appreciation of an EA donation to the organisation. She says: "The EA is pleased to work closely with OPSG in order to spread the message about the importance of racial and religious harmony."



# Hooping for a Merry Christmas

EA members and guests from like-minded associations attended the annual Christmas light-up followed by a dinner and dance at the Eurasian Community House. After EA President Benett Theseira had ceremonially flicked the switch to turn on the Christmas tree lights, the guests invoked the yuletide spirit by singing Christmas carols.



Seated (from left): executive director of OnePeople.sg, Ong Keen Choon, People Association's chief executive director Desmond Tan, EA President Benett Theseira, MENDAKI member, Norhidayah Hassan, EA Second Vice-President, Yvonne Pereira, Emma Chiau and her daughter. Standing (from left): EA general manager Lester Low and management committee members Julia D'Silva and Graham Ong-Webb



Round it goes: guests play the hula hoop game

Christmas dinner was a hearty Eurasian festive buffet prepared by Quentin's restaurant, after which guests had to play a tricky hula hoop game. Leticia Dragon, who was attending the event for the first time, explains: "We had to loop the hoop to the person next to us without using our hands. The game was hilarious and the hall was filled with laughter!"

The rest of the evening was spent on the dance floor, moving to the music provided by Gerard Danker and the MSG band.

## Santa's in Town

The Eurasian Community House turned into Santa's playground for the youngsters, with their parents in tow, who attended the EA's annual Children's Christmas Treat on 10 December.

The kids were thrilled to participate in activities such as pinning the nose on Rudolph, miniature golf and putting their artistic talents to the test by creatively colouring Santa Claus and his sleigh ride in the colouring contest.

The children continued to be entertained by CJ Bubbles and ToyBox, whose music got the youngsters up on the floor showing off their dance moves. Balloon sculptor Russell Oliveiro obliged every child's wish by creating their favourites – with Disney's *Frozen* characters being a hit.

The highlight of the afternoon was the arrival of Santa and Santarina and the children immediately crowded around them to get the candy canes being



A happy child receives her Christmas gift from Santa and Santarina



ToyBox stirs up the party



CJ Bubbles entertains the kids

handed out. Each child was then invited on stage to pose for a photograph and receive a special gift from them, and a few lucky children won special Lego sets sponsored by Lego Singapore.

Yvonne Pereira says: "We would like to thank South-East Community Development Council, Focus Network Agencies, Quentin's Eurasian restaurant, Lego

Singapore and volunteers from the Church of St Francis Xavier for contributing to the success of the event."

## In Grateful Memory



Remembrance Sunday was held on 12 November at Kranji War Cemetery to commemorate those whose lives were sacrificed in the two world wars. The ceremony was organised by the British High Commission of Singapore together with the Singapore Armed Forces Veterans' League. EA Management Committee member Graham Ong-Webb represented the association and laid a wreath.

## Kick Off the New Year With Some Real Goals

Guys: did you enjoy kicking a ball around the park when you were a kid? Do you wish you still had the ribbed abs of your NS days?

If you're Eurasian and in your late 20s and above, why not join the Eurasian Association Men's Senior Soccer Team for some friendly competition on the field – and make some new, like-minded kakis?

The team is a group of enthusiasts from the Eurasian community who come together for the love of the game. Squad member

Lyle Cordeiro says: "Currently we have an established core group of players but are keen to have more new members on board to strengthen our squad." The team plays in friendly matches and community tournaments.

So dust off those old football boots at the back of the cupboard and visit the team's Facebook group (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/eamensseniorsoccer/>) to find out how to join the squad and take part in upcoming games.



## Free EA Membership!



Are you contributing to the Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) but are not a member of the EA? Well, why not join up – for free? Life membership usually costs \$60, but the fee is waived for all ECF contributors if they can provide their latest three months' payslips indicating their ECF contributions.

Members of the EA enjoy discounts on its events and facilities throughout the year. The association also collaborates with external organisations to provide members with exclusive benefits. To find out more about membership benefits, visit: <http://www.eur Asians.org.sg/about-us/membership/> And to download your membership form, visit <http://www.eur Asians.org.sg/membership-form/> The EA looks forward to welcoming you soon!

# EA Education Schemes 2018

The EA supports students throughout their academic journey, offering numerous awards, bursaries and scholarships for primary, secondary and tertiary levels. Below is a table of EA Education Schemes 2018, criteria and application period.

