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**Cheat Sheet**

**#28 How to Be a Pro Photographer**

**LIGHT GRAFFITI**

**PHOTOGRAPHY TERMINOLOGY:**

Bulb mode or Long exposure

A feature that allows you to create art by using light - from words to drawings - this photographer trick will have you looking like you’re manipulating light to your whim. This is definitely a fun job.

**Step 1:** Find an extremely dark place: the darker, the better.

**Step 2:** Switch your DSLR to manual mode.

**Step 3:** Decrease your shutter speed to the lowest possible setting. This will automatically turn it to bulb mode.

**Step 4:** Get any type of portable light source, say glow sticks, twirly lights, etc.

**Step 5:** Click hold and keep the camera steady while your friend starts using the light source to write or draw.

**Step 6:** Once it's done, let go and the camera will take a shot which will comprise all the light graffiti you've just created.

**BLURRED ART**

**PHOTOGRAPHY TERMINOLOGY:**

Bokeh

Photography that embraces blurriness rather than focusing it. Bokeh allows you to play around with various shapes to create art.

**Step 1:** Cut a black paperboard to fit the shape of your lens.

**Step 2:** Then cut one shape that is about half a centimetre in width.

**Step 3:** Stick the paperboard on your lens.

**Step 4:** Set your aperture to the lowest value so that your shutter is completely open.

**Step 5:** Ensure there are bright lights in the distance.

**Step 6:** Start clicking.

**OPTICAL ILLUSIONS**

**PHOTOGRAPHY TERMINOLOGY:**

High-speed photography

For this feature, you'll be able to capture actions that are impossible to catch with the human eye, like the bursting of a balloon filled with water, or the shattering of glass.

**Step 1:** Find a dark room.

**Step 2:** Switch the flash, set your exposure timing to 5 - 10 seconds and keep the aperture open to 10 – 14.

**Step 3:** With those settings, snap a picture while performing the action closest, and you'll have still images of motion.

**DRAMATIC PHOTOS**

**PHOTOGRAPHY TERMINOLOGY:**

Silhouette

For that mysterious, dramatic appeal, to photographs, silhouettes are the best way to go.

**Step 1:** Choose a defined and strong subject.

**Step 2:** Switch off flash.

**Step 3:** Ensure that there is more light coming from behind the subject. Keep the lighting in front minimal.

**Step 4:** Keep it in auto mode, and aim your camera at the brightest point of your frame. Press the shutter button, but don’t let go, as it focuses accordingly.

**Step 5:** Then aim it back at your subject and take the picture.
WEARABLE TECH

SMART BRACELET

Expected to hit the market soon, is ARD’s latest smart bracelet that enables users to keep track of their health without much of a hassle. Like any normal health tracker, it calculates how many calories you’ve burnt, but what sets it apart is that it counts the amount of calories you metabolise using LED displays that measure your metabolic rate while you’re chopping down on food. Keeping up with the holistic health approach, the bracelet is also able to monitor your stress levels by detecting any sudden increase of your heart rate and analysing your sleep cycle to ensure that you have enough rest.

ROBO GLASS

A much talked-about wearable device, the Google Glass does more than just serve as a gadget straight out of a Terminator franchise; it functions just like a computer does, so there’s no need to lug around a laptop (or even a smartphone). Looking like a spectacle frame with a Bluetooth-like device attached to it, this elegant device can obey commands like ‘take a picture’ or ‘record a video’, translate languages and trawl the web, while reading and sending messages and emails. The Google Glass comes in 4 different colours (Charcoal, Tangerine, Shale, Cotton and Sky) but better still, you can customise it to your own existing spectacle frames. Google is also working with Ray-Ban and Oakley, so you can expect some slick designs soon.

RING OF SHORTCUTS

A project that started on Kickstarter, this device – shaped like a ring – serves as the middleground between you and every piece of technology in your home. From allowing users to send texts, controlling surrounding home appliances and even settling your bills, Logbar’s Ring is the latest benchmark in wearable technology as well as a piece of jewellery that’s more than just an accessory. Other functions of this sleek ring include vibration alerts when your cellphone receives a notification, and allowing you to write text messages using simple drawing gestures with your finger.

WIRED SKULLCAP

More suited for athletes or anyone looking for an extra set of eyes because they’re prone to head bumps, the Reebok Checklight – which looks just like an ordinary skullcap – comes with a range of sensors that collects impact data so you can understand the severity of a hit. Its easy-to-read displays warn you when an impact could border on a concussion – a red light indicates the need for medical attention, while a yellow means that the impact was moderate. A Red Dot award winner, this mechanised cap will soon save lots of lives.

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CARRIER TECH

SPARK S-512 SUPERSONIC JET

INVISIBLE PLANE

Hitting the airspace recently is a windowless jet. Can’t wrap your head around that idea? The Spark S-512 Supersonic Jet is outfitted with LCD screens on its walls from top to bottom. With each journey, it’s display a panoramic view of the outside to the passengers of the plane, so it will give off an invisible jet feeling. What’s more, you can choose what you want to see – be it the scenery outside the plane or a movie, the LCD screens that plaster this plane are perfect for any type of viewing. The plane, which looks like it’s modeled after a fighter jet, also cuts all travelling time by half.

POWERSHOT

Supercharging the idea of charging your phone through bluetooth is the INFOPF wireless charger, which powers up your smartphone by having it rest on a palm-sized mat. This wireless charger not only folds up once you’re done juicing it up, it charges faster than an ordinary adapter. Weighing less than 90 grams, it also works well for both Apple and Samsung users.

CONVENIENT TECH

MY ID KEY

PASSWORD COMBOS

Slightly larger than a USB, the myIDkey – a CES Innovations and Design Engineering nominee – is a panicua for absent-mindedness. Storing important passwords, personal information, as well as photos and documents, it retrieves information either through a fingerprint scan or voice recognition. The myIDkey connects to a mobile app so you can back up all data online so if the key ever goes missing, you just need to restore all the lost information into a new key.

CURVY PHONES

Probably the most widely used gadget, smartphones have been dominating the tech market for quite a while now. With most phones differentiating from the next through software, e.g., Android OS, Apple OS and Symbian, the current trend that looks to revamp the world of smartphones are curved screens. Said to be more palm-friendly, curved screen phones tend to fit more snugly in your hands, and the distance between your mouth and the microphone will also be shortened due to its design. Plus, it won’t stick awkwardly out of your back pocket.

