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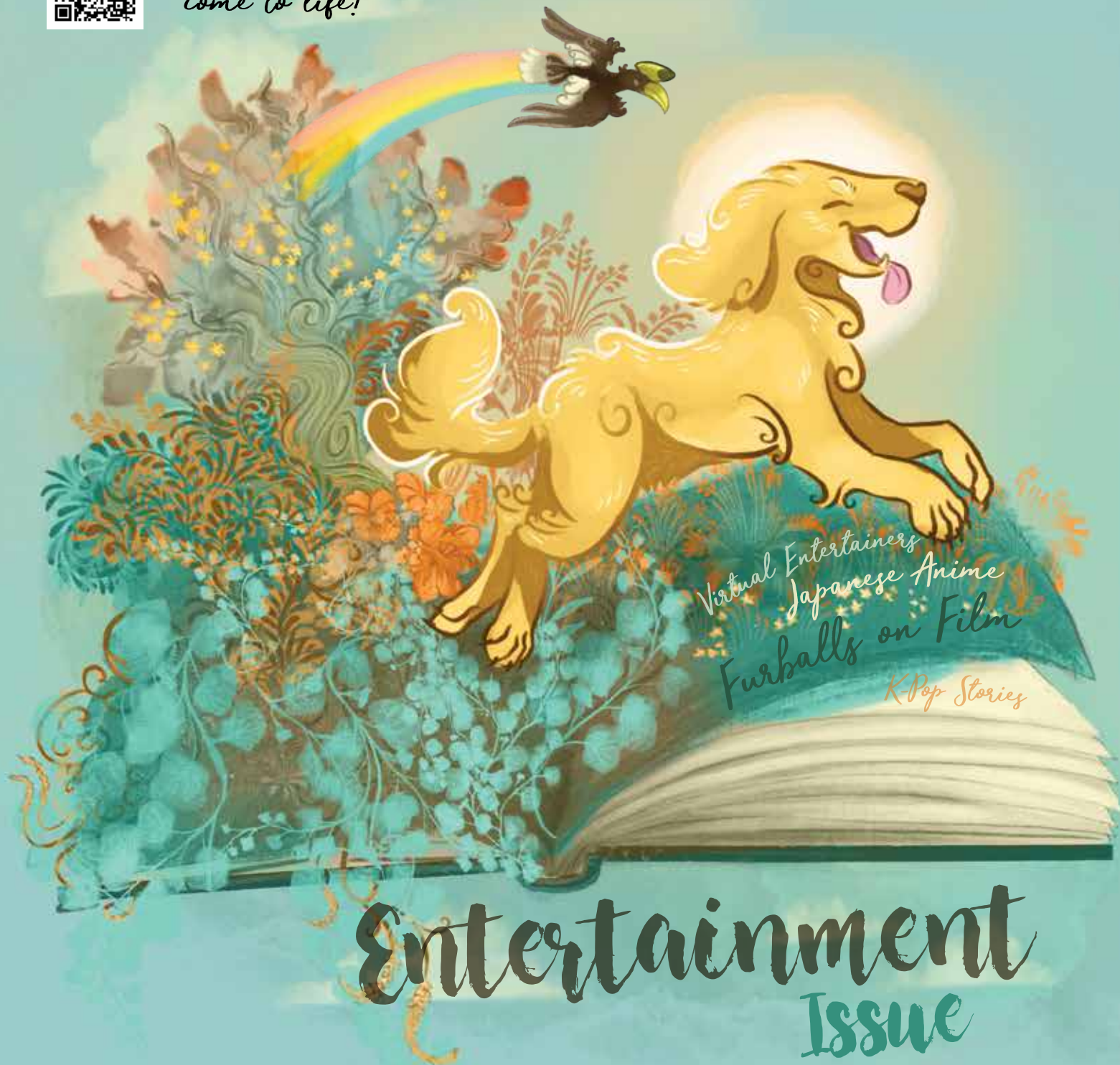
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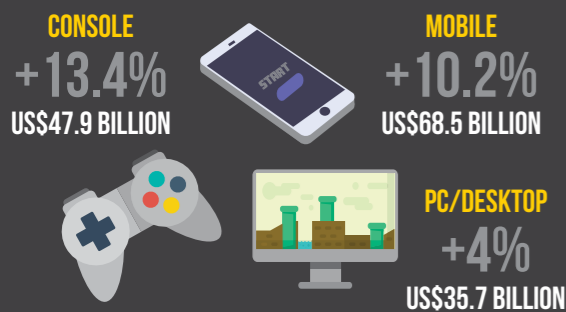


This cover is adapted from the Grand Prize-winning entry for the **GIF Challenge 2019**, held at LASALLE College of the Arts, with prizes sponsored by Pilot Pen. This artwork by Rabiatul is inspired by the children's book, "Murphy See How You Shine" by Chen Wei Teng. To see the cover in its animated GIF format, check the QR code above!

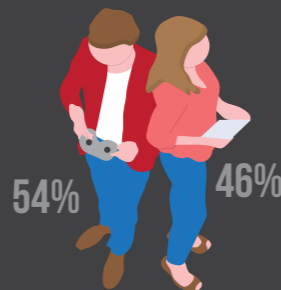
THE GAMING INDUSTRY LOWDOWN



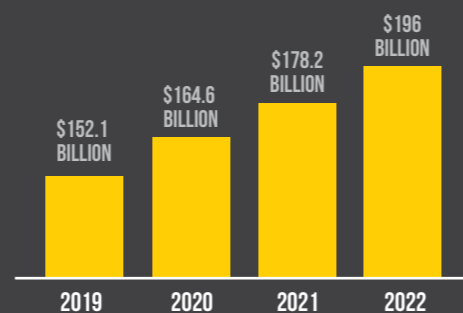
MODE OF GAMING | GROWTH IN 2019



PLAYERS BY GENDER



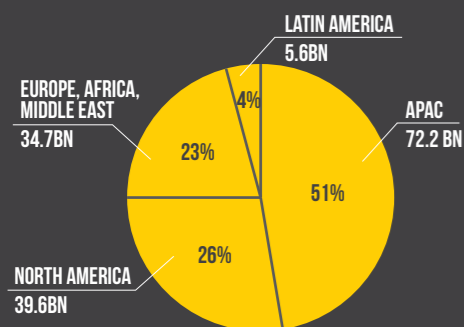
GLOBAL GAMING MARKET OUTLOOK



TOP GAMES AWARDING PRIZE MONEY



GAMING REVENUE BY REGION IN 2019



BIGGEST EARNING PER GAME

US\$6.9 MILLION
JOHAN SUNDSTEIN
DENMARK

US\$6.5 MILLION
JESSE VAINIKKA
FINLAND

US\$6 MILLION
ANATHAN PHAM
NEW ZEALAND

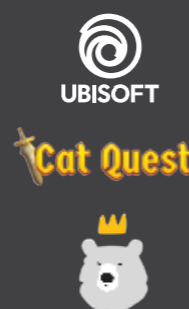
*ALL 3 ARE DOTA 2 PLAYERS

SINGAPORE GAMING LOWDOWN

TOP 3 MOST DOWNLOADED GAMES



TOP 3 LOCAL GAME STUDIOS



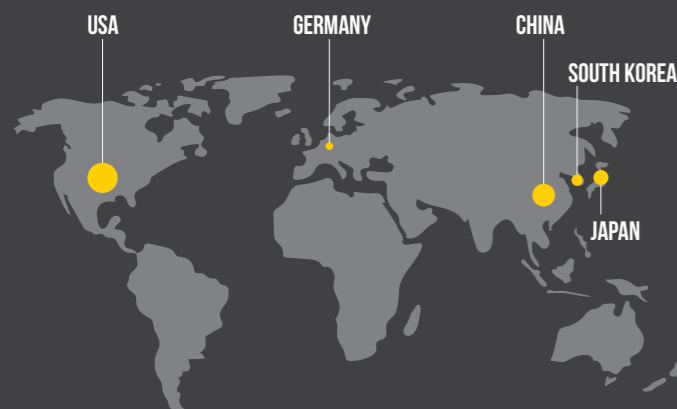
BIGGEST ESPORTS PRIZE POOL

DOTA 2
US\$200,000
NANYANG CHAMPIONSHIPS
2015

TOP 5 ESPORTS EARNINGS TO DATE

DARYL KOH 'ICEICEICE'	US\$1.5 MILLION DOTA 2
JENG YIH WONG 'NUTZ'	US\$225,400 DOTA 2
HO KUN XIAN 'XIAN'	US\$122,300 LEAGUE OF LEGENDS
WONG XING LEI 'CHAWY'	US\$97,800 ULTRA STREET FIGHTER IV
TOH WAI HONG 'XY'	US\$95,900 DOTA 2

TOP 5 GAMING MARKETS BY REVENUE



LARGE AND IN CHARGE

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ISSUE 62 | OCT '19 CONTENTS

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02 Furballs on Film

Dogs in Movies

04 Kpop Tubers

The trend of Kpop Youtubers

05 Lights! Camera! Location!

Iconic movie locations

06 Fears for Tears

Why do we like getting scared?

15 The See-food Diet

Food in entertainment

07 The Dead Don't Die

Zombies on screen

18 Screen to Stage

Youtubers on tour

09 Rise to Fame

How Kpop groups became popular

19 Love Lost

Why is romance unfairly hated?

10 Digital Divas

Rise of virtual entertainers

20 Invisible hand of Innovation

Adult entertainment and tech

13 Digital Addiction

Has it become an escape hatch?

14 The Imitation Game

Singapore's failing arts culture

REGULAR STUFF

08: Cheat Sheet:
Types of Theatre
12: The List:
Top Anime Movies
16: Out & About

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If you want to write but you don't have time for a full-time gig at the office, fret not. You can be one of Contributors - this means you'll get to write for both the website and the magazine, and still get to attend events we get invited to. While you won't have to be in the office at all, you're always free to drop by.

If you're interested in any of these positions, do drop us an email with your CV. We'd love to have you down for a quick interview to get to know you! Email us at interns@campus.com.sg

Furballs on Film

DOGS IN MOVIES

BY NINA GAN



The Drama Dogs

There have been plenty of dog movies featuring dogs as themselves – they wag their tails, they bark, and make you squeal. Many such movies simply document their trials and tribulations with their human families.

In the tearjerker *Marley & Me* (2008), which is the highest-grossing dog movie to date, we see how Marley the puppy becomes an integral part of a household. The movie basically documents his entire life with his family, following their ups and downs until the last days of his life.