S/N	Education Scheme	Level	Description	Quantum	Income Criteria	Application Period
1	Eurasian Community Fund (ECF) Education Awards	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	A one-time monetary reward to students	\$100 - \$300	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800 *Income criteria are only for Bursary Awards. Merit, Excellence and Distinction Awards do not have income criteria.	Apply by 29 June 2018
2	Project Ray Of Hope	Primary, Secondary, Tertiary	Disbursement of Popular and Bata vouchers to purchase educational items for the next academic year	\$250 - \$350	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 29 June 2018
3	Irene Joseph Memorial Fund & P.K.P Nair Memorial Fund	Primary	A one-time monetary reward to students	\$200	PCI range: \$626 – \$1,000 *For students not under MOE FAS	Apply by 29 June 2018
4	Coral De Cruz Memorial Fund	Secondary	Covering school fees, books, uniforms and transport for one academic year	\$1,200 for one academic year	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 30 June 2018
5	Merit Bursary Award	ITE and Polytechnic <i>(NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for the full duration of the course	<b>Cap:</b> ITE : \$1,600/year for a 2-year course Poly : \$3,600/year for a 3-year course	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 30 April 2018
6	EA University Scholarship	University <i>(NUS, NTU, SMU, SUSS, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for a 3-year course	<b>Cap:</b> \$10,000 per academic year for a 3-year course	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 30 April 2018
7	Oscar George da Silva University Scholarship	University <i>(NUS, NTU, SMU, SUSS, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for a 3-year course, to defray the cost of university education.	<b>Cap:</b> \$10,000 per academic year for a 3-year course	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 30 April 2018
8	Minnie Leicester-D'Rozario Award (for Literature in English at O-levels)	Secondary 4 O-level student	A one-time award for a Eurasian student(s) who attained A1 for Literature in English at the Secondary 4 O-level examination	\$1,000 If there is more than one candidate, the quantum per student will be decided by the Education Sub-Committee	Nil	Apply by 30 April 2018
9	Joseph Schooling Sports Scholarship	Independent Schools, ITE, Polytechnic & University <i>(Independent Schools, NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP, NUS, NTU, SMU, SUSS, SIT, SUTD)</i>	Covering the full cost of tuition and book stipend for the full duration of the course	<b>Cap:</b> ITE : \$1,600/year for a 2-year course Poly : \$3,600/year for a 3-year course Uni : \$10,000/academic year for a 3-year course	Nil	Apply by 30 April 2018
10	Rudolph Mosbergen Sports Award	ITE, Polytechnic & University <i>(NP, NYP, RP, SP, TP, NUS, NTU, SMU, SUSS, SIT, SUTD)</i>	A one-time award for a Eurasian student(s) who show(s) potential in sports and is pursuing a sports course at the Singapore Sports School, ITE, Polytechnic or University	\$2,500 If there is more than one candidate, the quantum per student will be decided by the Education Sub-Committee	GHI ≤ \$3,000, or PCI ≤ \$800	Apply by 30 April 2018

NOTE: GHI = Gross Household Income : Total monthly income of all working adults in the household  
PCI = Per Capita Income : Total monthly income divided by the number of people in the household

To apply, please contact Jolvin Wong at 6447 1578 (ext 205) or email [jolvin@eurasians.org](mailto:jolvin@eurasians.org)  
Application forms can be obtained from the Secretariat office at level 3 of the Eurasian Community House, 139 Ceylon Road, Singapore 429744 or downloaded from [www.eurasians.org.sg/education/awards-and-scholarships/](http://www.eurasians.org.sg/education/awards-and-scholarships/)

# Inter-Faith Help Towards a Good Education

## *A Buddhist charity contributes to the college costs of deserving Eurasians*

The Singapore Buddhist Lodge awarded bursaries to three tertiary-level Eurasian students – Christian Tide Van Huizen, Samantha Monis and Hanaan Muhammad Abdullah – at its bursary presentation ceremony on 7 October. As part of its work, the charitable organisation liaises with all the ethnic groups in Singapore to ensure that students have access to good education.

Samantha Monis, 19, who is currently studying at ITE College East said: "I am receiving this award for the first time and I am very grateful. I will be using it to purchase text books and also using part of it, together with my savings, to get a new laptop, which is crucial for my Digital Audio and Video Production course."



*Christian Tide Van Huizen (far left), Samantha Monis (second from right) and Hanaan Muhammad Abdullah (right) with VIPs at the ceremony*

## Shining a Light on Learning

### *The EA and the Government link up to help students*

The Project Ray of Hope ceremony provides Popular and Bata vouchers funded by the Ministry of Culture, Community and Youth to assist underprivileged students to defray their education costs. The event was held on 25 November at the Eurasian Community House, where Graham Ong-Webb, who chairs the EA Education Sub-Committee, presented the vouchers to more than 50 students.

Eleven-year-old student Elizabeth Prior said that she was very excited to learn that she would be one of the recipients and plans to use her vouchers for "school shoes, books and hopefully a new school bag". Her parents, who also attended the ceremony, expressed their gratitude towards the EA and MCCY.



*Elizabeth Prior receives her vouchers from Graham Ong-Webb*

## Flying High

### *Technology studies are extra fun when they include flying instruments*

Nearly a dozen children had the time of their lives when they upped their computer skills at a drone workshop at the Eurasian Community House in December.

The trainers – who were holding this workshop for the first time – drilled into the students the importance of safety before teaching them how to code so that they could fly their drone. Soon, the sounds of cheers filled the room as the drones flew higher and higher.



*Corey D'Silva (left) and Fabian Teo smile as they track their drone*

Thirteen-year-old Joshua Matthew De Souza from Raffles Institution decided to take part as he had time during the school holidays. He says: "These types of workshops do not happen often and I jumped at the opportunity. It was easy to learn and I wished we'd had more time allocated to the free-play segment." Joshua attended the workshop with his two siblings and all of them agree on one thing: "We can't wait to get our parents' permission to buy our very own drone!"



*Drone debut: the students pose after the workshop*



# LEADING LADIES

*Four women discuss their passion for their arts – and how being Eurasian has helped their career*

The Eurasian community has never been short of role models in the arts and that is continuing with the next generation. We talk to four women who are making their mark in various arts disciplines about how they are guided by their cultural background.