SLEEK CYCLING

Looking like a designer bicycle, the ebony A2B Obree electric bike, is a motorised bicycle that has an engine on the front wheel. With speeds up to 24 kmh, the sleek German-made bike is coupled with state-of-the-art technology to ensure the rider is closer to the ground, therefore zipping through traffic or riding uphill is a lot easier.
**STEM THE CITRUS SPRitzer**

Probably an invention that would have juicier dating days. Stem is actually designed so that the cool part of a dispenser. This lets the drinker feel more in control. Although Stem is still in the prototype phase, it has already been tested by the user satisfaction test. It seems that the people who have tried it have found it to be more convenient than the usual bottle. The bottle is made of glass, which makes it easier to clean and maintain. The Stem is designed to be used in a variety of settings, from bars and restaurants to homes and offices. It is a great gift for anyone who enjoys a refreshing beverage.

**SWEET PLAY**

Instead of the usual fancy posing, French designer Elise Lambelin has put a twist on food and design with this project called Sweets Play. Focusing on a modular design, foods will be able to build their own personalized goodbye hosted in 3 layers. The first layer consists of milk, white or dark chocolate, the second would be a filling like caramel, nuts, etc., and the third would be a topping like shortening made of nuts, fruits or even flowers. Probably a plan that could pave the way for new foodscapes all around the globe. The design rights can be sold, and it is definitely allowed for personal preference to take over.

**QUIRKY DESIGNED PRODUCTS SOLD ONLINE**

Whoever said necessity is the mother of all inventions? Clearly got it wrong because if you’ve seen some of the products on the internet, you’d definitely be mildly amused and surprised at the fact that it exists. But following in the efficiency department as all, these products deserve a shout-out.

**SWINGERS**

Not the usual four- or three-legged chair, this one does more than just provide a place to sit. You can even substitute it as a roasting chair as long as you have someone on the other side, that is. Designed to foster or nudge human relationships and called Swingster, this one-of-a-kind chair is structured similar to a seesaw, so if one person finds their weight down, the other person naturally gets lifted off the ground.

**LEAF PERSONAL LIGHT**

Looking like a greenish shadow in your desk, this desk lamp is a lot more efficient and functional than the usual. With the bulb area resembles a blade, this oddball is designed to illuminate kind of soft lighting. If you tilt the blade upward, you will have a bright source that can light up the entire room. Equipped with a fan that reduces the heating usually brought on by LED lights, this lamp will run for longer hours than a usual light source.

**SUNNY SIDE OUT**

Resembling a handheld vacuum cleaner, this device is marvelously made from silicon and plastic. It is only 13cm wide, holding as a suction cup that extracts an egg yolk from the shell which happens to be a chore for most people. This clever-designed apparatus is hands down a gem. For every hardboiled enthusiast, even though we know most of us can still do without it.

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Brought to you by Nature By Claudia Tan

Design and creativity have always been known to go hand-in-hand, but then again every once in a while when chaos occurs, beauty walks out. And no one in the world handles with such grace other than Mother Nature, so here’s a list of destinations that contain some of the most breathtakingly beautiful scenarios that are usually unheard of.

Red Seabase, China

Getting its name from the red seagulls brought on by the alkaline salt that blankets the area, the Red Seabase, located south of the Pingtan City, is also a paradise to over 350 birds and 400 wild animals. Generally warm, the area is best visited during spring (September) when the vivid red pigment of the seagulls comes alive, which makes this raining beauty one of nature’s masterpieces.

Crystal Caves, Mexico

Situated in Chihuhua, Mexico’s Crystal Caves sit in an underground cavern chamber that heats the ground water causing it to become saturated with minerals. The hollow cave, filled with the mineral-rich water remained filled for about 50,000,000 years at a temperature of 50°C and a humidity of over 90%. As the water eventually cooled, gigantic crystals spanning 1.2 meters long were able to form and with time, they could grow to larger proportions.

Door to Hell, Turkmenistan

Technically, not a work of art brought on by nature itself but still a work of chaos, the Door to Hell is a result of an oil field swallowed by a crater. To keep the terrains surrounding the incident from warning, scientists decided to set the natural gas circuiting. The victory on fire, however, what resulted was the crater lighting up explosively, which it continues to do till this day. Probably nature’s answer to the pits of hell, this fiery abyss sits smack in middle of the Karakum Desert, and it’s best visited in the night.

Salar de Uyuni, Bolivia

The world’s largest salt flat - where it’s hard to see where the sky ends and where the earth starts - the Salar de Uyuni which spans across southwest Bolivia was formed when a primordial lake dried up leaving a residue of pristine salt layers. This layer of salt now serves as a shining mirror whenever it rains, which reflects the sky and gives off the illusion that the sky is beneath your feet.

Cano Cristales, Colombia

Also known as “The River of Five Colours”, the river actually gets its multitude of colours from the plant Macareya clavigera that sits at the bottom of the river. For a few weeks in September to November, the water level in the river drops just enough for the sun to reach the moss and algae on the river’s bottom, leading to an explosion of colours from the brilliant red of the Macareya clavigera plant, to the spots of yellow and green sand in the blue waters of the river.

Moeraki Boulders, New Zealand

Sitting in the Koekohe Beach, these boulders are unusually large and spherical. Looking just like alien pods that chose to settle in a line along the shore, some of these boulders can stand as tall as 26m. Formed roughly 60 million years ago, these boulders can be spotted in several other areas as well, including on the shores of Hokong Harbor, North Island and Ottawa County. However, more than just imposing monoliths in New Zealand, these boulders often serve as frames for the Hector’s dolphins that play in the background.

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Singapore's skyline may be made up of elegant, towering buildings that seem to reach for the sky, but before being the poster child of postmodern architecture in Southeast Asia, the city was merely one large settlement speckled with shophouses and villages that housed large family units.

Before their numbers dwindle as the years pass, let's take a look at how the lion city's architecture has transcended over the last few decades.

1. **Before Independence**

   Prior to the British arrival, housing in Singapore consisted of Malay-style kampongs that were scattered throughout the island. Often settled, they sat above the ground or the swamps, as can still be seen on Pulau Ubin. After 1819, major architectural changes came in the form of brick black-and-white (designated with plenty of windows for circulation) and colonial civic architecture reminiscent of the styles in the UK, which include Victoria Concert Hall and the Old Supreme Court Building.

   With their iconic five-foot ways, shophouses were the ubiquitous architecture that spread across Singapore from the late 19th century. Designed with internal courtyards (for circulation), they were narrow in front but very deep inside because at the time, buildings were taxed according to the width of the facade. These buildings incorporated Malay, Chinese and European architectural influences (with ceramic tiles, geometric shapes or Chinese-inspired flower motifs). Today, many of these can still be spotted in areas like Emerald Hill, Katong and Ann Siang Hill.

   In the 30s, public housing flats emerged to house the masses. Built by Singapore Improvement Trust (SIT), they popped up in Tiong Bahru and served as the country's first bunkers during WWII. Following the Streamline Moderne design, which followed the European Art Deco style, these low-rise flats sported iconic rounded corners.

