

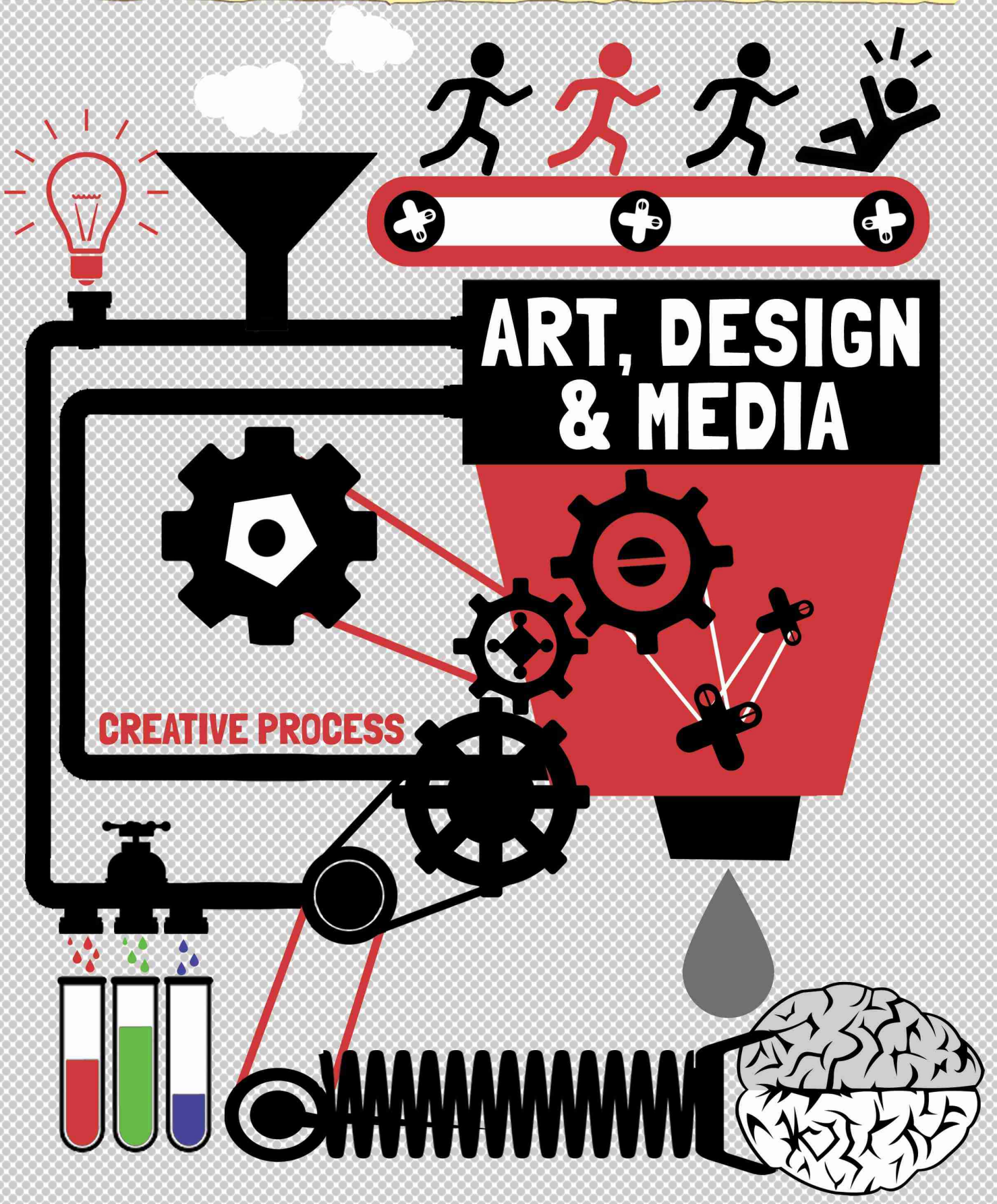
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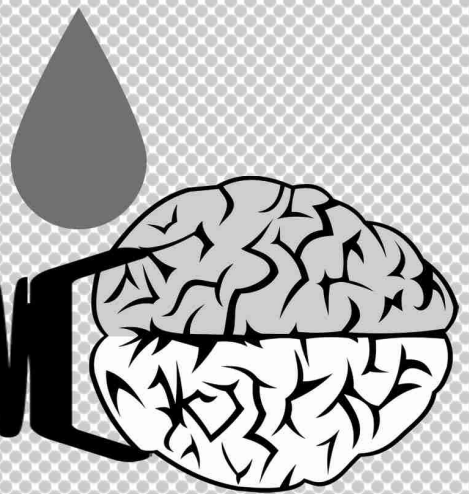
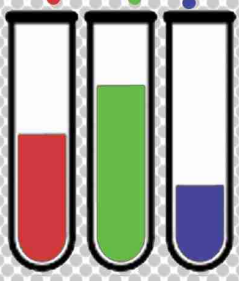