Hearty Paws (2006) is a Korean film about two abandoned young siblings. The older brother steals a dog so that his sister doesn't feel lonely, but in a tragic twist of fate, the sister dies and the brother blames the dog, not realising that it was the only true family who would never leave him.

It's not unusual to see dogs in movies these days – with their puppy eyes and friendly demeanor, it's no surprise that movies with dogs tug at the heartstrings. Canine actors have appeared on the big screen as early as 1939 when they cast a Cairn Terrier to play the role of Toto in *The Wizard of Oz*. Ever since then, there's been a steady stream of doggie-led movies in comedies, animation, action flicks, and most notably, tear-jerking dramas.

Japanese flick *10 Promises to My Dog* (2008) tells the story of a young girl who adopts a puppy to keep her company. As she grows older, transitioning from college student to working adult, she realises that keeping a dog required more time than she could afford, and when the dog dies, she goes through the list of promises she made to her dog as a child.

Many filmgoers have trouble watching films with sad endings, but that doesn't stop more of them being made.

Three dog-led movies came out in 2019 alone; interestingly, all the dogs narrate their thoughts throughout the films. Two of them – *A Dog's Journey* and *A Dog's Way Home* – were adapted from W. Bruce Cameron's books. The former is about Bailey, a dog who gets reincarnated to find a person he swore to

protect in his previous life. In *A Dog's Way Home*, Bella the dog has to find her way home after being separated miles from her family.

Cameron was also the author of *A Dog's Purpose* (2017), the original movie that introduced Bailey who gets reincarnated multiple times in order to find his 'purpose' in life. In all of his books, the stories generally end on a happy note.

Another notable release this year was *The Art of Racing in the Rain*, in which a dog who wants to be reincarnated into a human narrates his life with his race car driver owner. The ending borrows the idea from *A Dog's Journey* – does Enzo the dog finally get his wish to get reincarnated as a human?

Dogs in Other Genres

Of course, not all dog movies are that dramatic. There have been plenty of light-hearted comedies like *Air Bud* (1997) in which a dog inadvertently becomes the hero of a basketball team, and *Beethoven* (1992) which is a comedy about a family who owns a gigantic St. Bernard.

There are also doggie stars in the action genre; movies like *Turner and Hooch* officers and dogs work well together when solving crimes and making big messes.

In fact, movies with dogs do very well even if they're not the main stars. Just take *John Wick* (2014), who goes on a murdering rampage because his beloved dog was killed; the sequels even feature an adorable pit bull as his replacement companion.

Even in movies like *Stubber* (2019) and *Must Love Dogs* (2005), the canines prove they can be the best sidekicks to provide the laughs.

The Basis for Dogs

Dogs are a man's best friend, so it's not a stretch to have our favourite canine companions make that leap into movie stardom. From adorable Golden Retrievers with their friendly, goofy faces to the stoic Akita Inu and the elegant Malamute, dogs have shown to have magnificent screen presence. They just have that ability to tug at our heartstrings and make us reach out for those tissues.

Real Dog Stories

These furry four-legged friends have also starred in movies inspired by true stories, proving that in real life, a dog is a man's best friend.

We all know about Hachi, the famous faithful dog who has his own statue near Shibuya Station in Tokyo. The movie *Hachi: A Dog's Tale* (2009), based on the 1987 Japanese film *Hachiko Monogatari*, tells the true story of a college professor who has an inseparable bond with an abandoned dog, Hachi, that he took home. Every day,

Hachi would wait at the train station for his owner's return, but one day, the professor dies at work and never made it back. However, Hachi faithfully waited at the station every day for the next 10 years until his death.

Another real-life dog with his own statue is Red Dog, a red kelpie from a small mining town in Pilbara, Australia, who became a local legend that brought together a community of lonely working men. The movie *Red Dog* (2011) tells the story of the titular dog with humour as a well-travelled member of the community (he was known to hitchhike in cars).

Japanese film *Quill* (2004) is based on a true story about a patient guide dog who manages to weasel his way into the heart of a lonely and ill-tempered middle-aged man. The Hong Kong film

Little Q (2019) is loosely based on Quill, and focuses on the guide dog's relationship with a moody chef.

Max (2015) is an action film with a basis on actual events. Max is a trained service dog Kyle dies in action in Afghanistan, and like many returning vets, Max suffers from PTSD. However, Kyle's family adopts Max, who soon bonds with Kyle's troubled teenage brother. Together, they set out to unravel the mystery of Kyle's death which involves some action.

Eight Below (2006) follows the true accounts of a Japanese Antarctic expedition in 1958, when a dogsled team was left chained outside a research station when the humans suddenly evacuated. In the Japanese expedition, 7 of the 9 dogs died when the team returned a year later; in the movie, 6 out of 8 dogs survived and were rescued after nearly 6 months.

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Singapore 370198
(3 mins walk from Toa Payoh MRT station)

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Tiong Bahru

28/15 Jalan Menteng #01-017
Singapore 760216
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KPOP TUBERS

THE TREND OF KPOP IDOL CHANNELS

YouTube is a burgeoning market for up-and-coming content creators — and the Kpop industry is jumping on the bandwagon as well. There has been a recent rise of both current and former Kpop idols creating personal YouTube channels, sharing content from lifestyle vlogs and Q&As to singing covers and even makeup tutorials. These videos aim to show a more personal, "real" side to the idols and let their fans get an inside look into their daily lives.

However, there is a more unique genre of these Kpop idol channels: exposé videos. These are usually run by former idols and are centred around revealing the inner secrets of the industry and answering a lot of the fans' burning questions about the idol lifestyle. Here are some popular channels run by former idols.

GRAZY GRACE

Grace was a former idol trainee set to debut in a girl group which many people have inferred to be Laboum. Now she is a solo artist and has appeared on the third season of the female rap competition show Unpretty Rapstar. The majority of her videos talk about her experiences as a former trainee and understanding of the industry, from sharing how idols escape the strict "dating ban" to the taboo topic of pregnancies and early marriages in Kpop.

She also interviews special guests who have some form of experience in the industry to get their opinions on certain issues. Her second channel GRAZY TV is more focused on general Korean societal issues and other miscellaneous topics.



SOOBEANIE.

Christine, aka Park Subin, was from the now-disbanded girl group Blady. She has a main series called Idol Insider where she talks about the inner happenings of the idol life and her own personal stories from her time as an idol.

Her videos are more structured, as she will take questions from fans on her social media and address them in sections in the video. Some interesting topics she has covered in the series include how idols deal with body hair and periods. She also has some videos where she invites her close friends, mostly current or former fellow Korean-American idols, to speak on their experiences in a casual chit-chat format.

미르방 MIRBANG

Mir was from the boy group MBLAQ, which fell apart after their company dissolved due to financial problems. His channel is still fairly new; his introduction video just released this August. Some of his first few videos discuss some common idol issues, such as average idol earnings, and explaining why groups disband, so this seems to be the direction he's going for his channel.

As a member from a group that ended on very unfair terms, fans can maybe expect his views to be more political and directed at the insidious nature of the industry. MBLAQ was highly successful during the 'golden age' of Kpop (late 2000s to early 2010s), and with a career spanning 8-9 years since his debut in 2009, Mir is the most veteran idol on this list. With his experience of going through various highs and lows throughout his active career, you can expect to get a more personal, deeper perspective in his future videos.

With all the glitz and glamour that Kpop presents itself to have, many don't see what actually goes on behind the scenes. These channels help to shed light on how tough it is to make it big as a Kpop star and may even change your perception on the industry. As the saying goes, "All that glitters is not gold."

웨이랜드 WAYLAND

Way was a member of the girl group Crayon Pop which went on hiatus after its members chose not to renew their contracts and eventually went their own separate ways. Way is now a full-time YouTuber and used to run her channel with her twin sister and former groupmate Choa under the name Twin TV. In her interview with Asian Boss, she shared about her training years, career, and current endeavours as a YouTuber.

Her videos are more focused on the interesting hacks and idol secrets, like what goes on when idols get their hair and makeup done at the "shop" or salon. They are more lighthearted compared to the usual exposé videos that are more focused on exposing the controversial sides of Kpop.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! LOCATION!

By Darryl Goh

Iconic Filming Locations

Films and television shows help us to escape reality for a few hours, but dedicated fans want more. Some travel across continents in search of filming locations to experience the magic in a different light.

Here are some famous filming locations which promoted lesser-known countries and regions to tourism stardom.

1

UKRAINE & LITHUANIA Chernobyl

The Emmy-award winning HBO series was a cautionary tale about how bureaucracy could lead to fatal mistakes. Despite multiple warnings by *Chernobyl's* creators that the area is still radioactive, tourists have been flocking to Ukraine to visit the Soviet disaster site suspended in time. Fortunately (or unfortunately for some), the actual power plant is off-limits to all tourists.

A more reasonable destination would be Ignalina in Lithuania, where the show was filmed. Although less reported in the news, tourist numbers to Chernobyl's sister power plant rose after the series aired. In tours to the Ignalina plant, visitors can see what the Chernobyl power plant used to look like and even interact with real switches in the control room.

2

TUNISIA Star Wars

The Force is strong in Tunisia. Star Wars fans would know the country's southern Djerba Island as Tatooine, home planet of Luke Skywalker. Five Star Wars episodes were filmed in Tunisia, making it a must-visit place for superfans.

While you may not see a Sandcrawler roaming the desert, you can check out its brutalist inspiration. When George Lucas visited Tunis, capital city of Tunisia, it was said that he was inspired by the pyramid-shaped architecture of Hotel du Lac, and started sketching the mobile fortresses of the Jawas.

Steadfast supporters of the film franchise often work together with Tunisia's tourism board to host fan events, such as International Meeting of Star Wars. Even in 2019, 42 years after the first Star Wars film, Djerba Island still charms its visitors by playing host to raves and music festivals.

3

THAILAND

James Bond Films, *The Beach*

Thailand offers some of the best natural sceneries in Asia. With pristine beaches and clear waters, it is no surprise that the James Bond franchise shot several scenes in the country.

Khao Phing Kan, more commonly known as James Bond's Island, is a limestone island in Ao Phang Nga National Park. *The Man with the Golden Gun*, the ninth James Bond film, used the island as a hideout for Francisco Scaramanga, the film's villain.

After the film's release in 1974, the spike in visitors to the remote island resulted severe littering issues and the erosion of limestone rocks around the island. In order to curb the overtourism, a ban was put in place to prevent boats from sailing too close to the island. Thus, one can only admire James Bond's Island from a distance now.