   After the inception of these flats, SIT looked to Queenstown to build these similar-styled flats to house the public; however, with the British gradually moving out of Singapore, HDB soon took over the initiative.

2. **From 60s to 80s**

   After independence, a surge of HDB flats started popping up in numerous towns, like Tiong Bahru and Ang Mo Kio. These satellite towns were juxtaposed with shophouses and kampongs, but over time people soon started leaving the old to embrace the new, and satellite towns proliferated all across Singapore, which include areas like Paya Lebar and Jurong.

   As the town was generally slower-paced, places like Kallang Stadium were favourite among Singaporeans, since it was the only place to catch a game of football. Other areas like Golden Mile Complex and People’s Park Complex, which happen to be Singapore’s first integrated flats and shopping centres, soon became the benchmark for further architectural development.

   Other fine towering examples include the supertall angular The Gateway on Beach Road and Swastika (both designed by Pat), along with Singapore’s then-tallest building — the Republic Plaza with 66 floors — as well as UIC Building, Plaza Singapura and Shaw Tower.

   This period was also a boom time for transportation — Changi Airport was built in 1981 (and was the world’s largest at the time), while the North South MRT line was opened in 1987 (the MRT’s only architectural showpiece back then was at Orchard with its domed glass roof).

3. **From 80 to Present**

   In an era where the old is respected but will always have to make way for the new, Singapore has been going through a series of revamping sessions. One such example is a project by architecture studios FARM and KD Architects, which converted the shophouses that line the Gayang neighbourhood into state-of-the-art residences complete with inhouse pools. Another is The Cathay — the current building is a refurbishment of the former cinema and high-rise Cathay Hotel (which was Southeast Asia’s first high-rise building at one point) constructed in 1939 in the Art Deco style. Today, only the facade of the cinema remains in its original form.

   When it comes to residential architecture, a notable trend has been the inclusion of slits to high-rises that top 40 storeys. Perhaps an ode to traditional kampongs, some of these towering condo-in-columns include the Skyline Residences (200 Blk Bishan) and The Cosmopolitan (River Valley), as well as the HDB blocks at Kim Tian Green.

   Singapore’s ever-evolving building trend has taken a different recent years, heading towards greater functionality. Architecture now focuses on green design, which involves plenty of plants, grass walls and sky gardens, giving the city a fresher look akin to the concept of “hanging gardens.” Some of the buildings that are modeled after this idea include JUNO Orchard, School Of The Arts (SOTA) and Park Royal on Pickering.
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A whopping 99% of Singapore's enterprises are SMEs - SPRING Singapore

The current SME count in Singapore is 183,400 - Singstat

The SME sector is dominated by IT consultancy & service providers and software developers - EnterpriseOne

With the SME Talent Programme launched in June 2013, entrepreneurship can now start young, and with over 300 student applications so far the SME pool is set to grow - SPRING Singapore

By the end of 2014, there will be 3 more more SME centres added to the present

The World Bank ranks Singapore as the 12 country to do business in - worldbank.org

Plus, it only costs S$64 to register a business in Singapore and you can do it easily online with ACRA.

GOOD DESIGN'S IN OUR DNA

Biologically speaking, when we experience something pleasing to any of our senses – be it a delicious taste, soft touch or nice smell – our brain is flooded with dopamine, a chemical that makes us feel happy.

Over time, we subconsciously associate certain things with the happy feeling they give us – we all have a favourite colour for instance. And successful designers put this science to good use. According to international design guru Don Norman, all good product designs fall into a few key types:

VISUAL DESIGN

Visceral design is subconscious. It’s part of the genetic response that makes us enjoy bright colours, dislike overly loud noises, prefer a smiling face to a frowning one etc. For example, if you pick a bright-coloured phone cover because you like bright colours, that’s visceral.

BEHAVIOURAL DESIGN

Behavioural design is conscious. This is where we think about what a product should be and how we'll use it based on our expectations. For example, a running shoe that looks “sporty” makes us feel sportier, and more likely to buy it. Even if it was engineered to perform better, we'd have second thoughts on a clunky shoe because we don’t think the form matches the function. That’s behavioural design.

DESIGN IN BUSINESS

Let’s say you want to buy a dark chocolate bar. Brand A’s chocolate is simply packaged like the ones you see at 7-11. Brand B’s chocolate is in an attractively desiged box, using rich, appetising colours and looks expensive. Ignoring the price, which one would you want to buy more (even though they’re both identical on the inside)? Or when it comes to laptops, would you be most likely to pick a MacBook, or a standard PC laptop?

That’s the power of design – it propels us to “want” it because it makes us feel good. Even if it’s too expensive for some, it becomes a desirable product.

Therefore, if you’re planning on starting up a business, good design should be incorporated into your business plan – be it your logo, website or product. Even big companies – like Apple and Facebook – that started with just tech or business founders currently have excellent designers in their team because it’s now a necessity they can’t ignore.

Design is now a key differentiator for companies to acquire funding, and garner loyal followers. And that’s why it makes good business sense to have good design.
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SUPPORTING THE UNDERDOGS: CROWDFUNDING

WHAT IS IT?

A term lovingly fostered by Kickstarter in 2009, crowdfunding is a concept that gives the average Joe or Jane castle blanche to fund projects that they reckon would be useful.

While pledging dollars or creating projects are the only ways you can jump on the crowdfunding bandwagon, there are several ways in which you can help out of your kick — or, as the contributors call it, the project’s success.

WHERE CAN YOU FIND IT?

Depending on where you reside, there are a bunch of websites that cater to the creative and independent. Some include Match & Me, which is the go-to page for Asian startups that are involved in business, tech or media. Indiegogo and Kickstarter are two websites that advocate social responsibility, as well as Indiegogo and Kickstarter, which offers a range of projects from short films to design-centric magazines.

HOW TO GET STARTED?

With great ideas come painstakingly hard work, and the same goes for crowdfunding. It’s definitely not a short cut to the finish line. Pitching your campaign on crowdfunding websites requires the same dose of enthusiasm as launching a product, but this time around, you’ll have to pitch it to investors or investors. That means hard facts need to be laid out — from the team members involved, to the shipping and handling costs — so the kind souls donating to your project know that you have it all under control.

SUCCESS STORIES

Singapore-based companies have managed to raise a record amount of money last year via crowdfunding in Crowdfunding, with the amount doubling on a monthly basis thanks to its growing popularity in Singapore-based companies. Here are some success stories.

A Singapore-based company called The Buccaneer was able to raise $30,000 via crowdfunding in Crowdfunding, which is the go-to page for Asian startups that are involved in business, tech or media. Indiegogo and Kickstarter are two websites that advocate social responsibility, as well as Indiegogo and Kickstarter, which offers a range of projects from short films to design-centric magazines.

If you instinctively called “ME” and have a great business idea, read on. If you just like the sound of “free” and “money,” then you might prefer playing 4D.