## Cheyenne Alexandria Phillips – Poet

Cheyenne Phillips is a third-generation Eurasian who grew up with the culture's traditions and is proud to acknowledge her Eurasian identity. Some four years ago, while studying at the National University of Singapore, she became involved in theatre and developed a passion for poetry and the spoken word. She says: "I did a Google search and realised that the spoken word is writing a poem and performing it for an audience."

Earlier this year, Cheyenne and her fellow Eurasian partner, Charlene Shepherdson, decided to write a play about the Eurasian community in Singapore. The play, which was supported by a small grant from the Eurasian Association, was inspired by countless stories of Eurasians being mistaken for Malay, Indian, Filipino or other ethnicities. She says: "Even when I shared that I am Eurasian, they simply didn't understand it!" The pair decided to channel their concerns into a play and received a grant from the National Arts Council to write and direct *For the Record*.

Before they began working on the play, they conducted a survey among members of the Eurasian community. Cheyenne says: "The

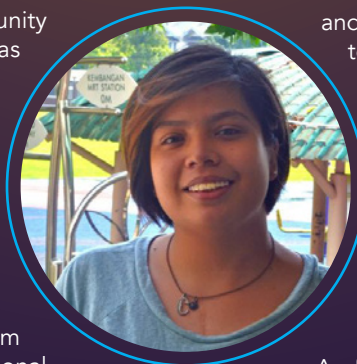
survey was about various things. The individuals had to share how their family arrived in Singapore; how they felt about the term *grago* (a Kristang term for a Eurasian that is considered by some to be derogatory);

*The play was inspired by countless stories of Eurasians being mistaken for Malay, Indian, Filipino or other ethnicities*

and which traditions they wanted to pass on to the next generation. It also included fun elements such as naming their favourite Eurasian food."

She was pleased with the turnout for the play and was heartened to hear feedback from an audience member that it was good to see how awareness of the Eurasian identity was growing alongside that of the national Singapore identity.

As for her role in the Singapore's arts scene, Cheyenne admits that succeeding in a career in the arts is tough and that it is important to not give up. As a woman in the local arts scene, she insists that it is important for women to share their stories so that they can be part of a discussion about their place in society. She concludes: "I hope that more people are supportive of the arts scene in Singapore. Show up! If you can't make it, volunteer in some other way, donate to the cause or at least help to promote it on your social media platforms."



*Cheyenne during a performance of For The Record*

## Melissa De Silva – Writer

A writer of Portuguese, Dutch, Indian and Southeast Asian heritage, Melissa De Silva worked as a magazine journalist and editor for a number of years since she graduated from university. In September last year, she launched her first book, *'Others' Is Not a Race*, which took a couple of years to complete. "I reached a point in my adult life when I realised I didn't feel very Eurasian," she says, and set out to reclaim her culture – by starting to learn her mother tongue, Kristang, researching and cooking Eurasian dishes, travelling to Malacca to document the livelihood of the fishing community there. She also recorded the oral histories of some of her older family members in Singapore and abroad.

The book is a collection of stories that are largely autobiographical, the oral histories by family members; and the last is a fictional tale about a future Singapore in which only two Eurasians remain. As a writer, she is happiest when Eurasians can relate to her writing, "such as the hilarious and painful experience of studying Malay as an arbitrary second language under Singapore's school system, the happy memories of baking pineapple tarts during Christmas and the frustration of Singaporeans not knowing who Eurasians are."

Melissa says she used to be shy about telling people she was Eurasian. "Initially, I got the impression that people were simply not keen to hear anything about the Eurasian community, history or culture." It seems that was far from the case. When her first Eurasian-themed story, *The Gift*, about her



Melissa with her book

maternal grandmother, Patsy Pinto, and the Kristang language was published in an American literary journal, she realised that if American readers who knew nothing about the Eurasian community in Singapore found the subject interesting, many other readers were also likely to. *The Gift* is now the first story in *'Others' Is Not a Race*. Melissa says she has learned that it is important not to describe her ancestry simply as "mixed" as this does not adequately express the fullness of the Eurasian heritage.

She encourages aspiring young writers to visit the Write the World website ([writetheworld.com](http://writetheworld.com)), a platform of writing resources and competitions for teenagers between 13 and 18 years old. Melissa was also recently appointed the website's education ambassador in Singapore, and teachers or anyone who works with young writers can contact her at [melissa@writetheworld.com](mailto:melissa@writetheworld.com) to promote creative writing.

Although being a writer in Singapore, as with anywhere else in the world, is challenging, Melissa spurs young writers to "read more and keep local literature alive".

*"I got the impression that people were simply not keen to hear anything about the Eurasian community, history or culture." It seems that was far from the case*



The audience for the launch of *'Others' Is Not a Race*



Melissa reads from her book during the launch

## Alemay Fernandez – Singer

Alemay Fernandez has been performing since she was four and is currently making waves in Singapore's jazz scene. She grew up in a big Eurasian and Indian family which loved to sing both at home and in church. "As a child, I got to be a part of the wonderful singalong sessions that took place at home around the piano with aunties and uncles. My aunt would play and the rest of us would join in chorus and naturally split into harmonies without any need for direction," she says. She joined her church choir and also undertook professional assignments including TV performances and voiceovers for education programmes. "My mother, Angela Monteiro (who is related to renowned Singapore jazz musician, Jeremy Monteiro), knew I was a drama queen from a young age", she laughs. "She took me to every audition she could find and I am grateful for her recognising my talent and nurturing it."