Unsurprisingly, tourism erosion has affected other islands in Thailand too. Maya Beach on Phi Phi Island, popularised in *The Beach* starring Leonardo DiCaprio, was closed since 2018 to allow its corals to recover from years of mass tourism. Before the closure, as much as 5,000 people travelled to the island per day, putting serious strain on the island's ecosystem.

4

SINGAPORE Crazy Rich Asians

The 2018 film based on Kevin Kwan's best-selling novel was essentially a long commercial for Singapore, complete with 30-second panoramas of the Singapore skyline sprinkled in it. The movie was filmed in iconic locations in Singapore such as Gardens by the Bay, Raffles Hotel and Chijmes. They even filmed at Newton Food Centre, because everybody loves hawker food, even crazy rich folks.

In 2018, tourism numbers exceeded estimations by the tourism board, and some attributed it to the buzz around the movie. Some entrepreneurial Singaporeans have since created tour packages based on the movie. There is a limousine service ferrying private groups around the film locations for photo opportunities.

Perhaps finding your next travel destination after watching a show not a bad idea. After all, you might just bump into the actors and actresses filming a sequel.

BY YUKI KOH

FEARS FOR TEARS

WHAT IS IT ABOUT BEING SCARED THAT WE LIKE SO MUCH?

Granted, it's not all of us, but being scared is a form of entertainment that many people enjoy these days. With Halloween around the corner, events like Halloween Horror Nights are coming back in full swing again, accompanied by yet another round of splurging on costumes and events for us. From simple horror movies and events to haunted houses and escape games, most

of us pay good money to give ourselves a good scare – but why? At its essence, being scared gives us an adrenaline rush. When we get scared, our body goes into fight-or-flight mode, triggering a surge of endorphins and dopamine. Getting scared gives us that thrill, and we love it – for some people, it can become addictive.

DIFFERENT FEARS FOR DIFFERENT REASONS

Although we may enjoy getting scared every now and then, there exists different types of fear within such a complex emotion. Some we enjoy, some we don't.

One end of the spectrum entails getting scared under orchestrated circumstances. This form of scare is the least threatening because we know for a fact that we are safe. For instance, watching a horror movie with friends – everyone is together, no one gets hurt, and it becomes a great bonding session. We manage to differentiate fact from fiction, and reality from fantasy; every year, we spend on horror movies to get that kind of anticipated fear together. The horror movie "It" (2017) made at least \$700 million from the box office, proving that people all over the globe enjoy horror movies. According to the box office, viewers prefer horror over romantic comedies.

This feeling is replicated in events like Halloween Horror Nights. Although it is technically an open space event, dark and potentially dangerous, it takes place at Universal

Studios. This puts us in a very safe spot, because we know that they won't do anything to harm us. As such, many of us willingly fork out \$50 to \$60 for the event every year, despite how pricey it is for such an experience.

Apart from Halloween, many of us might even go for a scare session at the many haunted escape rooms or zombie shooter VR experiences where we pay \$26 to \$58 an hour to free ourselves from the clutches of zombies or ghouls.



CURIOSITY KILLED THE CAT, BUT SATISFACTION BROUGHT IT BACK

Naturally speaking, there will be people who are addicted to fear (it is, after all, like a drug). For them, there is something addictive in the unknown or the haunted. Crime fanatics, urban explorers, and ghost hunters are some of the many thrillseekers that knowingly seek mystery and danger. Arguably different from orchestrated and organised thrills, they choose to re-visit crime scenes, explore dangerous abandoned places, and search for the unknown.

Although many people brand them as "ridiculous", these thrillseekers truly enjoy such pursuits, and have little fear regarding the dangers involved. They will go to great lengths to find out the truth, and compared to a cowardly person (like me), they exist on a truly different spectrum.

WHILE THE PURPOSE OF FEAR IS TO HELP YOU PROTECT YOURSELF IN A DANGEROUS SITUATION, FEAR-BASED ENTERTAINMENT CAPITALISES ON THE ADRENALIN RUSH. NO MATTER WHAT SPECTRUM OF FEAR YOU'RE COMFORTABLE WITH, THERE IS SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE.

BY NINA GAN

THE DEAD DON'T DIE ZOMBIES ON SCREEN

Whether you like it or not, the zombie genre has permanently made their mark in the entertainment world. Today we watch zombie films, play zombie shooter games or go for zombie haunted houses. How did the zombie genre come about, and why are these walking dead so popular? Turns out, zombie films are rarely just about the undead with sallow complexion, bad teeth, and a weird shuffle.



THE ORIGINAL UNDEAD

Unlike Frankenstein or Dracula, which have ties to Gothic literature, the zombie film genre has a relatively recent origin which can be attributed to Haitian folklore – the idea was first showcased in Bela Lugosi's 1932 film *White Zombie* which depicted undead slaves.

However, it wasn't until *Night of the Living Dead*, a 1968 film by director George Romero, that cemented the idea of flesh-eating 'ghouls'. A decade later, the term 'zombie' was finally coined by Romero in his *Dawn of the Dead* (1978).

The concept of zombies eating brains was popularised by the comedy *The Return of the Living Dead* (1985), and since then, the genre kept reinventing itself by creating new rules. These days, zombies can run, talk, sing, and fall in love, but more than that, they are an essential tool for moviemakers.

WE ARE ALL ZOMBIES

Zombie movies are never just about zombies – they're a metaphor for political commentary and social fears.

Night of the Living Dead revolutionised the zombie metaphor with 'flesh eaters'; prior to this, zombies were merely human puppets, reflecting fears of mind control at the time. Romero's movie was a critique of violence and devastation of Vietnam – a single zombie bite turning humans into zombies reflects the fears of loved ones turning on one another.

In *Dawn of the Dead*, the images of zombies mindlessly walking, groping, and drooling over consumer goods reflects the cult of consumerism and capitalism. It's pretty much the same story decades on, as depicted in the arthouse flick *The Dead Don't Die* (2019), where zombies are obsessed by consumer items.

Over the decades, the world had witnessed a number of major virus outbreaks: Ebola, AIDS, avian flu, and SARS. Contagion became an explanation for how zombies are reanimated, as depicted in movies like *Resident Evil* (2002) and *28 Days Later* (2002), which was credited with a new breed of zombie: the fast-moving, disease-infected type that prefer spreading infection than eating brains. *World War Z* (2013) made the contagion global.

While external forces can be blamed for societal woes, the biggest fear lies in the darkness of humanity itself.

In the TV series *The Walking Dead* (2010 to present), zombies are the least of the survivors' problems. In this post-apocalyptic hellscape, the protagonists are constantly imperiled by other survivors: groups of armed bandits, psychotic cult leaders, biker gangs, and thugs, illustrating the dangers of racism and white supremacy.



In *The Cured* (2018), zombies are cured and returned to society, but they face discrimination and social issues that lead to militant interference, reflecting how society behaves in an era of anti-immigration.

Korean blockbuster *Train to Busan* (2016) is a scathing indictment of Korean society, highlighting the archaic hierarchy where the entitled rich screw over everybody in order to survive. Similarly, *Pride and Prejudice and Zombies* (2016) is about classism represented by zombies.

EVERYDAY ISSUES

Not all zombie movies highlight big, societal issues; some are more personal.

Zombie comedies like *Zombieland* (2009) reminds us of who we should trust, while *Shaun of the Dead* (2004) make us reevaluate our ambition of achieving something. *Warm Bodies* (2013) is a romance with an underlying religious tone about overcoming sins with love.

Because zombies are great storytelling tools, these films have spiked in the last two decades, giving filmmakers a way to express racial sublimation, war, communism, mass contagion, globalism – and, more than anything, human nature. These stories of survival are a criticism of the prevailing social order and the dystopian future that awaits us.



If it's your first time to a theatre production, you should know that it's not simply about someone acting out on stage - there are different types of productions that cover different themes and styles. From singing comedies to thought-provoking plays, here are some basic theatrical performances you can expect to find at local theatres.

Cheat Sheet

#62 Types of Theatre Productions

MUSICAL

Musicals are plays that are performed completely in song and dance form, and usually incorporate some dance choreography. Made immensely popular by London's West End and New York's Broadway theatre, they are often big budget performances featuring elaborate backdrops, multiple cast members, and live orchestra. Sometimes, a popular musical troupe travels around the world to perform a certain title, while in other cases, the musical is adapted by a local theatre company.

SAMPLE: Phantom of the Opera, Aladdin, Urinetown



Aladdin



Shakespeare in the park

PLAY

Sometimes called 'straight play', the term specifically refers to a non-musical play. It's usually divided into Acts (segments): a short play may consist of only a single Act (called a 'one-act') while a typical Shakespeare play has 5 Acts. Acts are subdivided into Scenes, both of which are numbered (ie. Act 5, Scene 1). Each Scene refers to one location/backdrop which can be changed between Scenes. A play encompasses many genres, ranging from comedy to romance and tragedy.

SAMPLE: anything Shakespeare

FRINGE THEATRE

In terms of technicalities and production value, fringe theatre is frugal in nature. Often played in small theatres or rented rooms, these plays are experimental in style and narrative, and are often full of edgy and unconventional stories, usually (but not always) led by one person in a single act that commonly lasts an hour long. There are plenty of Fringe Festivals worldwide which allow the public to view a collection of these plays in one place.

SAMPLE: MI Fringe Festival



Angkat at the MI Fringe Festival



Immersive theatre at ANDSOFORTH

SOLO THEATRE

As its name suggests, a solo theatre (or solo performance) is a one-person show that can incorporate comedy, poetry, music, visual arts, theatre, and dance. It stems from the rich history of oral storytelling present in almost every culture. To make sure the act does not get boring, some performers interact with the audience, or take up multiple roles (ie. Patrick Stewart played all 43 parts in his version of A Christmas Carol).

SAMPLE: A Christmas Carol, Forked



Forked

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL PLAY

Autobiographical plays are told from a first person perspective, usually with a topic in mind (ie. dementia, feminism). The lead actor walks the audience through his/her life and its many moments, and are intertwined with questions about identity, truth, and memory. Often profoundly philosophical, they can either be a solo play or a multi-character play, and can be entertaining, funny, and at times, harrowing.

SAMPLE: Still Life (about local playwright Dana Lim)



Still Life by Dana Lim

IMMERSIVE THEATRE

Immersive theatre is an experiential form of theatre. Unlike conventional forms of theatre, where performers perform for the audience, immersive theatre audiences are an active part of the play, however small their roles may be. The play may be staged in one building and take place across multiple rooms, or it can even take place across multiple locations across town. The audience may also be involved in the plot development, making it an interesting theatre format.