So you’ve got a business idea. Unfortunately, ideas are free — that’s okay, everyone has them. It’s all the other stuff you need to turn your good idea into a business that can cost money.

Investing in your business

When starting up a company, you’ll typically need some sort of cash injection to get things rolling — accounting, software, rental, etc. — going.

Investors are traditional sources of money, namely well money necessary enough to bankroll your early days. They obviously want something bigger in return from you later on. There are also loans (from banks, friends, family, NOT Ah Longs), but you’ll need to repay them.

The latest trend in funding businesses is crowdfunding — you can read more about it on the next page.

And then there’s grants — if you meet the grant criteria and successfully apply, it’s essentially free money.

Do I qualify?

Below are just some examples of grants available to young entrepreneurs. These are provided by a variety of governmental agencies. To qualify for most of these grants, your company will need to have a minimum of 20% local ownership (up to 55% in some cases), and employ less than 250 staff.

Grant-giving bodies obviously have their own motives, but they’re motives that come with your best interest in mind too. The government gives grants so you can grow your company. Because bigger companies hire more employees, export more products and pay more taxes, all of which help our little world go round. Majalah everyone!

For a full(er) list of grants available to aspiring entrepreneurs, check out www.enterprisestat.gov.sg

Show me the money!

Before you run off an idea for yet another blogpost, take a look and see what industries are actually being supported by the government.

Ideas INC Business Challenge: If you’re 18-26 years old, you can get a grant of up to $56,500 if you’re a first-time entrepreneur.

ACE Startups Grant: Get up to $50,000 — or $5,750 for every $55 you raise — if you’re set up no longer than 6 months ago.

Development Assistance: If you’ve got a creative idea for media content (e.g. animation, film game, interactive, etc.), you can get grants up to $200,000.

ComCare Enterprise Fund (CEF): Get up to 80% of project costs (max $330,000) for social enterprises to help disadvantaged Singaporean citizens become self-sufficient.

Technology Enterprise Commercialisation Scheme (TECS): Your tech idea can get up to $250,000 for development, or up to $550,000 for further research and development.
BRAND STORIES

“98% of what the brain does is outside of conscious awareness.”
— Michael S. Gazzaniga

While all like to think that we make our own decisions on what to buy, science has proven that most of these decisions are made unconsciously. A tiny part of our brain called the amygdala, our emotional centre, is responsible for our purchasing decisions, simply because it makes us feel good about it.

And it’s this science — the emotional, subconscious decision-making process — that branding and marketing gurus tap into.

Any business or marketing student should know about the basics of branding and marketing, and while they sound like the same thing, they’re really not. Marketing is the call-to-action which activates you to buy the product while branding creates loyalty to that product. All this is guided by good design — just think of the logos and products that immediately pop up in your head.

ALGORITHMIC BYTE CURRENCY:
BITCOIN

UNLESS YOU’RE REALLY, REALLY NOT PAYING ATTENTION, YOU’VE PROBABLY HEARD A BIT ABOUT BITCOINS. THEY’RE MYSTERIOUS, THEY’RE CONTROVERSIAL AND PEOPLE HAVE MADE (AND LOST) A LOT OF MONEY ON THEM, WHICH OF COURSE FASCINATES US ALL.

WHAT IS BITCOIN

Bitcoin is a crypto-currency, meaning it’s not physical (like paper money), but encrypted like internet passwords. It’s a peer-to-peer exchange similar to a bank transfer without digital footprints.

This has advantages and disadvantages — like your Bitcoins are accessible on your smartphone in a “digital wallet”. But it can also be easily stolen, and once it’s gone, it’s gone forever.

IS BITCOIN REAL MONEY?

Yes and no. You can buy and sell things with it, but there’s no one (i.e. a government) guaranteeing it, therefore not everyone accepts it.

Money works because we believe a $1 coin is worth $1 of Kopi C or 1/100th of a house. We trust in the value of printed money — that’s because the government guarantees the value of a $1 coin, but nobody’s guaranteeing anything for Bitcoins.

HOW DO YOU GET BITCOINS?

As it’s digital, you’ll need to ‘manufacture’ them. There’s only a limited supply of Bitcoins in circulation. That’s because Bitcoins are ‘mined’ via software that solves mathematical calculations, and the first computer that solves it gets the “coin”. Only one coin per question is rewarded to prevent an oversupply (which would render it worthless), so becoming a Bitcoin miner doesn’t necessarily mean printing your own money, all the computers currently mining only produce a few coins per hour worldwide.

If you’re not mining, you can simply buy Bitcoins on an exchange site (like a forie but for Bitcoins — see Bitcoin.com in Singapore) or even dedicated Bitcoin ATMs (at Raintree Quay and CityLink).

USING BITCOINS

Acting like a commodity and a currency, Bitcoins can be traded (in XBT, currently worth S$480 depending on supply and demand much like stock exchange. As communities of users emerge, it has companies to serve them in the form of virtual exchanges where XBT are traded.

However, since there’s no authority regulating XBT, prices can fluctuate wildly from country to country.

WHY THE CONTROVERSY?

As money is changing hands virtually, it makes tax authorities suspicious since there’s no paper trail. Bitcoin is the first time in history that making money has been taken out of government’s hands, and that worries people.

Besides its volatility and security issues as seen in the high-profile Mt Gox bankruptcy, Bitcoin is also facing legal hurdles in many places. There are also security issues linked (indirectly) to criminal syndicates.

For India or China, who are limiting the amount of capital that leaves the country, Bitcoin has made an unwelcome loophole that governments are trying to close. In the US with its tight taxation rules, Bitcoin is regarded as a “property”, meaning it can be heavily taxed, while in Vietnam, it has been outlawed outright.

In Singapore, traded Bitcoins are taxed GST — as a “service”, since it’s not exactly a tangible product.

THE FUTURE OF BITCOIN

Right now, there seems to be a growing community of believers in its legitimacy as a global currency, but financial leaders are sceptical. But until more of us believe in its actual value, it probably won’t replace real money in our daily lives. Honestly, no one knows, but at least now you know more about it.
Everyone dreams of being their own boss, but the sad truth is, not everyone is able to jump over the obstacles entrepreneurship brings. Being your own boss means tackling various aspects of a business, from hiring and firing to conceptualization and budgeting. The lucky few that do succeed are usually padded by large amounts of determination and business acumen. To give you some of the inspiration that will impel you to be the best of the best, here are some young entrepreneurs that have made millions even before quarter-life crisis bit.

The fact that they’re better-than-average in the looks department is all purely coincidental.

ASHISH J. THAKKAR

Awarded the world’s best entrepreneur in 2013, Ashish J. Thakkar established his first IT company – and dropped out of school – at the age of 15 to sell computers to his circle of friends. He took on a loan of $5,000 to kickstart his company in 1996, called Mara Group, which in its current standings is worth millions. Currently running his business in over 40 countries worldwide, Thakkar has expanded his business to touch areas like infrastructure and agriculture.