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*"As a child, I got to be a part of the wonderful singalong sessions that took place at home around the piano with aunties and uncles"*

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Alemay's late father, Joe Fernandez, was a jazz fan and throughout her childhood, she listened to the sounds of jazz legends such as Ella Fitzgerald, Nat King Cole, Dinah Washington and Frank Sinatra at home. It was only when she first started singing in pubs and clubs that she realised that she enjoyed singing jazz more than pop. "I had become a fan of jazz without even realising it," she says. In 2006, she was offered a residency at Jazz@Southbridge on Boat Quay and it was there that her career as a jazz singer took off.

In 2016, she released her album *Hard to Imagine* – an apt title in view of the immense effort it entailed. "I was self-funding and this was one of the biggest challenges. I was lucky that my younger sister, Sabina, assisted me with the fundraising and I also used money I earned from gigs," she says. Alemay was also new to song-writing and producing so the learning curve was steep and slow. She sought the assistance of her talented friend, musician and album co-producer, Shawn Letts, who showed her the ropes. Alemay adds: "Many life-changing events occurred during the album's production – I met the love of my life, my father passed away and I also became an aunt or the first time – it gave me plenty to write about. Each song had a different treatment using a different set of musicians and styles."

Alemay believes that there are many talented jazz musicians in Singapore but not enough opportunities for them to perform. "The harsh reality is that there

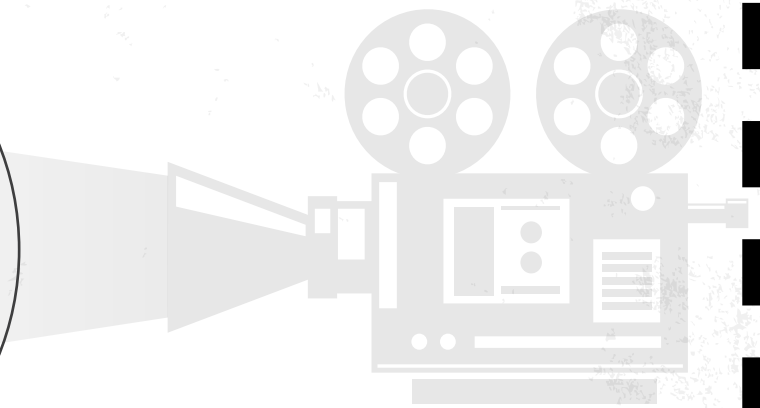


isn't a large enough consistent audience for jazz in Singapore. We need the support of jazz fans; a regular flow of people to show up for performances and to bring their friends to inspire them to become fans of this great genre and the amazing talent that we have in Singapore."

But she says that the arts scene generally in Singapore is thriving in terms of education and training. She teaches at Lasalle College of the Arts and is proud that one of its graduates, Elena Wang, is currently headlining a show on Broadway.

She encourages people to access jazz music from playlists on Spotify and YouTube. "Find more recent versions or covers of popular jazz tunes by current artistes and then look up the original versions. This will allow you to create a genuine love for the genre and to understand what has influenced and laid the ground work for the music you hear today."





## Carla Dunareanu – Actress

FLY Entertainment artiste Carla Dunareanu was born and raised in Essen, Germany, to a Romanian father and a Chinese-Singaporean mother, and has spent much of her life living in different countries, which, she says, has equipped her with the skills to adapt to different cultures.

Ever since she could remember, Carla has been passionate about acting and loved the idea of entertaining an audience by taking them on a journey through the stories she tells. “The concept of removing myself from the real world, even for a couple of minutes, to play and pretend was an intriguing experience,” she recalls. The thought of having a career in something that she did as a child was her idea of heaven and she decided that she was going to be an actress, no matter what it took.

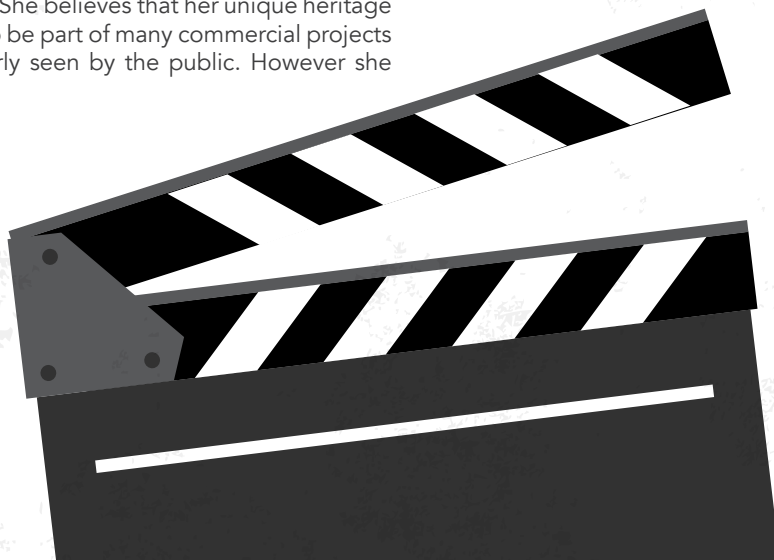
She made her acting debut at the age of 11 in a short film entitled *Gourmet Baby*. “It was amazing having to act alongside veteran actor Lim Kay Tong, whom I had watched and idolised on television. He was the most incredible co-actor and I am glad to have had the pleasure of working with him,” she says.