SAMPLE: Caught, anything from ANDSOFORTH

BLACKPINK

Blackpink strays away from K-pop girl group stereotypes and exude a strong 'girl crush' power. Their songs have powerful beats as well as hard-hitting dance moves, similar to what you would hear on Western radio nowadays. Blackpink got their big break when they appeared at the hugely popular Coachella music festival this year. The group caters more to an international fan base, as three out of the four members are foreign and half the group are native English speakers.



BTS

We can't talk about K-pop without talking about BTS, especially considering how much BTS has done for the genre and South Korea as a whole. Their popularity extended worldwide after the release of their album 'You Never Walk Alone' in early 2017, in which BTS was awarded the 'Top Social Artist' Billboard Music Award.

Fans were drawn to BTS mainly because of the lyrics behind their music which tackle topics like mental health, growing up, youth, chasing dreams, acceptance, self-love, and societal issues. BTS also uses social media to interact with their fans. They are extremely active on Twitter, VLive and WeVerse, and frequently upload posts and talk to fans. This has boosted their popularity as fans felt more connected to them.



THE RISE TO FAME: HOW TOP KPOP GROUPS BECAME POPULAR

BY LINDSAY WONG

Having been around since the 90s as a niche genre, Kpop is becoming more mainstream, achieving cult status within the past decade. In 2017, BTS won the 'Top Social Artist' award at the Billboard Music Awards, paving the way for recognition of the genre, especially from the West.

Now, BTS aren't the only ones traveling to Hollywood to make appearances at big Western award shows. More and more groups like MONSTA X and Stray Kids are making it big. But how did the most popular Kpop groups reach this level of recognition and fame? Each group has used different means and methods strategically to become popular.

TWICE

Twice is arguably the most popular girl group in Korea at the moment. Part of JYP Entertainment, a company that is known for debuting successful girl groups, TWICE made their debut after appearing in the reality show 'Sixteen', which determined the line-up of the group. Since their debut, all of their songs have been big hits; many songs, like 'Cheer Up' and 'TT', went viral because of catchphrases (Sana's 'shy shy shy' from 'Cheer Up') or memorable dance moves.

Furthermore, each member is famous on their own, and the band is heading towards a 'girl-crush' concept that showcases the girls as fierce and confident women that appeal to both male and female audiences.



NCT

NCT is a boy group like no other. With 21 members, they are divided into various units: NCT U, NCT 127, NCT Dream, and WayV. While NCT 127 is a fixed unit, NCT U frequently changes members based on the concept and music. NCT Dream is targeted towards the youth, and members graduate from the unit once they reach 20 years old (in Korean age). WayV is based in China.

NCT aims to establish different units in multiple cities around the world. As such, 11 out of 21 members are foreign. Mark is Canadian, Johnny is American, Ten is Thai, Yuta is Japanese, Yangyang is German-Chinese, Lucas is from Hong Kong, while Winwin, Renjun, Chenle, Xiaojun, and Hendery are Chinese. With members of different nationalities, their fan bases in these countries are particularly large.

WANNA ONE AND X1

The boy groups Wanna One and X1 emerged from the popular MNET reality shows 'Produce 101 Season 2' and 'Produce X 101'; each programme showcases 101 trainees from different entertainment companies who compete for the chance to be in the nation's chosen boy group. The public votes for their favourite contestants and the top 11 will debut.

The group that debuts always achieves instant success because of this exposure. On the show, the contestants are subjected to various missions in which they have to display their talents in singing, rapping, dancing, or even variety skills. The show features original songs and only the best of the best get to debut.





CONCERT WITHIN A GAME

What do you get when you put a popular EDM star into one of the world's biggest MMORPG games? An insanely massive audience.

In February this year, EDM DJ Marshmello (who performs with his signature marshmallow helmet) held a live virtual concert within Fortnite – it was staged entirely within the third-person shooter game in a location called Pleasant Park, complete with an avatar of him and a number of dancers recorded in live motion capture.

The use of weapons was disabled for the entirety of the 10-minute event to ensure that everyone could enjoy the show, where players could “dance” using in-game emotes. A staggering

10.7 million players logged in for the show – the biggest moment in Fortnite's history.

However, this wasn't the first live performance within a video game – Minecraft staged their Coachella Festival (featuring Soundcloud artists) in September last year, but their servers only managed to handle about 3,000 players.

In-game concerts are an interesting mix of real-life and fantasy where everyone is hiding behind an avatar, including the performer. While in-game concerts featuring a famous performer is successful, another game developer decided to do things the other way around.

LEAGUE OF LEGENDS AND KPOP STARS

Last November, an all-girl Kpop quartet called K/DA – comprising virtual members Kai'Sa, Akali, Evelynn, and Ahri – was entirely created by the popular MOBA game, League of Legends simply to sell skins (in-game costumes).

Instead of in-game concerts, the band debuted to a live audience at the 2018 League of Legends World Championships in Seoul using augmented reality, where the real-life singers performed on stage with their virtual personas projected backstage. Their first and only song, Pop/Stars, garnered 5 million views in 24 hours on Youtube, breaking the record for the

most viewed Kpop group debut MV at the time. To date, their official MV has surpassed 260 million views.

While K/DA's members were digitally created, their presence was shot into virtual infamy partly because they're actually voiced by real-life pop stars. Ahri and Akali are voiced by Miyeon and Soyeon from Kpop group (G)I-DLE, while Evelynn and Kai'Sa are voiced by American pop artists Madison Beer and Jaira Burns.

K/DA was a balance between real-life pop stars and digitally-created idols, but would a digital idol still be popular without a star backing?

STEP BY STEP: VIRTUAL BOY BAND

Even if you're a fan of Japanese boy bands, chances are you've never heard of Eight of Triangle and ARP (Artists Republic Production) that debuted in 2015 and 2017 respectively. That's because they're digitally-created virtual boy bands.

Both bands made their name by performing to a live audience using motion capture and augmented-reality technology – unknown singers and dancers that represent these AR boys perform in real-time behind the stage and interact with the audience.

Although their shows are technically 3D projections on stage, fans still go wild at



You may have seen the Black Mirror episode titled Rachel, Jack and Ashley Too, where we see a hologram of Ashley O (played by Miley Cyrus) perform on stage. While the episode gives us a glimpse of the future of entertainment, this technology is already here, and virtual performers have slowly been taking over the entertainment world one byte at a time. From singing synthesizers to in-game concerts, the music world is definitely breaking new ground in entertainment technology.



their concerts. To give these bands more credibility, the characters have their own Twitter accounts, biographies, and even Youtube vlogs. They even do interviews on TV.

The team behind these boy bands are professionals who produce the music and perform live backstage. By creating digital pop stars, there won't be issues like sick days or outrageous demands that can come with real-life performers; the downside is that they can seem a bit “manufactured”. However, their popularity proves that even virtual stars can garner a huge fanbase; but what if the team behind it aren't even music professionals?

MUSIC CROWDSOURCING: VOCALOID

Characterised by her long, turquoise pigtails and schoolgirl-inspired outfit, 16-year-old Hatsune Miku performed her first live concert in 2009 at the Animelo Summer Live in Japan.

Today, she's one of the most prolific singers in the world, having sung over 100,000 original songs. She's also had collaborations with companies like Coca Cola, Toyota, and Google, and performed opening acts for Lady Gaga. There's also a Miku Expo, a series of concerts held around the world since 2014, in countries like Mexico, USA, Taiwan, Indonesia, China, and Hong Kong.

Not a bad achievement for someone who doesn't exist.

Hatsune Miku is a Vocaloid – basically a software of synthesised voice which can be used by anyone who wants to make music with her voice. Of course, there are other Vocaloid characters that make up the voice bank, comprising recordings of various actors or singers, but none are as popular as Miku, who also has video games and merchandise to her name.

As a virtual persona, she performs on stage as a 3D holographic avatar, and her songs are provided by individual creators (using the Vocaloid software).

making her the first truly crowdsourced virtual talent. The repertoire of songs performed at concerts sometimes comprise songwriting contest winners, or selected by Miku's creators, Crypton Future Media.

Anyone with the software can become a music producer. To make her character accessible to the creative masses, the software is easy to use – simply type in lyrics and punch in a melody – and her image can be freely used without breaking copyright rules. This means creators can upload their homemade music videos on Youtube, where they'll be viewed by her millions of fans.

While Miku isn't real, she does pave the way for real people who want to make a name for themselves. This gives hope to the millions of talented people who are too shy to perform in public. But what if creators don't want to use another person's voice?



YOUTUBERS WITHOUT A FACE

You may have heard of “VTubers” – or “virtual YouTubers” – who are basically cute, female anime characters on Youtube who mostly stream Youtube-y things like singing, dancing and live streaming their chats with viewers. Created in 2016, Kizuna AI is probably the most popular VTuber (over 2.5 million followers) who's known for music performances. When she held her own “live” birthday concert in Tokyo in June this year, tickets for the event were sold out almost immediately.

VTubers started out as a Japanese phenomenon, but the trend quickly spread over to China, where video sharing website Bilibili has seen thousands of virtual broadcasters entering the market in recent years. They recently held a Bilibili Macro Link VR concert featuring over 20 famous virtual idols, including Kizuna AI, Hatsune

Miku and China's own Vocaloid, Luo Tianyi – the event attracted nearly 10,000 fans.

What makes VTubers interesting is that the personas are created by regular people using motion-capture and filming devices, creating avatars that mirror their real-life movements and voice to varying degrees of realism. Viewers are often drawn by this type of entertainment because they seem more realistic and accessible than professionally-produced idols.

In the near future, it won't be surprising to see more performers coming from this untapped virtual market of amateurs. Already, there are VTuber management agencies and dedicated streaming sites. Who knows who or what the next big talent would be?

WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF ENTERTAINMENT?

As we know, technology – in particular, augmented reality, motion capture, and voice banks – plays a big part in this future of entertainment. It gives everyday folks a chance to be part of the rapidly-growing talent industry, and existing performers the chance to reinvent themselves in a digital world. So what will the future of music entertainment look like?

To quote a line from the episode Rachel,

Jack and Ashley Too: “In an age of streaming content, live tours are the most lucrative aspect of the music industry.” Imagine combining the technology behind Hatsune Miku's 3D hologram with motion capture technology of K/DA and current streaming technology – we could easily see a future of live virtual concerts streamed simultaneously across the world as predicted in the Black Mirror episode. The only surprise is that it's not already here.