DAVID KARP

While most 17-year-olds were busy with school, David Karp was in Tokyo working for an online gaming advice site while simultaneously honing his computer skills. Soon after, he started his own consultancy company named Davëdville while keeping up with his blog, which paved the way for his idea of Tumblr. So in 2007, Karp launched Tumblr with a concept of wanting to help people express their thoughts and feelings in any way they want, be it pictures, text or even songs. Within two weeks of its launch, Tumblr gained over 75,000 users.

MICHIEL PHAN

Michelle – the princess of cosmetics – first started out as a Youtube who uploaded all sorts of video tutorials ranging from DIYs, fashion tips, and even mastering the art of walking in heels. What inspired Phan to create them was the support she received from her large fanbase, which also motivated her to become a beauty entrepreneur. Since then, she’s had a stint with L’oreal in 2013, created her own cosmetics line (Mii) and currently curates her own bags.

EVAN SPIEGEL

Evan Spiegel – known to famously turn down Facebook’s billion-dollar offer to acquire the ever-popular photo messaging app Snapchat – is another wizkid entrepreneur. Since he started young, initially called Picaboo, and thought to be a great fit for Snapchat, the app’s direction has changed now but at the age of 23, Spiegel and his fast-bud team had very limited plans for the app but they knew it would go far with its connectivity, ephemeral nature and easy picture-snapping tool.

IF YOU’VE ANSWERED...

1. You’ve found the right product to sell, and believe it’ll be a hit with the public; what’s the first thing that runs through your mind?
   A. I could utilise crowdfunding or just set up my own website, spiff it up and use bitcoin as a payment mode.
   B. If I do choose to import this product in large numbers, will I be undermining any Fair Trade act?
   C. I’m buying a 100-piece lot right now so that I can sell it off to my friends and relatives, and test it out on them first.
   D. Who should I team up with to help me sell this?

2. If you’ve hit a wall with your business, how do you approach it?
   A. I think it’s time to be tactical with social media.
   B. I need to find advocacy groups that would be interested in helping me out.
   C. It’s time to move on to my next venture, there’s no time to lose.
   D. Time to start socially rubbing elbows with some high-profile, useful people.

3. How do you foresee your future home?
   A. Decked out in the latest technology, with a giant flatscreen in every room.
   B. Plenty of solar panels, my own vegetable garden and an orphan chinchilla/dog/cat sanctuary.
   C. Why have one house when I can have three?
   D. Think Great Gatsby in Sentosa Cove.

4. What are most of your friendships like?
   A. I make friends with people that I can have intellectual conversations with, and if they own an Xbox or PlayStation that’s even better.
   B. I like other individuals who advocate for meaningful causes because if you don’t stand up for something, no one will.
   C. We all party like there’s no tomorrow.
   D. Each friend of mine has an important trait that I admire, and I turn to them when I need it the most.

5. Which statement are you comfortable with?
   A. I can code, and I can give you the lowdown on what’s happening in the world. Ask me anything.
   B. Everyone deserves a voice, and they should really do something about low wages because no one deserves to be underpaid.
   C. Since I work hard, I deserve to play hard as well.
   D. What are we doing tomorrow? I need to get my social calendar sorted.

NOT A.
THE WUNDERKIND
Keeping abreast of the world’s happenings is essential to you, you’re also always seen behind a computer, and the internet is your best friend.

NOT B.
THE GREEN ACTIVIST
If you could wear hemp all day, you’d probably do it. You also prefer to foster human relationships over anything else, and you’re always finding for a new cause to talk about.

NOT C.
THE GO-SETTER
There’s no such thing as a slow day for you. You’re out there always looking for the next opportunity and you’re not afraid to grab onto it before the next person does.

NOT D.
THE NETWORKER
Always on the lookout for network events, and you’re always dressed to the nines because you never know when you’d bump into a big-shot who likes you.
Get ahead in business.

Bachelor of Commerce
Supplies Chain Management
Understand how goods move from the beginning of production to the end of sales process.

Bachelor of Commerce
Marketing
An expert in positioning products/services in the market with effective strategies.

Bachelor of Commerce
Finance
Acquire theoretical knowledge and the tools of business finance.

1. Was Math your strong subject?

2. Are you a ‘big picture’ person?

3. Are you super meticulous?

4. Are you a right-brained person?

Intrigued by how money works!

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

Yes

No

1. Intrigued by how money works!

2. Bachelor of Commerce
   Management
   Master the art and science of planning, coordinating, and leading groups.

3. Bachelor of Commerce
   Marketing
   Acquire skills to position products/services in the market with effective strategies.

4. Bachelor of Commerce
   Finance
   Acquire theoretical knowledge and the tools of business finance.

It’s possible.

Find out more at psb-academy.edu.sg/uow

psb 50th Anniversary

psb

Design in Transit

Contributed by Nurshurina Sarif

Graphic design is one of the many creative ways to get a message across by a combination of text, symbols, and pictures on basically any platform. Graphic designs are ingrained in our everyday lives - take a look at your food packaging, road signs, and magazines; you will find that it’s all around you.

However, as Steve Jobs elaborates, “design is not just what it looks like and feels like, design is how it works.” Design has a purpose - be it influencing you into buying certain things or helping you find your place on an MRT map.

Finding your place

While train layouts are conceived by engineers, it’s up to visual designers to convey that map to the public. The key is to make it as simple to understand as possible - especially in a multilingual country like Singapore - because the faster someone processes the information, the easier their commute will be.

If you were the designer of a subway map, which would you create? An abstract schematic map that gets you from point A to point B but bears no relation to the actual geography of the city, or a more geographically accurate one that coincides with your sense of direction?

The NYC Subway

In an experiment on a New York City subway in the 70s, the public rejected a simple clean-lined map (designed by Massimo Vignelli) because they wanted something more geographically accurate.

However, vision scientists at MIT have recently discovered that by distorting both the current geographic map and Vignelli’s version, it’s Vignelli’s that was still decipherable.

By distorting images, our minds play a role in filling in the blanks - but there is only so much someone’s brain can “fill in”, and the less your brain has to work to do the easier (and faster) it is to comprehend.

The complexity of simplicity

It seems that as a commuter, we can ignore geographical accuracy (drawing a curved or straight track makes no difference to a commuter’s perception) in favor of ease of use, which are aided by clean fonts (sans serif typefaces that can be read even from a distance) and straight lines.

Check out the evolution of a subway map below, and you’ll see how design plays an important role in helping us decipher the transport system over the ages.