Does being a Eurasian help her with an acting career? “Yes!” says Carla. She believes that her unique heritage has allowed her to be part of many commercial projects and to be regularly seen by the public. However she

*“The concept of removing myself from the real world, even for a couple of minutes, to play and pretend was an intriguing experience”*

does not take being recognised for granted. “I never allow the fact that people know me to get to my head and make me complacent. I prepare for every audition I go for and my aim is not just to get the job but to leave a lasting impression on those in the audition room.” She feels that hard work gets recognised no matter what gender or industry an individual is in – “Eventually, the cream always rises to the top.”

Carla believes that it would be useful to have Eurasian-centric events where work done by the community is showcased in order to build a stronger sense of ownership and belonging. “It would highlight the incredible amount of talent possessed by the Singapore Eurasian community.”



# Keeping Singapore Safe

*Statistically, a person's chance of being involved in a terrorist attack is small – but the threat is still very real. A group of Eurasians were shown how to cope if the worst happens*

Focusing on 'SG Secure', more than 60 guests at the EA's latest Tea With Neighbours learned about the national

the guests the different types of terror attacks, including 'lone wolf' attacks by self-radicalised individuals, which could

*"I realised that my SG Secure instincts were kicking in. I had become more conscious about my surroundings"*

movement to get people to stay alert, united and strong in the face of terror threats. The session was organised by the EA's Family Support Services in collaboration with the Marine Parade Community Policing Unit, supported by the Joo Chiat Neighbourhood Committee @ Marine Parade.

Senior station inspector and community policing officer Tey Poh Len explained to



*Members of the Eurasian community paying attention during the SG Secure talk*



*Guests listen intently to advice on how to stay safe during a terror attack*

be hard to detect and stop. He provided them with various scenarios and taught them on how to respond in order to protect themselves and their family.

Afterwards, guest Philip Cordeiro said: "The session was very informative. I went overseas after the talk and even then I realised that my SG Secure instincts were kicking in. I had become more conscious about my surroundings and my awareness was heightened."

## Christmas Starts Early at the EA

*The annual FSS Christmas lunch provided an afternoon of joy for disadvantaged members of the Eurasian community*

The EA spread Christmas cheer to numerous families and elderly people who are struggling to make ends meet when it held its annual Family Support Services (FSS) Christmas lunch on 3 December.

Close to 120 FSS beneficiaries let their hair down as they enjoyed an afternoon of music, games and dancing – and, of course, a lavish Eurasian meal.



*Guests show off their dance moves*



*ISS students perform for the FSS guests*

Welcoming the guests, EA President Benett Theseira said that the FSS Christmas lunch was "a special occasion to share the Christmas spirit with the underprivileged in the Eurasian community" and he thanked the ISS International School, whose volunteers were helping out at the event for the eighth year running. "It is always great to see the joy they bring to our clients, leaving them with special festive memories."

This year, the ISS students performed a skit for the guests and the afternoon continued with trivia questions, Christmas carols and entertainment by Kenneth Gomes. For the Smith and Cuthbert families there was a fabulous bonus – they picked the two top prizes in the lucky draw and each walked away with a 32-inch television.

Edmund Rodrigues, who chairs the FSS Sub-Committee, said: "The FSS Christmas lunch is also a way to show the wider society the plight of the poor in the Eurasian community. Those who have assisted us will find the lunch enriching as they have now developed greater empathy and enjoyed the chance to fulfil their responsibility towards the less fortunate. I hope more people follow in our volunteers' footsteps."

## A Box Full of Goodies

A team of volunteers gathered on 18 December for the EA's annual Christmas hamper packing to make up boxes of festive foods to be distributed to elderly and underprivileged Eurasians. The hampers comprised more than 20 food items, including sweets, biscuits, cordials, cereals and more. Other volunteers then took more than two days to deliver the items to more than 80 beneficiaries.

Edmund Rodrigues, who chairs the FSS Sub-Committee, says: "We are grateful for the ongoing contributions of many individuals and organisations which allowed us to raise enough funds for the annual Christmas lunch and hampers. We also appreciate the volunteers who have worked hard to help those in need and bring them joy through these hampers."



*Thumbs up for a job well done! Volunteers (from left) Burton Koek, EA secretariat member Denise Pinto and Allan De Cruz*

## Ace Your Studies and Get Your Dream Career

*The EA Youth Sub-Committee is enhancing its successful Mentorship Programme to help young people achieve education and career success*

Last year, the EA's youth wing introduced a Mentorship Programme comprising a number of workshops to provide young Eurasians with useful tools to ace their studies and prepare them for their careers. Christopher Gordon, who chairs the EA Youth Sub-Committee, says: "In 2018, the Eurasian youth can look forward to an improved Mentorship Programme which incorporates even more beneficial elements. I am happy to see that those who participated in 2017 now have a clearer idea of what they want to achieve in their education and careers and are starting to take huge steps towards their dreams, for example by doing well in the major national examinations. All the workshops are free for young Eurasians and we would like to see many more of them stepping forward to benefit from the programme."