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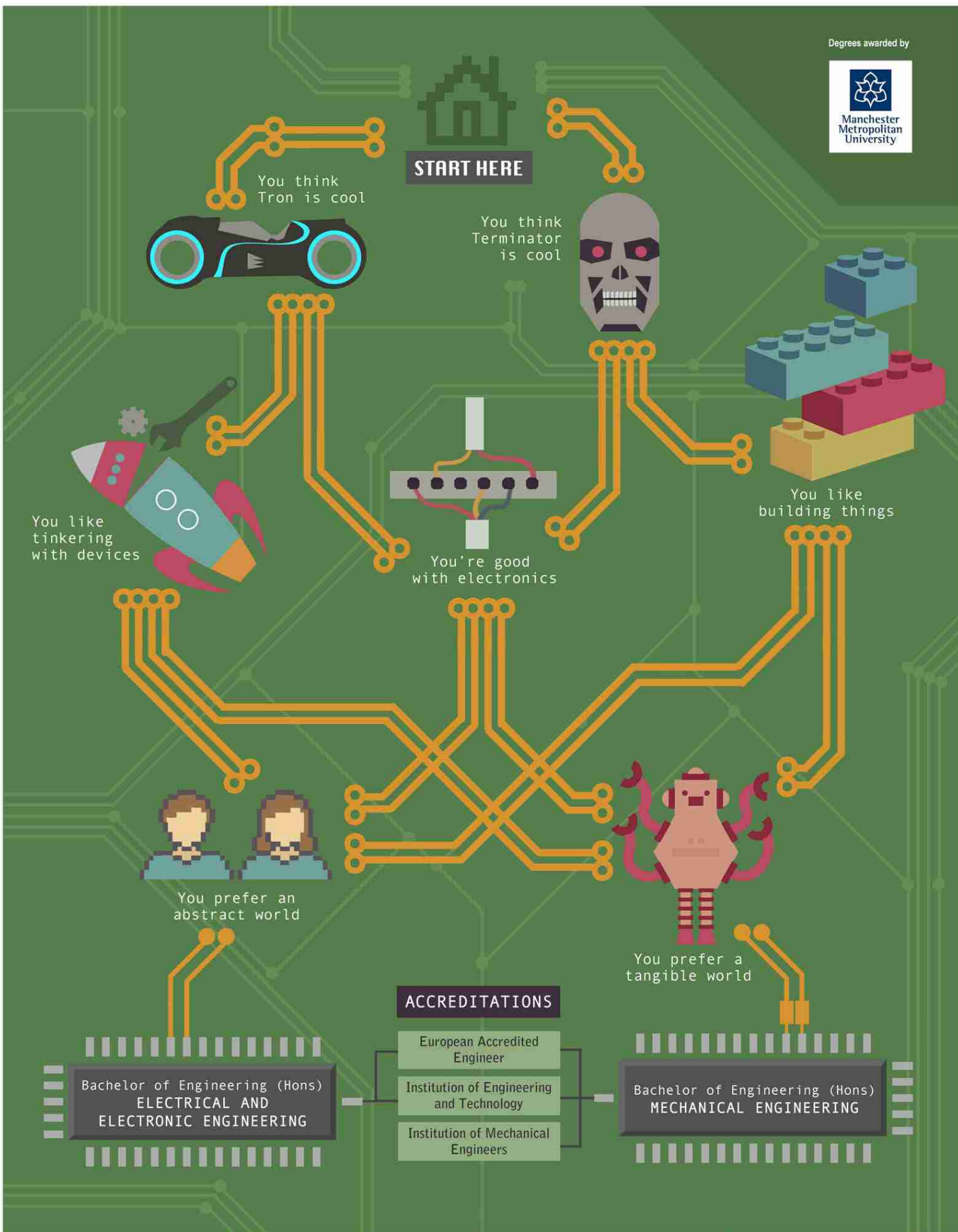
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ART, DESIGN & MEDIA