A designer’s task is to decipher the jumble of lines into a legible map like the ones below:

Designing a map

It may seem easy to draw lines and indicate stations, but a lot more thinking has to go in. You’d have to consider how to depict the train lines (what colours to use, and what grid to follow), and what fonts to use (easy to read).

Try creating your own subway map on a game called Minimetro (динопаскклуб.com/minimetro). It’s not exactly visual design, but you’ll get to appreciate the sort of thinking that goes into organising a mass transport system.
**Trending Tattoos**

by Sharmaine Chan

Done in various shapes and sizes, tattoos are a form of art and expression. Originating around 5,000 years ago, the word “tattoo” is derived from the Tahitian word tatou, which means to mark something. Now, more often seen in pop culture to symbolise a message or loved one, or just to serve as a decorative tool, tattoo art has forever, so unless you’re planning on forking out thousands on laser treatments much later, we’re taking a look at some of the styles that are undoubtedly timeless.

### Watercolour Tattoos

 Mimicking the style of paintbrushes on a canvas, watercolour tattoos are not a new trend; however, it is not a skill many tattoo artists can boast about. Using the same technique as any ordinary tattoo would require, it is essentially the same process that goes into creating watercolour tattoos that sets it apart from the rest. So, be sure to do your research on your tattoo artist before getting inked because you might just end up withsplashes instead of the exquisite fluid movement. Colours do also play an important role in watercolour tattoos, so know what type of tattoo you want before diving straight into a parlour.

### Morse Code Tattoos

Not the first type of tattoo that many look to, morse code tattoos may seem odd to the observer because they are a bunch of dots and lines grouped together. However, within these elegant shapes lie a story or secret for you to talk about, when someone goes “what does your tattoo mean?” There are plenty of morse code generators online that can help you with picking a tattoo, but be warned—some of them can be quite dodgy so you might want to get your facts right before dashing off to the tattoo parlour, because you don’t want the words “spicy tuna fish” marked on your body, yes?

### White Ink Tattoos

A variation from the traditional dark inks used, white ink tattoos either come with glow in the dark properties, or UV components which have it glowing in sunlight (but white tattoos are generally not sun-friendly). Definitely a great way to shy away from the taboo that comes with tattoos, the white ink tattoo’s visibility depends largely on skin tone, and it is a lot more high maintenance compared to traditional tattoos. When done properly and depending on the design, the tattoo can also look off like modern day bank, which is a whole list of unique.

### 3D Tattoos

As the name says, 3D tattoos are done with plenty of shading, which creates depth thus giving it a life-like look. Enough to even anyone from afar, 3D tattoos have taken it up a notch with a new trend that involves being injected with hyaluronic acid under areas that require a lift since shading can’t create the depth that’s needed. However, the acid injected will only last up to a year (depending on how fast your body metabolises it) so be sure to keep up with the illusion, you’d have to go for routine injections.

### Typography Tattoos

Based off the type script font that can be seen in most tattoos, the script lettering seems too right? Then take a style of tattoo that has actually been around for quite some time but heavily utilised in typography. Giving it a twist on the simplest text, with typography you’re able to incorporate unique fonts with symbols and designs. Like watercolour tattoos, your creativity could spin a whole new tattoo that can’t be found on anyone else.

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**Spring It Up**

The fashion world changes up its offerings so fast sometimes, it can be quite hard to keep track of what’s hot and what’s not. But instead of following trends blindly, why not dress according to your body type, so you can always look your best. For that, we’ve compiled fashion pieces that are trending now, and are definitely designed to change up or even conceal the bits you’re uncomfortable with.

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**Tea-Length Skirt**

Make the most of your legs while keeping the upper body comfortable by wearing a tea-length skirt. The skirt length will vary depending on your height, but a general rule is to choose a length that hits just above the knee.

**Colours**

Think black is the only colour you can wear? Think again, pastels and metallics, which happen to be the colours trending for the current season are perfect for trimming down and pizzazz up! Pastel colours, which are often labelled as ‘dreamy’, are actually dreamy colours but that largely depends on your skin tone, so for those with fairer tones—explore green and pastel shades. While those with olive skin tones should try pastel purple, while darker tones would be great with softer golden yellow. Metallic colours are generally good with fair skin tones, but do not pair metallic pieces with your body makeup because that just amplifies it instead of toning it down.

**Voluminous Sweaters**

Not exactly blessed with the weather to embrace sweaters, but the good thing is whenever a rainy day comes along, the sweaters you’ve shunned at the back of your closet will become the perfect top. Comfy and perfect for both sexes, the sweater is your go-to piece to liven up your outfit or be too overheating. For guys, you can pull a casual sweater over your shirt, put on your pair of chinos and you’re good to go. There’s also the option of picking a cropped sweater, which means there’s no need to feel stifled by the heat.

**Wide-Legged Pants**

A pair of pants that fits any body type from straight hips to curves, the wide-legged part not only adds length to your body, it even out most insecurities like narrow shoulders or wide hips. Cutting a fine figure for any body, a printed wide-legged pant is best suited for anyone looking to add volume to their frames, while a basic, coloured pant is best for those with more than the average curves, as it tones down and adds definition to the lower half.

**Athletic Wear**

When we say sporty, we don’t mean oversized basketball and football jerseys that you wear to sleep. Think washable tights, hooded pullovers and patterned T-shirts. Just by wearing these pieces with your daily wear, you already add a little bit of edge. Athletic pieces are also perfect for those busy days when you know you’re not going to put effort into dressing up, but still want to look good. And in time, you just might be comfortable enough to step into a gym because you’ve already laid out the groundwork for looking good anywhere you go.
Judging a book by its cover: TYPOGRAPHY

BY NICOLE HILARY TEO

Literature may be a text-based world, but design is often the book industry’s secret weapon. As more often than not, it’s the way a book cover is designed that captures the interest of a reader. With most books shifting away from strong imagery, focusing instead on typography to encapsulate rich storylines, we’ve collected a list of well-known books displaying some of the most fascinating fonts that tell a story.

THE GREAT GATSBY by F. SCOTT FITZGERALD
Set in the roaring 20s in America—a period of economic and cultural prosperity—the book illustrated that when the affluent came out to play, they played in extravagance. As it was also the prohibition era (when alcohol was illegal), the cover depicted an act of rebellion—most of the book’s characters loved to party and drink—through the tipping of the letter ‘Y’. The zigzags were also all about earthy tones, polished looks and straight lines, and the book cover portrayed just that.

EAT, PRAY, LOVE by ELIZABETH GILBERT
This book is about the experiences of a divorced woman who travelled to three different destinations in a year. The title is spelt with objects associated with these places, giving readers an idea of where she went to and what she did at each location. ‘Eat’ is spelt with pasta, representing her months in Italy where she overcame depression through food. ‘Pray’ is spelt with prayer beads, representing the months she spent in India meditating in hopes of finding spirituality. Finally, ‘Love’ is spelt with flowers, representing tropical Indonesia where she found love again.