THE LIST

TOP ANIME MOVIES TO WATCH

BY ZHIQI WANG

YOUR NAME (2016)

Despite living in different timelines, Mitsuha and Taki inadvertently swap bodies with each other frequently to hilarious effect. As they get to know each other by leaving messages on phones or notebooks, the two teens gradually become close, but the threat of a destructive meteor strike threatens to destroy their relationship.

WHY: The gorgeous animation is complemented by a rich, complex story immersed in Japanese culture, brilliantly illustrating how the thread of fate brings two souls together.

IN THIS CORNER OF THE WORLD (2016)

Set in Hiroshima during WWII, the story follows 18-year-old Suzu who lives with her husband's family. She has to run the household creatively, preparing meals during times of rationing and bombings. Her life changes irrevocably when the US military reaches her town, but she continues to persevere.

WHY: It's a rare, and very heartwarming anime that combines various animation styles to convey the emotions of those who lived during times of war.

A SILENT VOICE (2016)

Shoko, as a sixth grader with a hearing disability, was constantly picked on by school bully Shoya. They do not speak to each other again until years later, when an older, wiser Shoya - tormented by his past behavior - decides he must atone for his sins, and the victim role is suddenly reversed.

WHY: This poignant film brings up one of the deepest communication problems in every society, depicting the struggles of adolescence alongside coming-of-age outside the norm.

SUMMER WARS (2009)

Timid high school math genius Kenji is recruited by his secret crush Natsuki to pose as her boyfriend during her grandmother's 90th birthday party, where after he solves a complicated math riddle, he unwittingly unleashes a malicious AI in a virtual world which threatens the safety of the real world.

WHY: It tackles the very real threat of technology, with influences from *Avatar* to *The Social Network*, and cleverly weaves Japanese culture into the background.

Weathering With You is the latest Japanese animation to hit it big in the cinemas this year, but it's hardly the only anime worth watching. Here is a list of other amazing anime titles that should be on your to-watch list, whether you're looking for adventure, romance, or Japanese culture.

PAPRIKA (2006)

Paprika is a sci-fi psychological thriller about a doctor using a new, untested device that allows psychotherapists to treat patients by entering their dreams. When the device is stolen, all hell breaks loose - nightmares merge with reality - and only a mysterious character called Paprika can stop it.

WHY: With its cartoonish, creepy characters, many viewers have trouble understanding what exactly is going on even after a few viewings.

THE GIRL WHO LEAPT THROUGH TIME (2006)

High-school girl Makoto acquires the power to travel back in time, and decides to use it for her own gains. Little does she know that she is affecting the lives of others: she races back in time to fix everything, but with every jump she is one step closer to discovering the most wonderful secret.

WHY: Its beautiful visuals and imaginative story combine to make it one of the most memorable coming-of-age comedy dramas.

MIRAI (2018)

Four-year-old Kun has lived a spoiled life as an only child, but when his new baby sister Mirai is brought home, his simple life is thrown upside-down. He is prone to frequent temper tantrums - that's when he is visited by past and future versions of his family, most notably Mirai, who appears as a teenager.

WHY: This magical sibling adventure is a dreamy, touching look at the importance of family ties, packaged in a gorgeously animated film with moments of cuteness.

SPIRITED AWAY (2001)

From the legendary Studio Ghibli, middle schooler Chihiro visits an abandoned theme park with her parents where they suddenly turn into pigs. She then has to navigate the 'underworld' - she takes up a job as a scullery maid, meeting friendly spirits and malicious ghouls along the way - in order to save her parents.

WHY: An Academy Award winner, it has gorgeous immersive visuals that showcase the depth and beauty of Japanese culture and Shintoism.

DIGITAL ADDICTION

BY DOUGLAS LEW

In a world obsessed with technology, has it become an escape hatch?

It is difficult to imagine a time without technology. These days, leaving your house without your mobile phone or any form of technology can make one experience feelings of anguish and loss. As an extremely powerful device that is capable of storing, transferring, communicating, accessing information, and act as an entertainment medium, the mobile phone has become a necessity in our everyday life.

Smartphones and social entertainment

This technological revolution began in 2007 when Steve Jobs introduced to the world the first iPhone, within it contained a plethora of games, functionalities and more on top of the cutting edge touchscreen capabilities, transforming, almost overnight, the phone from a basic communication device to the multi-functional tool that we now know.

At the same time, Facebook began rising in popularity, and with people now being equipped with a smartphone that could connect to the web on the go, even more people became interested in the idea of updating their status and checking up on their friends in between pockets of free time. Instagram, Twitter and Snapchat rode the social media wave as well and the rest is history.

These days, social media platforms have evolved to become a great way to build a company's branding, and a source of income for many. It also allows regular people to escape the chaotic reality we live in, and becomes a form of validation to feed our ego. But have we become overly addicted to technology that it has become a crutch to us?

A form of escapism

Entertainment technology provides a form of escapism to those who seek to remove themselves from their current reality. Many use games and/or social media to do so, where they subconsciously project the idealistic version of themselves onto.

For instance, in games, it is easy to make progress and see one's efforts being rewarded almost instantly; both are difficult to achieve in the real world, where in the local context, school and the workplace are steeped in competition and pressure to perform.



Some turn to social media to validate their existence and make themselves heard. From midnight rants on one's Instastory, to an extremely lengthy post about climate change on Facebook, social media platforms have evolved to become an indispensable tool for many to communicate their thoughts and opinions that they would not otherwise share with people in real life. Additionally, many perceive social media as a game, in the sense that the more likes and attention they get, the more validated and powerful they feel.

As such, both social media and games are highly appealing to the masses as they provide us with different versions of reality, one that is less harsh, fairer and easier to live in.

Social addiction

Particularly troubling is the increasing number of youths who look to social media for external validation. A recent CNA article interviewed some youths who have claimed to be addicted to such online platforms: some went as far as relating their self-esteem to the number of virtual likes and attention that their contents rake in, which makes these teenagers extremely susceptible to online bullying.

Our obsession with entertainment technology could also explain our fear of missing out. In this fast-paced, ever-changing world where the hottest trend is volatile, many see social media and news outlets as a way to update oneself on the current trends and happenings.

This need to always know what is happening paralyzes us and restricts us, as we become so obsessed with what others are doing that we do not get to do those things ourselves, citing a lack of time.

Addiction in any form does more harm than good. While the smartphone has brought about many conveniences, we should remember that its main purpose is a communication device and its use should not overextend to compensate for a bad day at work or to distract ourselves from reality. In a world where everyone is glued to their screens, we should invest time in things and actions in real life, such as bonding with friends or finding a hobby.

As a Robert Frost quote goes: "I took the one (road) less travelled by, and that has made all the difference".



The Imitation Game

HOW BEAUNITE IS A TESTAMENT TO SINGAPORE'S FAILING ART CULTURE

BY HO WEI JIAN

On December 2017 a little-known Kpop group by the name of Beaunite debuted with a group of 13 girls. They quickly achieved fame in the following weeks, when they walked into the savage clutches of the internet. Two responses, an apology, a disbandment, a deletion of their social media accounts and a comeback video on National Day the following year, their humiliating endeavour to become the new BTS has been both whimsical and surreal.

This pandemonium, much to the delight of the voyeuristic trolls online, has been a fascinating tale to watch as an outsider. It is not only a tale of ambitious artists who took things too far, an ironic success story, as well as a representation of a country's failing art culture.

While I have no prior knowledge to Kpop before the introduction of these lovely girls, nor have I developed a particular interest in the Kpop genre, I would be willing to put Beaunite on a pedestal of failing Singapore art culture. Beaunite does not just represent a tale of lofty ambitions from a group of adolescents, it represents a country's failed endeavour to possess a pop culture of its own.



Lack of originality

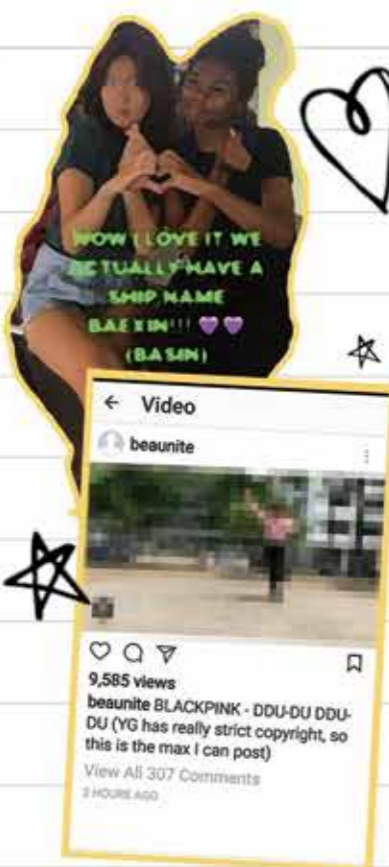
Much of the warranted criticism aimed at Beaunite is their lack of originality. Added to their fervent desire to call themselves a 'Kpop' group, it is no surprise that there is an angry sentiment among people who are fans of the Kpop genre.

Whether they do have the right to call themselves a Kpop group, it is up for debate. There are several wormholes I wouldn't delve into, but what I will say is the fact that 'Kpop' is an abbreviation for 'Korean-pop', not 'Singaporean-pop'.

So fervent was their desire to emulate an overseas brand that they did not choose to create something original or local. Beaunite wanted to brand themselves as a Kpop band, rather than be a Singaporean band, even though they were based in Singapore. It leads me to believe that, either

- 1) THEY DIDN'T WANT TO BE PART OF THE SINGAPORE MUSIC SCENE, OR
- 2) THEY PREFERRED TO BE PART OF THE KPOP SCENE.

That is the problem of the Singapore's art culture.



In fact, I would be willing to bet if you ask any 16-year-old on the street to name any musicians they enjoy, the names 'Sam Smith' or 'BTS' would come before 'Stephanie Sun' or '53A'.

I do not blame Beaunite. However, I do attribute this problem - that when it comes to the arts, Singaporeans prefer overseas brands over local ones to the influence of mass- and social media.

Drowned in noise

Because of the huge following that these international acts have on the rest of the world - from their criminally large followings on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and their influence on video platforms whether on television or Youtube - local acts often get washed away from all the noise.

Foreign acts have large amounts of money to spend on never-ending marketing and doing outrageous things constantly to keep up with the trends, such that they stay relevant, while our local groups stay niche.

This phenomenon is not limited to Kpop; if we look at filmmaking for example last year, the highest grossing movie in Singapore was Avengers Infinity War, which grossed \$16.22 million. The highest-grossing local film was Wonderful! Liang Xi Mei, at 29th on the list, which grossed just \$1.76 million. There is a widening gap with more people favouring overseas artforms compared to our local arts scene.