CREATIVE PROCESS





DESIGNS OF 2013

A window into design technology today

By Raziyah Begam and Yoon Ji Seon

A platform that allows aspiring designers to pitch ideas that could alter the way the world looks, competitions like the iF Design Awards and A'Design Awards garner entries from over 35 countries. Hand-picking the best, most innovative young talent to showcase their designs on a global scale, the winning pieces walk away with an iF Seal for outstanding design quality or a coveted A'Design Award.

Here's a look at some of the award-winning designs:

Top Designs from A' Design Awards & Competition



ACME Peanut Computer Mouse by ACME Europe Ltd

Deceiving the eye, these adorable peanut-shaped objects are actually high-tech, wireless mouse. Fully charged after just a few hours plugged in, this pod-looking mouse is able to last an entire month wirelessly. And its ergonomic, symmetrical design means it's easy on the wrist and the eye, and equally comfortable for both right-handed and left-handed users.

HEIGHT ADJUSTABLE WATER CLOSET BY ISVEA EURASIA

Out to aid the elderly, disabled, children and shorties, this toilet bowl's built with a unique push-button, height adjusting function. It's also eco-friendly, using just enough water that you won't regret going green. The only potential "downfall" could be if you're not paying attention and the last person before you was significantly shorter.



Donut Folding Bike by Arvind Mahabaleshwara

There's folding bikes, and then there's the Donut. Like its name suggests, it's a totally round, self-contained shell. And like any great donut, the best bits are inside. The handlebars, wheels and pedals all fold inside and all the gears and chains are hidden away inside the main circular structure.

Top Designs from iF Design Competition



OPEL RAKE BY ADAM OPEL AG

Looking like the Batmobile, only eco-friendlier, Opel's Rake emits zero emissions and works out to an amazing operating cost of SGD\$1.50/100km; making it even cheaper than taking the bus. Half-way between a sports car and a racing bike, it's agile and only seats two, and has no doors - instead the super-sexy roof lifts off. The only downside is its battery range is just 100km, but then that equals about 30 trips down Orchard Road.



Sigma Shuttle Watercraft by Bouffon Wang

If road travel has made you weary, you could always take your Sigma Shuttle Watercraft for a spin around Sentosa instead. It's got literally a boat-load of technical innovations. But the cool bit is that above water, it's a catamaran. Under water, however, it turns into a personal submarine - perfect for eccentric millionaires or secret agents.



SEIL-bag Bluetooth LED Pack by Lee Myung Su DesignLab

Perfect for cyclists in Singapore - because nothing says "Uncle, I'm about to turn right, so please don't run me over with your taxi..." like a blinking red sign on your back. Battery-powered, and programmable via your smartphone, the rider can wirelessly control right- and left-turning arrows, the word STOP, as well as any other message you want.

TopBrewer Coffee Machine by Scanomat AS

For a dedicated coffee lover, it could be a dream come true - having a dedicated, coffee-dispensing faucet in your kitchen (or hostel room?). Well almost. The bulky brewing machine is hidden below, and it's totally operated by iPhone or iPad, meaning you can order a single-, double- or whatever you want, without even having to put down your phone.