FAHRENHEIT 451 by RAY BRADBURY
On this book cover, a matchstick is used to represent the digit ’1’ in the book’s title, which is complemented with the design of a matchbox’s striking surface on the book’s spine. This gives some insight into the book’s setting, which is a dystopian society where books were illegal and burnt by “firemen” if any were found.

MESS by KERI SMITH
With instructions like rubbing dirt on your elbows to create art, this book reminds readers that with creativity, there are no hard and fast rules. Coaxing us to get comfortable with mess rather than just stifling it, this book naturally chose to apply a raw typography in the form of handwriting written over with erased-out clean fonts to show that being messy is not only acceptable, it’s how great art is formed.

PARIS, PISA AND LONDON by PENGUIN BOOKS
These book covers may only bear the names of these places, but the letters are played up to represent the star tourist attractions of each country. For instance, the slanted ‘I’ represents the iconic Eiffel Tower of Paris, the tall ‘A’ depicts the magnificent St. Louis Arc, and the ‘O’s at the bottom portray the renowned London buses.

WHERE WILL A CURTIN DEGREE TAKE YOU?

Ranked in the top 100 universities for communication and media studies, Curtin is the ideal place to launch your career. When you study at Curtin, a world of opportunity awaits. Find out where a Curtin degree can take you. Visit humanities.curtin.edu.au Make Tomorrow Better.
OUT AND ABOUT

THE WEB ART SHOW
ONLINE GALLERY OPENING LUNCH
19 Apr, 2014 Marks the launch of Gallery sg: a virtual gallery built into a multi-player gaming platform that allows visitors around the globe to view a series of art works. Coned by The Web All Show, Eugene Soh – the founder of the site – has pooled in the 15 artists who had previously adopted one of the many 3D one-cent-sqm platforms that he used to acquire in his initial entrepreneurship days.

MOVIES

BLACK BUTLER (April 17, 2014)
Cast: Hira Mitsuhisa, Ayame Gouriki
Based on the manga Black Butler by Yana Toboso, in which the young protagonist Ciel Phantomhive sets his soul to the demon butler Sebastian Michaelis (Hiro Mitsuhisa) in exchange for vengeance, the movie is set 130 years later in 2020. This new adventure sees the return of Sebastian who once again assists a descendent of the Phantomhive family, the young Kiyotaro Gouriki (Ayame Gouriki), who runs the large corporation Fujukura Group. Like her predecessor, she solves difficult cases ordered by the queen, and when she receives a `black invitation`, Sherry winds up in a desperate need of Sebastian’s assistance.

MALEFICENT (May 29, 2014)
Cast: Angelina Jolie, Elle Fanning, Sam Riley
Shooting light on Maleficent (Angelina Jolie) – the wicked fairy that was locked in Sleeping Beauty’s crown jewels – Disney gives its first tracks the fairy’s beginnings from her days of kindness to the moment she turns Sparkly evil. Date: 29 May 2014 %u2013 Maleficent places a curse on the beautiful Aurora (Sleeping Beauty) to despair as the beauty queen, and in return for the kiss, Maleficent is wrenched between the forest kingdom and the human kingdom.

GIGS

Azrael Symphony
With its Sudanese folk influences and extraordinary emotional vocals, Azrael Symphony by Czech composer Josef Suk is a masterpiece for the teacher, an opera buff. In addition, classical pianist Roderick Tse will perform Liszt’s transcription of Frédéric Chopin’s Piano Concerto.

POSTERIAL

23-25 Apr 2014
B95 Arts Centre
Tickets: $20 - $25
Inaugural Singapore Comedy Fringe
The Comedy Club Asia presents a four-day festival that will feature a lineup of comedians from all around the globe, such as Peet Coops (USA), Marty Le (AUS) and Nick Alexander (UK). The event is hosted by Melbourne stand-up Michael Wilson, who will be performing his talent of imitating voices.

24 Apr | 7.30pm
Esplanade Concert Hall
Tickets: $15 - $29
Spring Symphony
My Pacific, the island’s young principal within with MOE, will be performed by 278’s latest release, Cathy Collin Concerto and Fantasy for Cello and Orchestra, as well as Schumann’s First Symphony.

26 Apr | 7.30pm
Esplanade Concert Hall
Tickets: $15 - $29
A malevolent
Symphony
With its Sudanese folk influences and extraordinary emotional vocals, Azrael Symphony by Czech composer Josef Suk is a masterpiece for the teacher, an opera buff. In addition, classical pianist Roderick Tse will perform Liszt’s transcription of Frédéric Chopin’s Piano Concerto.

Disney Fringe
The Comedy Club Asia presents a four-day festival that will feature a lineup of comedians from all around the globe, such as Peet Coops (USA), Marty Le (AUS) and Nick Alexander (UK). The event is hosted by Melbourne stand-up Michael Wilson, who will be performing his talent of imitating voices.

22 May | 7pm
Esplanade Concert Hall
Tickets: $10
Malevolent Symphony
With its Sudanese folk influences and extraordinary emotional vocals, Azrael Symphony by Czech composer Josef Suk is a masterpiece for the teacher, an opera buff. In addition, classical pianist Roderick Tse will perform Liszt’s transcription of Frédéric Chopin’s Piano Concerto.

22 May | 9.30pm
Star Performing Arts Centre
Tickets: $77 - $116
Jeff Dunham ‘Disorderly Conduct’ Tour
Making his way to Singapore in May for his first Asia tour, `Self BOSS`, comedy icon Jeff Dunham is America’s renowned comedian and ventriloquist known for his `Lawn Show with David Leiberman’ on Comedians Central. His signature performances involve giving `insanities` life to his more than 4000 handmade puppets.

22 May | 7pm
Star Performing Arts Centre
Tickets: $80 - $129
RCELLS
FRESH from their sold-out Japan tour, the deca duo of Luke Sulec and Ryan Beaulieu are most known for their quirky cover of Michael Jackson’s `Smooth Criminal’. RCELLS has joined forces with Edon Sorel in his worldwide tour and the duo have also appeared on `Glee’.

2-19 May | 7pm
Drama Centre Theatre
Tickets: $88 - $198
The Rise & Fall of Little Voice
The Rise & Fall of Little Voice tells a journey through Little Voice’s relationship with her stylist, and how she deals with a complex relationship with her father. The Rise & Fall of Little Voice tells a story through Little Voice’s relationship with her stylist, and how she deals with a complex relationship with her father.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
2-26 May | 7.30pm
Fort Canning Park
Tickets: $65 (concessions)
The Merchant of Venice
SRT’s The Merchant of Venice will showcase multi-themed winning director Scott Graham who will be directing this romantic comedy, which is a story of a Venetian merchant’s second spouse of love.
**Wackiest Designs in the Animal Kingdom**

by Reuben Dhanaraj

With evolution as the animal kingdom’s sparkplug, the types of animals that can be found borrowing in all corners of the earth to the deep sea may surprise you, mainly because they can be a little more than peculiar looking. Here’s a look at some of the odd creatures that rarely come out of the woodwork, but they’re definitely keeping the status quo.