Students on the programme can look forward to a series of workshops conducted by experienced trainers that will help them become more productive in their studies and visualise and maximise their success. One of the tools used in the programme is 'mindfulness', which helps to deal effectively with stress and to focus the mind on the things that are important. There are also workshops to prepare the students for life in the working world, including the use of career profiling tools to help them understand their personalities, interests and strengths better, and workshops to help improve their résumé and interview skills. The programme ends off with a mentorship

component in which each person will be matched to a mentor from a profession or industry of interest to them.

Alexandra Moosa, 19, a university student, says: "The Mentorship Programme provided me with an opportunity to meet fellow Eurasian youth and to personally connect with professionals. I



*Students who took part in the Mentorship Programme in 2017 received certificates from Christopher Gordon at a casual alumni gathering session on 11 November*



*A trainer provides individual attention to students during the Mindfulness Workshop*

gained personal insight about their work and the mentors inspire you to learn."

Shannon Siew, also 19, says that through the programme she was able to identify that being a special needs educator was her true calling and she managed to link up with a Eurasian educator who

is guiding her on making the right choices in order to pursue her career.

Ryan Chua, 16, is currently looking forward to tertiary education and says: "The Mentorship Programme helped me to build on my strengths and gave me clarity on some of the areas that I would like to pursue in the future." Christopher concludes: "We have spared no effort to bring in the best trainers and the most effective techniques, because we want to put our youth in the best position to achieve success in life."

Parents and students who are keen to find out more about the upcoming workshops or register their interest should visit: <http://www.eurasians.org.sg/events/> or contact Denise at [denise@eurasians.org](mailto:denise@eurasians.org) or 6447 1578 (ext 206).

## The New Eurasian Narrative

*Strengthening the community's identity in multicultural Singapore*

Young Eurasians enjoyed a frank dialogue session with Senior Minister of State and chairman of OnePeople.sg, Dr Janil Puthuchery, on the Eurasian identity and the state of multi-racialism in Singapore.

The event, organised by the EA Youth Committee on 18 November, was themed 'Singapore Eurasians: Oneness in Diversity' and focused on three key questions: What does it mean to be Eurasian? What is the new Eurasian identity and narrative? How can Eurasian youth help to strengthen multi-racialism in Singapore?



*Young and the young at heart at the Youth Dialogue*

# The Spirit of Leadership

*From a wee dram of whisky to grooming the next generation of Eurasian leaders, Andrew Pang explains what motivates him*

The eldest of six children – with a Chinese father and Eurasian mother – Andrew Pang was a sporty child, but he also developed a keen interest in the culinary arts, and very specifically whisky and crafted cocktails. His passion saw him owning and running a whisky bar and restaurant but he says, “My real passion lies with training. I am currently developing training courses for whisky,



*Andrew Pang with his cocktail 'Singer in a Smoky Room', inspired by the lyrics of the 1980s song Don't Stop Believin' by Journey*

wine and spirits and hope to commence these classes in the second half of the year. I also work on events and private whisky appreciations and food pairings.”

Andrew joined the EA's Youth Sub-Committee in 2016 and over the past two years, he has attended several youth events, including dialogue sessions



*Vanya shares her personal experiences during the dialogue*

The youngsters spoke about their pride in their Eurasian heritage, how they felt growing up as a Eurasian – in Singapore and overseas – including sharing personal experiences related to racial



*“I think it's good for the Eurasian youth to participate in this programme as it provides them with opportunities to initiate and deliver positive change through networking, service-learning projects, and mentorship”*

*Andrew discusses different glassware during a talk on whisky appreciation and chocolate pairing*

with government ministers and other mentorship events, which were the youth wing's focus last year.

This year, he is fronting the inaugural Young Eurasian Leaders Programme (YELP), which is an initiative for selected young people to be groomed as the next generation of Eurasian youth leaders. He says: “I think it's good for the Eurasian youth, especially those interested in leadership roles, to participate in this programme as it provides them with opportunities to initiate and deliver positive change through networking, service-learning projects, and mentorship.”

He is looking forward to the year ahead and encourages more young people to participate in the programmes organised by the sub-committee so that they get to meet fellow Eurasians. He also adds that he is keen to organise more get-

togethers and create interest groups for the young Eurasian community.

## What Does It Mean to Be Eurasian?

Growing up as a Eurasian meant that I had the option of wearing different types of ethnic costumes on Racial Harmony Day as I am of Portuguese, French, Chinese, Scottish and Chinese descent! Being Eurasian makes me adaptable and I find myself comfortable with people of diverse cultures. My heritage also serves as a talking point as it gives me an opportunity to break walls of racial stereotyping as I can share more about the Eurasian community and our history.

stereotyping. SMS Janil also spoke candidly about his own personal race-related experiences and helped to give the audience a better understanding of Singapore's approach towards race relations as well as some of the ongoing and future challenges in maintaining racial harmony in Singapore.

Christopher Gordon, chairman of the EA Youth Sub-Committee, said in his opening address: “As Eurasians, we are at the forefront of promoting deeper dialogue and understanding between people of different races. Our small number means that we are naturally

exposed to people of a wide variety of races in our social networks. We can and must be an example of how such deeper interactions can take place.”

Vanya Minjoot, 17, who attended the session, says: “It was a thought-provoking dialogue. I shared my personal experiences about introducing myself as a Eurasian to others and also learned that many other youth are unsure and find it challenging to explain who Eurasians are. I feel that the session allowed us to ponder how everyone can play a part in creating awareness and strengthening the Eurasian culture, heritage and identity.”