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ANIMATION: From Pencils to Pixels

Artwork by LASALLE College of the Arts Animation Students

Technology has oiled the wheels of many industries, and nowhere is that more obviously seen than in animation. With film studios trading in their trusty 2D animation departments for sharper, more vivid 3D developments – the question on many animation

students – minds is – “Which should I pursue?” As each style’s unique, and has its own fans and critics alike, the “video killed the radio star” debate about 3D killing 2D continues. So for anyone not in the know, here’s a quick glimpse at the key points:

Why 2D?

Seemingly lacking dimensions, 2D is often viewed as the voice of a bygone era because it lacks realism. However this animation style is not leaving the stage.



With a strong footing in the media industry, especially in television, hand-drawn animation is the foundation of most children’s cartoons like SpongeBob SquarePants, and even anime.

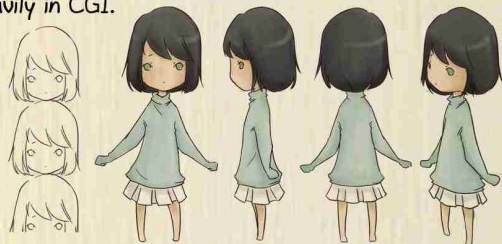


2D animation by (from top to bottom): He Jiayin, Yen, Nadia So, Xu Meilin, Bella Dwimaryanto.



Far from forgotten, 2D animation continues to reign in the fast-evolving gaming industry too. A visual style preferred by many indie game developers like Artix Entertainment and The Behemoth because of its cost-friendly nature, this frame-by-frame method is viewed to present a more creative and artistic vision as compared to its hi-tech 3D counterpart.

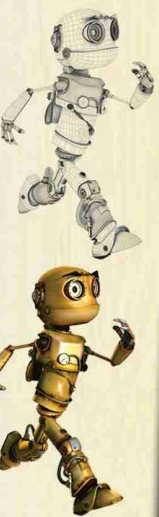
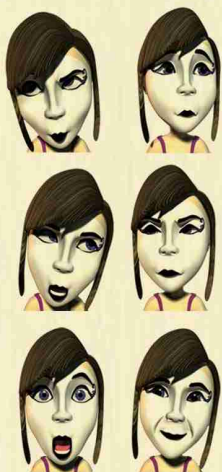
A field requiring impeccable attention to detail coupled with godlike patience, hand-drawn animation is workmanship aimed at those extremely passionate about illustration. With up to 30 or more drawings required for a mere second of cinematic animation, 2D is definitely not a job for the restless or the high-strung. Those looking to peddle in 2D animation can also dive into 3D animation, as illustration is a component used heavily in CGI.



Why 3D?

Shoehorned in every aspect of the media industry, 3D animation is hailed as the glitzier format of storytelling. Presently taking over the film and gaming industry, CGI is gaining popularity fast because of its appealing graphics, verity and immersive experience that it provides.

Deep-rooted in computer technology, 3D animation is less tedious than hand-drawn animation. Flexible in styling options – as it is relatively easier to stimulate lighting conditions in a computer than through the shading used in 2D animation – 3D technology also allows for brilliant effects. Take any sci-fi flick currently dominating the film industry – without the flares and special effects used, many of these movies might seem a little tacky or unpolished.



Succeeding in 3D animation is achievable if you have a passion for computers. Often regarded as puppeteers of their field, a paramount skill required to be a 3D animator is the knowledge of discerning personalities and body movements, as they need to ensure that the characters created are natural and life-like.



3D animation by (from top to bottom): Nafisah Mohamed, Jude Gayan Pereira, Abdul Hafiz, Ken Tan Zheng Wei

FABULOUS FASHION DIY

BY YOON JI SEON

Work the magic and revamp your old tattered clothes and shoes and turn them into your very own stylish masterpieces. Here are some awesome D.I.Y demonstrations from the amazing Youtuber, Macbarbie07 (Bethany Mota).



DIY: LACE TRIM SHORTS

WHAT YOU NEED:

Scissors, tweezers, fabric glue, some lace (from Spotlight, Daiso), your old denim jeans- short/long (or you can get it cheap from the flea market)



STEP 1: Cut the jeans short



STEP 2: Pull out threads at the ends of the short with your tweezers to get it all scruffy looking. (You can even rip the front part of the shorts to get the more shredded look)



STEP 3: Apply some glue onto the lace which has been cut to the length



STEP 4: Glue it onto the inner parts of each leg of the shorts



STEP 5: You're done! Yes, it is this simple.