THE MASS MEDIA IS RESPONSIBLE FOR TRANSFORMING THE WAY WE ENTERTAIN OURSELVES. AND AS THE INFLUENCE OF THESE MEDIA GROWS, SO WILL THE MONOPOLY THAT THESE LARGE FOREIGN ACTS HAVE ON US, AND SO WILL IT SHAPE OUR PREFERENCES FOR THEM.

Beaunite is a shining example of our preference for foreign brands, and they have been mocked for it. But beyond all the mockery that this group has suffered, it paints a grim picture of our country's dwindling arts and culture scene.

The See-Food Diet

BY ZHIQI WANG

FOOD AS ENTERTAINMENT

As Singaporeans, food naturally forms a great part of our lives. Not only do we eat food, we talk about food, and we spend hours and hours hunting down the next big eat.

Unsurprisingly, this is not just a local phenomenon; it's an international trend that's sweeping every continent in this world. Social media has played a huge part in this, because sharing what we have devoured has become as simple as a quick click on our favourite visual app, Instagram.



FOOD INFLUENCERS (the visual eater)

In recent years, there has been a rise in food influencer, and profiles like @sethluicous, @danielfooddiary, and @ladyironchef have reached a celebrity level of influence and fanbase. These people are often invited to the exclusive dining events and the newest restaurants that want to be featured on the influencers' social media platforms, many of which have impressive follower numbers (@ladyironchef boasts 750k followers).

Millennials and GenZs who spend hours on these platforms tend to look up to these profiles to find the next queue to join, braving the scorching heat of the Singaporean sun to try the next Bubble Tea or Cheese Tart or whatever floats their boat.

FOOD TOURISM (the curious explorer)

People are no longer satisfied with locally-available food - they want exotic grub from every edge of the world. Food tourism has become one of the biggest hypes as YouTubers put what they eat onto the carefully-edited videos.

A popular site is The Food Ranger, who currently has 3.4 million subscribers. The Canadian expatriate hunts for the very best food from every region in China (he recently expanded into new countries) and shows foreigners a different view of the Chinese food culture. Another popular channel is Foodinsider which collates a list of top foods to eat in each city. These videos allow people to experience real local culture and clear misconceptions about stereotypes.



FOOD PRODUCTION (the knowledge hunter)

More than finding new and cool foods, people are now finding interest in understanding how the current food production and distribution ecosystem work. With such demand, there are television and Youtube channels devoted to help consumers understand the process behind these manufacturing processes.

The Food Factory TV series brings viewers to food factories to understand how commonplace snacks are made and delivered to supermarkets. These videos make us appreciate how readily available some foods are. In Singapore, we have our very own Food Source (食在好源头), hosted by the bubbly Pornsak.



MUKBANG VIDEOS (the sadistic viewer)

This is a food-based video genre where we watch people gorge on unholy amounts of food for entertainment. An idea initially popularised by Epic Meal Time from the US, it is now popularly called mukbang - a mashup of Korean words mukja ("let's eat") and bang song ("broadcast") - where everyday people stream their mealtimes online.

These days, millions of people watch in awe as petite girls like Yuka Kinoshita (5.4 million followers) and Mi Zijun (6.4 million followers on Weibo) gobble down bowls of noodles and giant burgers, inhaling upwards of 4,000 calories per sitting.

Be warned though, do not attempt unless you have been properly prepared. The Spicy Noodle Challenge is definitely one of the highlights of mukbang, and videos from Stephanie Soo (1.3 million followers) can be really entertaining.

COOKING VIDEOS (food creators)

Some Youtubers have literally taken things into their own hands. Instead of relying on ready-made food, the values of cooking have permeated the millennial generation (Gordon Ramsey and Masterchef probably played a huge part).

There are plenty of dedicated channels to teach millennials (also read: awful cooks) how to regain this important skill set. Viewers can learn how to bake amazing cakes via channels like Rosanna Pansino, or cook Italian food with Laura in the Kitchen, or prepare easy meals on channels like Tasty.



OUT AND ABOUT

EVENTS

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ROMP 2019

When: 2 Nov 2019 | 8am - 10pm
Where: Our Tampines Hub
Tickets: varied

Stand to win prizes worth up to \$600 per team! ROMP 19, the largest youth sports carnival run by a non-profit organisation, is back and better than ever before. Organised by W.A.D.I Club, the youth arm of Harvest Care Centre, it aims to build youths' character through sports and volunteerism.

ROMP 18 featured 2,000 participants and volunteers, 5 sports competitions across 3 venues! This year, ROMP 19 is held at the biggest venue we've had so far - Our Tampines Hub. Sign up to compete in badminton, basketball, pool, soccer, table-tennis or tchoukball. Or check out our 3 inclusive categories! Visit www.wadclub.org/romp for more.

MOVIES



Zombieland 2: Double Tap
(Oct 31)
Cast: Woody Harrelson, Jesse Eisenberg, Emma Stone

A decade after Zombieland became a hit film and a cult classic, the lead cast have reunited for Zombieland 2. In the sequel, through comic mayhem that stretches from the White House and through the heartland, these four players must face off against the many new kinds of zombies that have evolved since the first movie, as well as some new human survivors. But most of all, they have to face the growing pains of their own snarky, makeshift family.

EduTECH 2019

When: 4-6 Nov 2019
Where: Suntec Singapore Convention Centre
Tickets: Free

At EduTECH Asia, we pride ourselves on bringing together thousands of educators from across Asia to evaluate and plan for the future of learning. In 2019, we're going bigger and better than ever before. Spanning across 4 exciting days, the event will feature 10 theatres of content spanning topics in K-12 Education, Tertiary Education, Vocational Training (VET), Early Childhood Education, Special Educational Needs (SEN), EduBUILD Asia and new for 2019, Admissions & Marketing, STEAM, Smart Schools and Smart Campus.

Plus, there will be lots of Practical Workshops, EduSHARE Roundtables and more. Supported by IMDA, event will also feature an exhibition showcasing the latest edtech innovations and technologies. Join us at Asia's largest education conference and exhibition.



Singapore Comic Con 2019

When: 7-8 Dec 2019
Where: Marina Bay Sands, Halls A, B, C
Tickets: \$21 - \$125

Singapore Comic Con (SGCC) is back for 2019! If you're an art toy lover or pop culture fan, this year's event will be a nostalgic weekend! There will be collectible vinyl toys, licensed merchandise, an artists' market, and lots of visiting illustrators and comic artists you can meet and greet. There will also be a cosplay championship, as well as egaming to sink your teeth into.



GIGS

Nov 2 | 3:30pm - 10pm
Zhongshan Park
Tickets: \$38

Starker Music Festival

The one-day carnival will bring to you live music by prominent regional artists and homegrown talents. F.I.R., Taiwanese Pop Rock Band will be headlining this year's Starker Music Carnival 2019, supported by 5 notable local acts - the "power duo" Tay Kwei and Alfred Sim, Qiu Feng Ze, local pop band The Fleurist, and last year's Starker Music Jams Champion, Soph T.



Nov 11 | 8pm
Capitol Theatre
Tickets: \$98 - \$148
Lewis Capaldi

International breakout star Lewis Capaldi will be live in Singapore for the very first time. Capaldi has the kind of voice that needs little accompaniment to create an unforgettable impact. Featuring the hit single "Someone You Loved", the album endlessly reveals Capaldi's rare gift for capturing love's complexity in the most simply arranged songs and understated melodies.



Nov 17 | 8pm
Capitol Theatre
Tickets: \$79-\$109

SAM TSUI: The Gold Jacket Tour

Youtube sensation Sam Tsui will be heading back to Asia this November in support of his latest album "Trust" and new single "Gold Jacket". Sam will be singing all his favourite covers, mashups and fans

(family) can also expect a number of original tracks from both "Make It Up" album and "Trust" album. Sam's long time music partner and collaborator Casey Breves will on stage to join in the fun.



Nov 22 | 8pm
Shine Auditorium
Tickets: \$55-\$120

Kenny Sebastian

Youtube sensational comedian Kenny Sebastian back in Singapore for another spectacular show, The Most Interesting Man In The Room. Sebastian uses a unique blend of humor and music to entertain audiences as he shares on his outlook on life has changed ever since he turned 28 in his 6th stand-up comedy special. He also shares about animals, birds, and why the world being lazy around him is getting on his nerves.

PRODUCTIONS

Nov 1 - 3 | varied timings
Esplanade Theatre
Tickets: \$35

Passages by SDT

Singapore Dance Theatre (SDT) will be presenting its annual full contemporary season of the year, Passages. This year, there will be two works that were previously made especially for SDT, with Natalie Weir's Bittersweet and Toru Shimazaki's Blue Snow, as well as Val Caniparoli's Swipe. There will also be a world premiere from an exciting Australian choreographer, Lucas Jervies, working with SDT for the first time.



SITEX 2019
YOUR DIGITAL PLAYGROUND



SITEX 2019

When: 28 Nov - 1 Dec 2019
Where: Singapore Expo Hall 5 & 6
Tickets: Free

SITEX is back this year, bringing you the latest cutting-edge technology available in the market. The exhibition is Singapore's annual consumer and lifestyle IT exhibition which aims to connect technology and lifestyle in one single element, and to push boundaries in innovation and digital transformation.



Dec 5 | varied timings
Esplanade Theatre
Tickets: \$40 - \$80

Swan Lake (SDT)

As a grand finale in 2019, Singapore Dance Theatre's (SDT) will be presenting one of the world's most famous and well-loved ballet of all time, Swan Lake. With an ever-compelling story and technically demanding choreography, this is a performance not to be missed! With exquisite costumes and enchanting moments, this classic masterpiece remains to be the favourite ballet of many children and adults.

FROM SCREEN TO STAGE: BY YIN LOON

YOUTUBERS GOING ON TOUR

When it comes to famous entertainers, it's said that the easiest way to make money is by going on tour. The truth can also be said if you're an online celebrity. These days, we're seeing more and more YouTube stars going on tour – whether they're singers, comedians, or gamers, they've succeeded in making the jump from screen to stage.

THE FACE TUBE

You've heard of popular YouTubers getting signed onto major records, like Carly Rae Jepsen, Charlie Puth, The Weeknd and even Justin Bieber. Their viral YouTube videos caught the attention of record labels, who made them celebrities on tour.

We all know that anyone can upload a video onto YouTube and even make a decent living if they have decent follower numbers or views, since artists get paid per stream.

But going big isn't an easy task. According to a 2018 research from Germany,



This is hardly surprising when you look at the stats.