# Bong Natal! (Happy Christmas!)

*Hundreds of guests at Ulu Pandan learned how to do Christmas the Eurasian way*

The Eurasian Christmas Festival proved the perfect occasion to create awareness about the Eurasian community in Singapore and to share its Christmas traditions with fellow Singaporeans. As guest-of-honour Christopher de Souza MP said in his speech: "Let us celebrate the differences that make every race

a vibrant and important part of our society. We can all play a part to make Singapore and Ulu Pandan a better home for everyone."

The festival was held on 9 December at Ulu Pandan Community Club, where MCs Bernadette Gostelow and Veronica Gomes introduced the entertainment by various musicians including Peter Diaz, the Lesslar family, brothers Trevor and Jared Martens Wong, and a special dance performance by the Diamond Drip Team. In a heart-warming segment, children were invited up on stage to sing along to Christmas carols together with the Regina Coeli Choir from the Church of Saint Vincent de Paul.

More than 500 guests enjoyed fringe activities such as toy soldier bowling, pinning the nose on Rudolph. The children particularly enjoyed the craft tables where they could make and colour tiny reindeers, snowmen and gingerbread men, which they



*EA President Benett Theseira with authors Valerie Scully (left) and Catherine Zuzarte present The Eurasian Heritage Dictionary to Christopher de Souza*

*"Let us celebrate the differences that make every race a vibrant and important part of our society"*

then hung on the Christmas tree as ornaments.

The event also included the launch of the second edition of *The Eurasian Heritage Dictionary* and authors Valerie Scully and Catherine Zuzarte were invited on stage to present a copy of the book to the guest of honour.



*A youngster concentrates on making a reindeer Christmas decoration*



*Guests join Santa to sing Christmas carols*



*Christopher de Souza chats with guests*



*The Diamond Drip Team put on a show*



# Sharing Our Heritage

Throughout the year, the EA helps to spread knowledge about the unique Eurasian culture by conducting heritage sessions and setting up Eurasian booths at events around the island. Here are a few of the key events that were held in the last quarter.



*The Eurasian Dance Troupe perform the Jinkli Nona together with Micappella at the President Star Charity show*



*The Eurasian heritage booth team with guest-of-honour Minister Grace Fu (fifth from left) at One Community Fiesta held at Jurong East Sports Hall*



*Participants brave the rain to make their own Eurasian cultural badge at the Orange Ribbon Walk held at Esplanade Park*



*Guest of honour Deputy Prime Minister Teo Chee Hean shakes hands with youth volunteer Ari Van Huizen at the heritage booth at Pasir Ris-Punggol One Community Fiesta*



*Eurasian volunteers at the Aljunied Cluster One Community Fiesta held at Kovan Hub*



*Member of Parliament Christopher de Souza (left) chats with guest of honour, Minister Vivian Balakrishnan (third from left) over suggee cake at the heritage booth at Holland Bukit-Timah One Community Fiesta*

## Come to the Party!

A party will be held in Armenian Street on 9 and 10 March from 6pm onwards. The street is located outside the Peranakan Museum and will be closed off for guests to mingle over delicious food – including Eurasian and Peranakan favourites – and enjoy special stage performances. From 6pm to 7pm, be sure to catch Eurasian chef Damian D'Silva, who will be sharing interesting facts about Eurasian and Peranakan cuisine at the museum's Ixora Room. Damian's talk is free of charge but registration is on a first-come-first-serve basis.

For more information, contact Jacqueline at [jacqueline@eurasians.org](mailto:jacqueline@eurasians.org) or 6447 1578 (ext 202).

# Finding Your Role in the Workplace

*Human resources expert Martin Gabriel discusses the workplace of the future and what technology can – and can't – do*

As chairman and senior HR consultant of HRmatters21 forum, and with more than 20 years of experience in the HR sector, Martin Gabriel has given much thought to how employees need to develop to keep pace with the fast-changing nature of the workplace.

Technology, he acknowledges, has brought about huge improvements in speed, efficiency and accuracy. "Machines have the ability to sort millions of data in seconds and also improve productivity. Humans have no chance of competing against machines based on frequency and high-volume tasks." However, he contends that there are certain jobs that machines will never be able to do, such as nursing, as machines are unable to feel and empathise. "We humans can be creative, innovative, handle novel situations and have the ability to connect disparate threads and solve new problems. Machines at this point in time can't do this."

He emphasises that people should be aware and ask themselves to what extent their jobs are repetitive or transactional. He says that if 80 per cent of their job is transactional work, it can be easily taken over by machines in the future. "The portion of a job that involves novel situations like strategising, creativity, innovating or being a care giver, will still belong to us."