PRICE COMPARISON:



BUY
Lace Trim Short - \$61
From MISS Selfridge



DIY
Shorts (\$14) +
Lace (\$3/m) = \$17

DIY: STUDDED SHOES

WHAT YOU NEED:

Studs/Rhinestones (Spotlight, Daiso, Scape flea market), super glue, tweezers, dark coloured marker, plain flat shoes



STEP 1: Mark little dots of where you want to place your studs



STEP 2: Put some superglue on the dot.



STEP 3: Pick up a stud with your tweezers and carefully place it onto the dot.



STEP 4: Do the same for the other side and your shoes are ready!

DIY: BOW BACK TOP

WHAT YOU NEED:

fabric glue, some cardboard, a rotary cutter, scissors, your old t-shirt



STEP 1: Cut out a short portion of the shirt at the bottom and at the neckline



STEP 2: Turn the shirt over to the back side and slot the piece of cardboard in between the two layers of your shirt. (This is to prevent cutting through the front part)



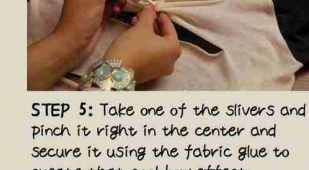
STEP 3: Create about 5 slits using your rotary cutter



STEP 4: Take the piece of material that you've cut off earlier and use scissors to cut out about 6 slivers from it



STEP 5: Take one of the slivers and pinch it right in the center and secure it using the fabric glue to create that cool bow effect



STEP 6: Repeat Step 5 for all the slits and Ta-da! You're done.



PRICE COMPARISON:

BUY
Ivory bow back top - \$46
From Dorothy Perkins



DIY
Shirt - \$8

If you already have old shirts, shorts and flats to modify at home, you don't even have to spend a dollar.

PRICE COMPARISON:



BUY
Studsy - \$579
From Gripz



DIY
Flats (\$15) +
Studs (\$5) = \$20

Art on the Flipside

A general arts degree or diploma is often seen to prep students in disciplines like illustration, design and digital media. However an arts-based degree is more than just deciding to pick up a pencil, or singing and dancing. Like any field it has its specialisations that are highly regarded especially in the creativity sphere.

Below are some options (often unheard of) that you might want to consider if you're already armed with the passion.



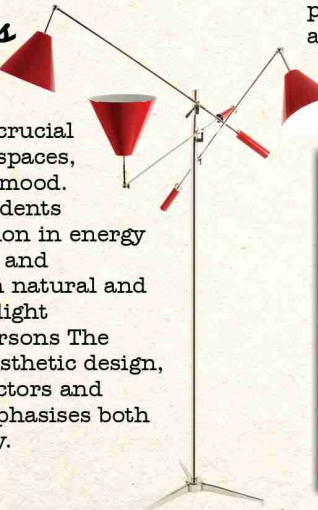
Masters of Fine Arts in Comic Art

Have you always dreamt of publishing your own comic book? Bringing life to stories through lines, colour and composition does

require a certain amount of technicality. While many prefer to doodle their way to a career, California College of the Arts offers a master's degree where you'll study in-depth and even be mentored by renowned graphic novelists as well as famous artists in fields like graphic design, printmaking and animation. Here, you'll be surrounded by a tight-knit student community and faculty to ensure you're supported in your book-length creation.

Masters of Fine Arts in Lighting Design

Lighting has always played a crucial role in not only illuminating spaces, but also in creating a certain mood. Through this programme, students learn the theory and application in energy conservation as well as social and environmental factors in both natural and electric light. More than just light manipulation, the focus at Parsons The New School of Design is on aesthetic design, physiological/psychological factors and sustainable practices that emphasises both design and civic responsibility.