200,000 streams, creators only get paid around US\$350.

Plus, many successful full-time YouTubers don't get any days off.

As we all know, it's the companies – not artists – that get the lion's share of profits.

Universal Music, Sony, and Warner earned US\$19 million per day in streaming revenue in 2018 alone.



↑ 96.5% of all YouTubers won't make enough revenue to surpass the poverty line in the US.

FROM ONLINE TO IRL

With streaming services like YouTube or Spotify, it's easy for anyone to get their name out there, but the best way to bring in serious income is to bring themselves out to the public via live shows.

For the past decade, social media stars have taken the stage at events like **Playlist Live** and **VidCon** – large conventions that feature a mix of Q&As and meet-and-greets, for a combined audience of fans and industry insiders. Here, YouTube's biggest stars loom over the convention as royalty, but their inaccessibility here can alienate their biggest fans.



This is why tour producers and talent managers are now focusing more intimate, concert-like events targeted specifically to fans. Events like **YouTube FanFest** makes its way around the world, with the current tour making its way around Indonesia and Mumbai this year. The last tour in Singapore was in 2015, when local fans got to see superstars like Tiffany Alvord, Wong Fu Productions, and beauty blogger Bubzbeauty.



\$92 million
\$1.1 million per stop

While festivals like these have been happening over the past decade, more and more YouTubers are striking out with their own tours. For many YouTube creators, tours like these have become a key source of income.

In 2017, The Weeknd earned an estimate of US\$92 million, mostly from his lucrative world tour; according to Forbes, he took an average of US\$1.1 million per stop.

Last year, Singapore was a pitstop for The Weeknd and Boyce Avenue; in September this year, it was The Try Guys. Comedian Kenny Sebastian and musician Sam Tsui will be coming in November on separate tours, proving that international YouTubers will continue tour our region.

The thing about YouTube tours is that you never know what you're going to get: they could be comedians, makeup artists, or gamers (they're some of YouTube's top earners). Earlier this year, the 5-man sports comedy channel Dude Perfect went on tour with their favourite programmes like Overtime and stunts, while popular YouTube gamer DanTDM (whose shows often sell out) went on tour to host live audience games, among other acts.

TUBERS ON TOUR

Even YouTube's ad revenue is nowhere close to what musicians make on the road, and they're getting in on the game. Their YouTube for Artists programme shows entertainers exactly where their fans are based and what their favourite videos are, so they can better plan their next tour. Spotify is also



doing the same thing to endear themselves to artists with analytics like these.

This just proves that no matter how popular one can be online, the best way to entertain the masses is if you get out into the real world.

Love Lost

BY EVAN SEE

WHY THE ROMANCE NOVEL IS SO UNFAIRLY HATED

The romance novel is one of the few genres that has existed since antiquity, and it hasn't changed all that much too. Romance novels have the largest mass-market appeal to readers by far, making over US\$1.44 billion on average per year. Coming in second is the mystery novel, making just over half that amount with US\$728 million.

Often written from the perspective of the woman due to a 91% female readership, it's easy to see the appeal of these steamy serials to their fans – a protagonist who always gets the perfect man, an emotionally satisfying ending and no shortage of passionate, feel-good romance. Maybe you hate them, or maybe you're an avid fan. But what is it about the romance novel that creates such polarising opinions on them?

BOOK SNOBBERY

The pure, undignified hatred for the romance novel is no secret. Common criticisms that romance novels face are that they are formulaic, repetitive, or meant for "stupid readers". Self-professed bibliophiles will often mock romance readers for not knowing "good writing", frequently citing the immense popularity of the best-selling *Fifty Shades* or *Twilight* series, both of which have been panned by critics.

This book snobbery is fairly common when discussing "bad fiction". Many book lovers frequently ridicule entire genres, with romance being a prime example of this. The genre is often reduced to stereotypes of clunky writing, predictable storylines and mere "mommy porn" (steamy romance novels for bored middle-aged women).

Writers themselves are not immune to snobbery. Even Nicholas Sparks, the undisputed king of romance novels with movie adaptations, refuses to be classified as a romance novelist, preferring the term "love stories".

Some romance novels do suck, with poor editing, underdeveloped characters, or lacking inclusivity for queer and disabled characters. But there are bad examples of every genre of fiction; sci-fi writer Theodore Sturgeon once succinctly said: "90% of everything is crap".

Even so, it's unfair to deride entire genres as worthless because of the bad apples. Writer Jane Casey tweeted: "I'd say the vast majority of romance writers are exceptionally good at maintaining suspense and characterisation or NO ONE WOULD READ THEM." Furthermore, some of the most-loved contemporary novels have been of the romantic variety, including modern classics like *Outlander*, *The Notebook*, and *The Fault in Our Stars*.

It's also hard to deny the positivity that readers can gain from reading an uplifting, feel-good love story with a strong heroine. Besides, what's wrong with wanting some escapism from the dreariness of life?

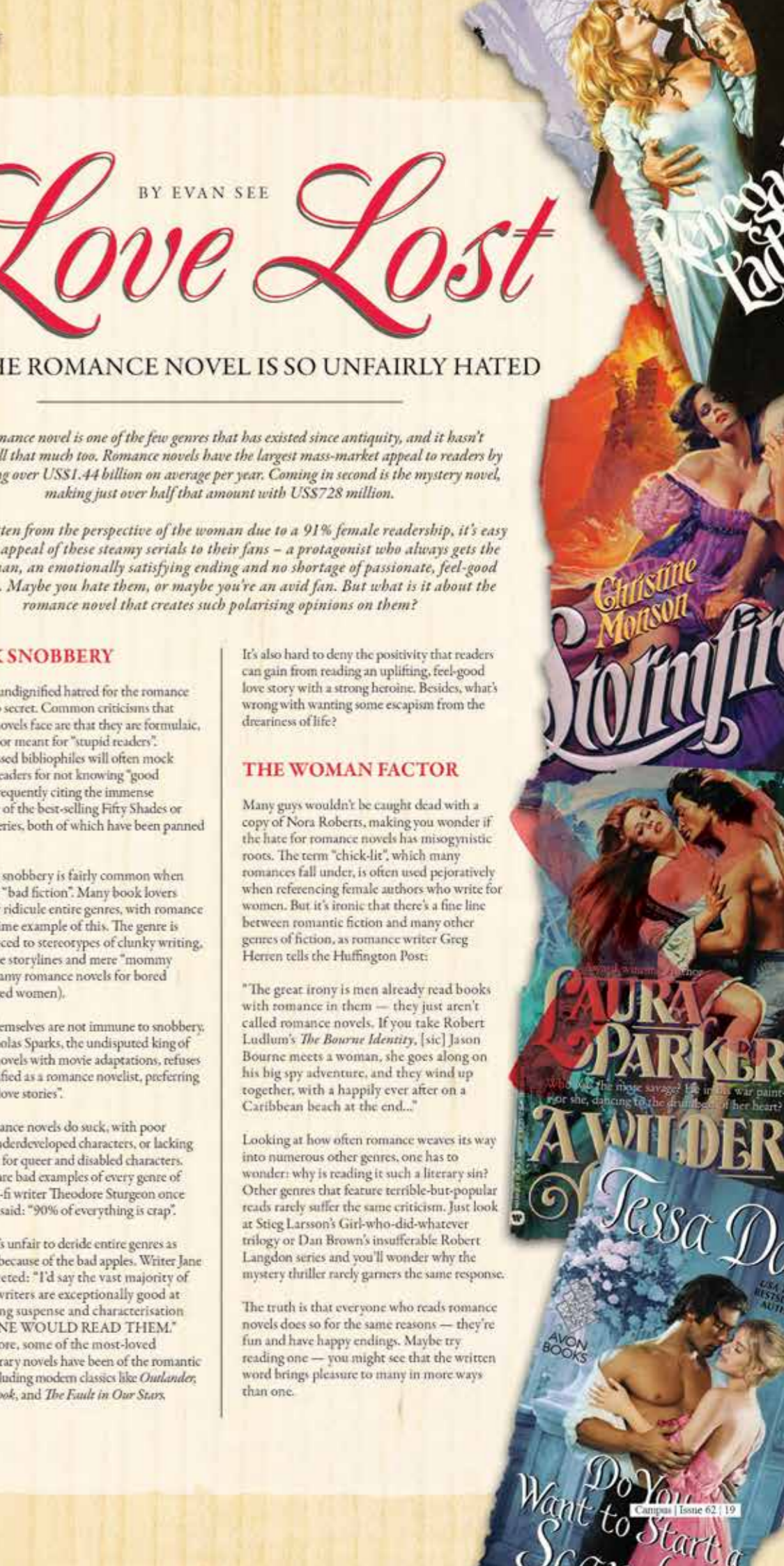
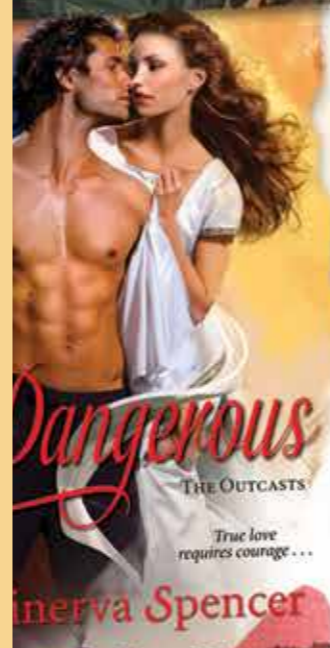
THE WOMAN FACTOR

Many guys wouldn't be caught dead with a copy of Nora Roberts, making you wonder if the hate for romance novels has misogynistic roots. The term "chick-lit", which many romances fall under, is often used pejoratively when referencing female authors who write for women. But it's ironic that there's a fine line between romantic fiction and many other genres of fiction, as romance writer Greg Herren tells the *Huffington Post*:

"The great irony is men already read books with romance in them – they just aren't called romance novels. If you take Robert Ludlum's *The Bourne Identity*, [sic] Jason Bourne meets a woman, she goes along on his big spy adventure, and they wind up together, with a happily ever after on a Caribbean beach at the end..."

Looking at how often romance weaves its way into numerous other genres, one has to wonder: why is reading it such a literary sin? Other genres that feature terrible-but-popular reads rarely suffer the same criticism. Just look at Stieg Larsson's *Girl who did whatever* trilogy or Dan Brown's insufferable Robert Langdon series and you'll wonder why the mystery thriller rarely garners the same response.

The truth is that everyone who reads romance novels does so for the same reasons – they're fun and have happy endings. Maybe try reading one – you might see that the written word brings pleasure to many in more ways than one.