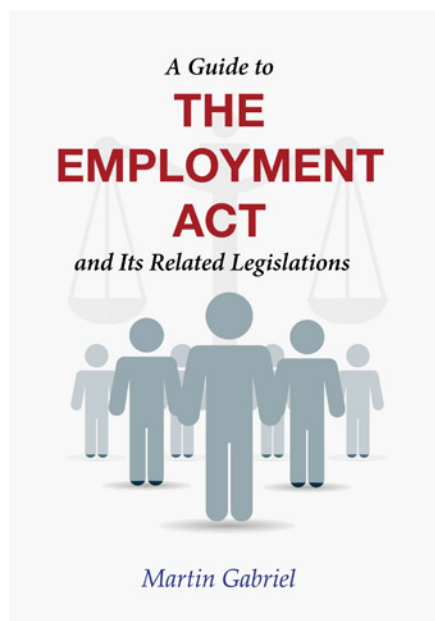
Martin started the HRmatters21 forum in 2001 to provide a platform for HR practitioners to share information about best practices. Then, many HR members needed to be cajoled to speak out, he says. In contrast, today, many online users are having discussions on diverse platforms. He also says that in HR there are often sensitive issues that are seldom spoken about, such as retrenchment or termination, and the forum allows users to discuss these and tap on the experiences of the other more seasoned HR professionals anonymously.

He encourages people to continue learning new skills, and at a faster pace. "Learning has to be ongoing," he says. He also points out that work no longer necessarily involves personal encounters and cites his own experience, when an entire work process was completed without having to meet face to face, which would not have happened in pre-



*Martin Gabriel seeks the positive attributes of technology*

*"Humans can be creative, innovative, handle novel situations and have the ability to connect disparate threads and solve new problems. Machines at this point in time can't do this"*



*Martin's achievements include a book on employment law*

internet days. He says: "Technology presented us with an opportunity to do a business transaction regardless of the fact that we were from different parts of the world. These are new opportunities that we must seize or create for ourselves."

Martin has also written a book that examines key clauses of the Employment Act and its related legislation. It breaks down and interprets legal jargon for laymen to allow them to gain a better understanding about employment law in Singapore. The book is available from the EA, priced \$28, \$10 of which is donated to the EA.

Martin concludes that there are many workers who fear that technology will take over their jobs but he encourages them to have an open mind and use the technology for their own gain. "Embrace technology and make it work for you rather than against you," he advises.

# Getting the Message Across

*Working in public relations can range from simply getting your client's name in the news to undertaking some serious investigative journalism on their behalf*

Wesley Gunter's first job was in a public relations firm and he soon realised that the diversity of the work and the lack of a strict routine were a good fit for his temperament.

After gaining experience, he decided to set up his own firm, Right Hook

hard to build his portfolio and used social media platforms to showcase the work he did with diverse clients.

Wesley says that PR is all about human connections and building relationships. As the digital media space continues to evolve, more clients are asking



*A radio interview with a client, arranged by Wesley*

to gain at least five to eight years of working experience before setting up on their own.

As for working in a PR agency, he chuckles and says: "Be ready to eat some humble-pie! You need to have a good attitude and be able to take criticism. Come with an open mind and you will thrive!"



*The Right Hook team at the Milipol Asia 2017*

Communications, in 2013 and he has now been in the PR business nearly 15 years.

He discovered, however, that entrepreneurship wasn't as easy as he'd thought it would be. "It was a two-man show at the start and I mostly worked from my home or co-working spaces. I pitched non-stop and was lucky that one of my clients from my previous workplace decided to hire my company after the contract with their existing agency ended."

*PR is all about human connections and building relationships*

But he says that during the early days, there were clients who tried to get his services on the cheap. "Looking back, there were so many clients who refused to pay me because of the size of my firm. They asked me why they should pay me the same amount as the big-name firms. His reply was to explain the personalised service a small agency such as Right Hook was able to provide and that the quality of his work remained as good. He worked

Wesley how they can use their social media content to meet their campaign objectives or boost sales.

He is glad that his company has grown slowly and steadily. He says that one of his favourite projects was with a physical data security company operating in more than 140 markets in 17 different countries, which was keen to gain more awareness in the Singapore market. "It was an interesting project as it was not simply about getting media mentions. We had to get on the ground and did some investigative journalism and found out that many companies were flippantly discarding confidential documents with personal information." The investigation led to reports in the mainstream media such as *The Straits Times* and Wesley was proud not only to have gained a satisfied client but also to have been able to create public awareness about the problem.

Wesley's advice to budding young entrepreneurs is to be aware of the consequences of your actions and understand, too, that the business world is all about surviving. He urges them



*Wesley Gunter loves the diversity in his job*

# The Magic of Masquerade



More than 230 guests decked in mysterious masks ushered in the New Year in style at the EA's dazzling New Year's Eve Masquerade Ball at Orchard Hotel. The evening began with cocktails and a warm welcome by EA's President Benett Theseira and Second Vice-President, Yvonne Pereira, and MCs Charlene Lee and Christian Eber kept the mood revving throughout the evening.



The guests enjoyed an international buffet spread accompanied by a free flow of beers, wines and soft drinks, and musical entertainment by DJ Bernard Jeremiah, guest singer Romito Mendoza, and The Music Men band ensured they kept their feet swirling on the dance floor.



A lucky draw supported by sponsors provided lucky winners with bottles of Champagne and a top prize, courtesy of The Ban Khi (Yang), of a flight and hotel stay in Penang. And the four best-masked couples each won a bottle of wine after sportingly performing a catwalk to parade their masks before the cheering crowd.



As the seconds crept towards midnight, Old Father Time (aka Vincent Sim) appeared, and the New Year was celebrated with a drop of more than 600 purple and silver balloons followed by a traditional rendering of *Auld Lang Syne*, a conga line dance – and more action on the dance floor into the wee hours of 2018.