**Blue-Ringed Octopus**

With a whopping three hearts, eight legs, and enough venom to kill 26 humans, the Blue-Ringed Octopus is the perfect example of a lethal beauty. Attractively known as the B.O.C., it inhabits reefs around the Indo-Pacific and has a dazzling blue and red tail when the octopus is stimulated. This creature is also able to alter its body colour (sometimes blue) in a split second, before awakening its venon. Extraordinary vibrant colors on the skin called chromatophores are swiftly contracted or expanded to efficiently transmit the octopus’s skin color.

**Anglerfish**

Known as the ‘Lightworker’ species, also known as the Anglerfish, a seductive creature of the deep, it is renowned for the “light bulb” at the end of its head. Growing to a sizable length of 3 feet, the male anglerfish develops a rod-like structure (referred to as the illicium), which extends just over its eye. At the tip of the illicium is a glowing bag, known as the esca organ. Engulfed by light-sensitive bacteria, the esca is constantly wriggling, luring any small fish to it, and stringing of comparable size, asserting a continued tug for those exciting underwater interactions.

**Age Age**

Dwelling in the deserted regions of the Madagascar, the Age Age is a distinct relative of crappies, apes, and even humans. Equipped with a long elongated middle digit (finger), the world’s largest nocturnal primate undertakes a daily process known as “Perspective Foraging.” Sunny up to 8 times per second on the thumbs and knuckles of trees with its finger, the Age Age curious to see the wood, brushing for我能 believe it indicates a hollow chamber’s visually appealing grains. Upon discovery, sharp incisors make up the bark and a yearly knot on the end of the finger impales the target, extracting a large and juicy meat for the Age Age.

**Star-Nosed Mole**

With a nose that features 22 whip-like tentacles and over 10,000 sensory receptors, the Star-nosed mole has been recorded as the fastest-moving mammal on the planet. The mole’s 22 appendages contain approximately 29,000 Eimer organs (also known as “vomeronasal organs”), which are extremely sensitive to touch. They are efficiently picking up the mole’s tiny presences. These appendages constantly move around the soil, underground, making for some pretty impressive speed. Recorded at moving only 120 milliseconds to identify and consume individual food items, its highly functioning brain decides in a mere span of 26 milliseconds when the prey is edible.

**Sawfish**

The Sawfish, also known as the Carpenter Shark, is a critically endangered species, renowned for its saw-like nose, covered with electro sensitive pores that allow for the shark to detect the movements of prey in the sandy sea floor. The newfound (new) can be used to capture buried crustaceans. Usually traveling in the sandy coastal, this stealthy creature occasionally springs up, visibility slinking its teeth-covered nose at prey swimming by. The eyes of the Sawfish are also slightly underdeveloped due to the missing basal plate, the sharp teeth on the prowelling shark as its weak sensory device.

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animation [an-uh-mey-shuhn]

noun

1. to observe, to deconstruct and to frame the world through your unique perspective.

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3. to discover and produce discussion anchored in truth, capable of establishing identity through your use of dialogue and performance.

4. your imagination to define universes and destroy worlds.

5. to demonstrate the technical skills necessary for you to craft and sculpt characters that define heroes and vindicate villains.

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Deigned for Love

Unless you've been under a rock all your life, you've probably come across some 'Toys' made for the bedroom—while ones that you see these days in sex shops along Orchard Road can get pretty tacky and gross, you just have to look a little further to find well-designed works of art that would make any product designer proud.

Before you start giggling at the thought of adult toys, you just need to keep an open mind. Some of these award-winning products will leave you amazed at their ingenuity.

Things that go buzz

When you think of a vibrator, images of gaudy casts of various phallic objects come to mind. Then comes a new generation, which include Minna’s Ola (which has an advanced mechanism that allows you to control vibration simply by how hard you squeeze it), Jimmynine’s Form 4 (a cute flexible silicone in contemporary colours) and Lelo’s Silicone which has 2 ‘business’ ends with a variety of settings. Then there’s Cheve’s Duet Lux, which looks more like a thumbdrive than a toy – it even stores data up to 16GB and charges via USB. All of them look more like designer wares for anywhere other than the bedroom – and they’re all waterproof.

Then there are a variety of buzzers that look like cute desserts. Some notable ones include Jimmynine’s flexible Form 2, and Tenga’s Ironho collection.

For luxury, there’s Lelo’s Inez 24kt Gold Exclusive Vibrator, which is simple and elegant, but costs a whopping S$21,000.

While plenty of buzzy things are mostly for women, there are some catered to both men and women. At the same time.

Take the Zini Deus, for instance. It’s an egg-shaped device that splits into 3 buzzing parts – one for man, and one for woman – that can be used simultaneously. The 2 parts lock back magnetically for easy charging. Then there are a variety of couple’s rings, like Lelo’s Insignia Odin 2, which features a high-tech remote control that allows you to change vibrations with the tilt of your hands.

New toys are also redefining ‘internet sex’ – take Lovense’s Max (for men) and Nora (for women). Both slave devices are connected to each other via the Internet (or smartphone), and when one partner shakes his/her device, the other’s device reacts by vibrating (and suctioning, in the case of the man’s version).

Just say: chika-woo. Whoosh.

Static love

Not all well-designed toys are motorised. Tenga is a brand most famous for its Eggs. They’re basically shaped like hard-boiled eggs and come with a variety of indentation modules. Made of SPF stretchy silicone, it has a hole at the bottom, and you can imagine what you stick it in. Too cool? Warm it up with the specially designed Hele Warmer.

Tenga also has flip hole, which looks more like some sort of go-go at a craft convention, and the reversible Sculpted Easycollection, which looks more like sculptures than sex toys. Oooh, discreet.

Love collage

Even though most of these toys are discreet, they’re not something you’d display as art. However, some innovative designers have come up with ingenious ways to combine form and function by fusing everyday items with pleasure toys.

At the Love Design exhibition in Milan in 2019, a number of interesting works of art emerged. These are Ark Lay’s wooden egg with which comes with an extractable vibrater, and Mathio Cibic’s bedside lamp, which lifts to reveal a pleasure device below, causing the lamp to change colour when it’s removed.

San Francisco brand Crave has a range of forensic jewellery including the Dreipet, a 43-piece stainless steel chain necklace with 2 bullet-shaped pendants that deliver a subtle vibration.

No longer objects of embarrassment, these elegant Illustrator-designed products are the future of adult toys.
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