By Nina Gan

THE INVISIBLE HAND OF INNOVATION

How adult entertainment drove tech advancement

We don't think twice about how things like Netflix or webcams came about, but you may be surprised to hear that the technology that we use today to quell our hunger for nonstop entertainment is heavily influenced by the adult entertainment industry. From VHS to VR, the adult industry has always been an early adopter of technology, and their revenues funded innovation. When it comes to technology, erotica leads and mainstream follows.



THE INTERNET BYTES

While the military created the internet, the adult industry was the first to take advantage of it. During the 80s, BBSs (Bulletin Board System) - precursors to today's peer-to-peer file sharing forums - were the first homes of pornography online where users shared dirty images in ASCII code in an age of limited bandwidth.

During this time, instead of downloading Hollywood movies, people were looking to download their porn faster. By 2004, a Nielsen/NetRatings study found pornography to be one of the biggest factors behind broadband penetration in Europe. In 2018, just one popular adult website alone saw 33.5 billion visits.

SUBSCRIBING TO PERVERSION

The true innovator of the content subscription model wasn't Netflix. In the days of BBS, people realised that the most popular shared files were smutty photos. Enterprising folks then started to charge for access to their systems, creating the very first online subscription model.

The adult industry had the biggest impact on ecommerce way before PayPal. In the 1990s when companies pioneered online credit card transactions, their biggest source of revenue were adult sites which created some of the first online payment programmes. They were also the first to do a real-time credit card verification.

The industry was also responsible for developing one of the first web analytics tools (1996) to count unique visitors, and the double opt-in process - where you sign up to a site and they ask you to verify your email - pioneered by Cybererotica.



HOMEMADE IS BEST

When digital cameras became the norm on smartphones, no one understood their use better than the porn industry. The web has allowed the distribution of homemade adult videos, so it could be argued that before social media, it was porn that introduced the concept of user-created content.

The adult industry was also an early adopter of inventions like Polaroid and Super 8 cameras, since both formats allowed for the average person to produce homemade erotica.

THE FUTURE OF LUST

When Apple released the iPad, they expressly forbade pornographic content on their store. However, the adult industry quickly responded by using the HTML5 video standard, allowing them to stream naughty vids.

Like Apple, manufacturers of VR goggles like Facebook aren't allowing any adult content in their stores, but according to HuffPost, VR adult entertainment is the latest tech trend that's said to make for about 30% of all data transferred over the internet. VR content from one major online adult site clocked in over 500,000 views per day.

In an era of user-friendly AI, porn has been the biggest proponent of deepfakes, which are now mainly used to create fake celebrity pornographic videos.

The adult industry has grabbed technology and applied it to consumers' needs, wants, and desires since forever, but until society looks past its steamy content and to its true significance, the actual impact of erotica will remain largely unheard.



LIVE ACTION IN YOUR FACE

Sites like Youtube wouldn't exist if it wasn't for adult entertainment companies trying to live stream performances directly to consumers. Pioneered in 1991, live streaming wasn't mainstream until 1996 when college student Jenny Ringley set up a webcast from her room, creating the very first streaming channel.

However, the first workable internet-based video streaming system can be credited to the Dutch porn company Red Light District back in 1994. Even with low bandwidth, they allowed users to stream online without plugins - by the time Hollywood attempted this, there were already tens of thousands of full-length adult titles online.

Then came live chat between consumers and performers - thanks to its high revenue, porn companies were driving this technology. Without them, we wouldn't have things like WhatsApp or Skype.

BY NINA GAN

KNOCKOUT

THE RISE OF FIGHT SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT

These days, we are familiar with UFC, muay thai, and Street Fighter - in simple terms, it's where people actually fight with each other for entertainment. Today, whether it's real life or digital, they're multi-billion dollar industries that have woven themselves into our popular culture - just take a look at how many MMA gyms and wannabe fighters out there. Here's a look at the history and growth of our obsession with 'sports entertainment'.



FIGHTING TOURNAMENTS

The Brazilian fighting sideshow called **Vale Tudo** (aka 'No Holds Barred') is the precursor of the modern-day mixed martial arts tournament. From 1960, Vale Tudo remained mostly as an underground subculture, with most fights taking place in martial arts dojos. Its popularity was fueled by the legendary Gracie family (creators of Brazilian jiu-jitsu) - one of its members helped set up Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) in 1993.

Professional wrestling (aka **Pro Wrestling**) also became popular from the 60s, especially in North/South America and Japan. A combination of flamboyant personalities and wrestling (sometimes involving props), it's now a billion-dollar entertainment industry. The biggest promoters include WWE (USA) which gave us personalities like Hulk Hogan, and the grittier New Japan Pro Wrestling (Japan).

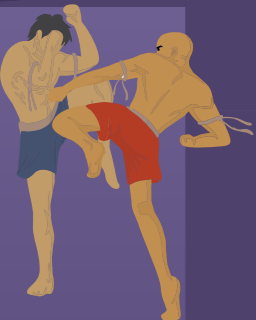


Mexico's version of pro wrestling - **Lucha Libre** - is one of the country's biggest spectator activities today. Characterised by colourful masks, its origins date back to 1863 when a Mexican wrestler developed this free-style fighting form. It wasn't until the early 1900s that its popularity started to explode as entertainment after holding no-holds barred tournaments.

A key component of MMA is **Muay Thai** - the "art of eight limbs" known for its combined use of fists,

elbows, knees, and shins. It's been around since the 18th century, but made popular as entertainment from the 20th century.

In the early 90s, mixed martial arts was gaining popularity all over the world, although the term '**MMA**' was first coined in 1993 by the creators of UFC - a tournament to determine the most effective martial arts.



Interestingly, MMA was most popular in Japan during the 90s and early 2000s when promoters like Pride and Shooto combined Japanese martial arts like daidojuku, judo, and karate, creating highly popular fighting events like K-1 and Pride which also incorporated muay thai. While the Japanese scene was flourishing, MMA's early development in the US was plagued by criticism of its violence, regulations, legal difficulties and broadcasting issues.

It wasn't until strict regulations regarding MMA was established that UFC started to flourish by the late 90s, and by the 2000s it acquired Japanese MMA brand Pride, marking the slow decline of MMA's popularity in Japan. Today, UFC has grown into a globally popular multi-billion-dollar enterprise, and the popularity of MMA has also seen the rise of other promoters worldwide, including the Singapore-based One Championship.



DIGITAL FIGHTING ARENA

Fighting games took centre stage over much of the 90s in the early years of home PCs and gaming arcades.

Capcom's **Street Fighter** (1987) was the first to release its version of a fighting game, and it's credited with establishing many of the conventions of the one-on-one fighting genre. **Mortal Kombat** (1992) was the first fighting game to introduce a secret fighter (unlocked after a series of requirements), and was also known for high levels of




violence, in particular, its Fatalities (finishing moves to kill an opponent). Bandai's **Tekken** (1994) focused on hand-to-hand combat, and was one of the first fighting games at the time to use 3D animation.

Street Fighter, Mortal Kombat, and Tekken are some of the most successful fighting franchises in the history of video games, spawning multiple movies, TV series, touring leagues, conventions, and even card games.

STRESS RELIEF

This Halloween, it's time for card gamers - this one doubles up as trivia for horror movies. How much do you know about these (in)famous characters, and will you survive the game till the end?

Freddie Krueger



Carnage Level Mass Murderer ●●●●●●	Easy to Kill? He isn't even alive ●○○○○○
Survivability Just don't dream ●○○○○○	Gore Factor He loves it ●●●●●●
Creepy Factor He looks scary ●●●●●●	Strength You can't imagine ●●●●●○

Carnage Level ○○○○○○	Easy to Kill? ○○○○○○
Survivability ○○○○○○	Gore Factor ○○○○○○
Creepy Factor ○○○○○○	Strength ○○○○○○


Blank card
for you to
fill in



How to play:


1. Cut out the cards. There is an empty card waiting for you to fill in your favourite ghoul/monster. In fact, make as many cards as possible, otherwise it'll be a very short, boring game.
2. Find at least one other player to play with you.
3. There are many ways you can play this - the easiest is to call out one of the 6 points on the card (ie. Strength) and challenge the other player with their card. The character with more points in that category wins the opponent's card.

Jason Vorhees



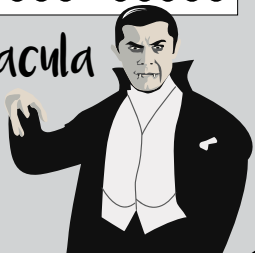
Carnage Level Mass Murderer ●●●●●●	Easy to Kill? Not by you ●○○○○○
Survivability Run for your life ●○○○○○	Gore Factor It's a bloodbath ●●●●●●
Creepy Factor He's behind a mask ●●●●○○	Strength He's invincible ●●●●●●

Chucky



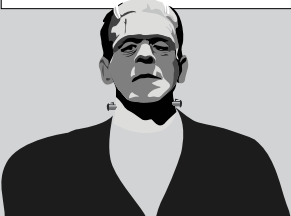
Carnage Level Mass murderer ●●●●●●	Easy to Kill? He resurrects ●○○○○○
Survivability Better run fast ●●○○○○	Gore Factor He's super violent ●●○○○○
Creepy Factor Look at those eyes ●●●●●●	Strength He's a toy ●●●○○○

Dracula




Carnage Level He's a solo killer ●○○○○○	Easy to Kill? If you have the tools ●●○○○○
Survivability If you have protection ●●●○○○	Gore Factor He's pretty classy ●○○○○○
Creepy Factor He looks human ●○○○○○	Strength He's superhuman ●●●●●●

Frankenstein




Carnage Level He's peaceful ●○○○○○	Easy to Kill? He was dead once ●●●○○○
Survivability He isn't out for you ●●●●●●	Gore Factor Only by accident ●○○○○○
Creepy Factor He looks a bit off ●●○○○○	Strength Strong as an oaf ●●●●○○

Mummy



Carnage Level Like a 5-year old ●○○○○○	Easy to Kill? It was already dead ●●●○○○
Survivability You can run away ●●●●●●	Gore Factor No violence ●○○○○○
Creepy Factor Scary for kids ●●○○○○	Strength It's pretty fragile ●○○○○○

Pennywise



Carnage Level Children killer ●●●●○○	Easy to Kill? Only by spell ●●○○○○
Survivability Only if you're brave ●●●○○○	Gore Factor He keeps corpses ●●●●○○
Creepy Factor He's got creepy eyes ●●●●●●	Strength He's strong enough ●●●○○○