Masters of Arts in Puppetry and Digital Animation

If The Muppets have always been your source of entertainment, with Miss Piggy and Kermit playing a leading role in your formative years, then you might just be interested in taking on the education pathway of puppetry. Many would scoff at the idea of this old tradition, but the trade is nowhere close to dying. With the digital domain seeping into the industry at an alarming rate through the help of 3D animators and game developers, taking on a course such as the one offered by Trent University will give you the leg-up you need to stay on top in this fast-changing industry.

Masters of Fine Arts in Anime

From Doraemon to Naruto, anime is loved by people of all ages, all across the globe. So if you have a penchant and a basis for this cultural product of Japan, a Masters in Anime is a natural progression. Currently offered at Tokyo University of the Arts, this research programme evaluates the fundamentals of anime from an international perspective, with classes teaching production issues in collaboration with anime authors and directors with the aim to find and nurture innovative talents. No animation skill required; just a really in-depth knowledge and a passion for anime.



QUT

Queensland University of Technology
BRISBANE AUSTRALIA

Creative industries

ARTS | MEDIA | DESIGN

Create the future with us. QUT Creative Industries Faculty is a world leader in arts, media and design teaching and research. Be inspired by our internationally-recognised academic staff in state-of-the-art teaching, performance, workshop and exhibition spaces.

To enhance your employment prospects, you will have the opportunity to develop a unique combination of skill sets during your studies – creativity, entrepreneurship and technology. You will also work with like-minded creative students on real-world projects and have opportunities to participate in creative internships and projects both in Australia and overseas.

Undergraduate programs

- Acting
- Animation
- Architectural Studies
- Creative Industries
- Creative and Professional Writing
- Dance
- Dance Performance
- Drama
- Entertainment Industries
- Fashion
- Film, TV and New Media Production
- Industrial Design
- Interactive and Visual Design
- Interior Design
- Journalism
- Landscape Architecture
- Mass Communication
- Media and Communication
- Music
- Technical Production
- Visual Arts

Postgraduate programs (coursework)

- Animation
- Architecture
- Creative Advertising
- Creative Industries
- Creative Production and Arts Management
- Creative Writing
- Dance
- Interactive and Visual Design
- Interdisciplinary
- Music and Sound
- Music Industry Professions
- Journalism
- Professional Communication
- Urban Design

Research courses

QUT's Creative Industries Faculty is ranked world standard and above in the majority of our research disciplines. Join our leading researchers to discover new knowledge in the following areas:

- digital media, communication and culture
- innovation in the performing and digital arts
- sustainability and innovation in design.



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BRING OUT THE PHUNK



So... you've studied classic fine art, and you're about to graduate. Unlike an animator who's heading to digital studios or a graphic designer who's already interning at an agency, your career path is a little less "specific", but that excites you. So what's next?

Here are some strategies to help you take that first big step in launching your art career.

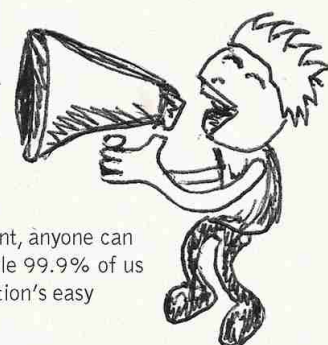
BREAKING OUT

Market Yourself

It's no secret that with a bit of luck and talent, anyone can reach a global audience on the web. And while 99.9% of us will never be Youtube sensations, self-promotion's easy and free.

What it does cost is time. It means you won't have time to develop your art while you're researching galleries, writing press releases or dealing with media.

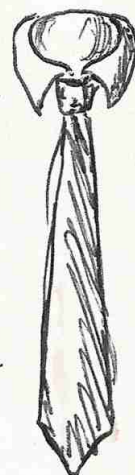
If you're lucky enough to be gifted at art and marketing, or if your art is related to the digital pipeline (ie. if your art is based on memes or social media parodies), this could be the route for you.



Find a Manager

A manager will find galleries on your behalf, do some PR for you, and generally keep an eye out for good opportunities. The obvious benefit is this frees you up to create art.

They will also take a percentage of any sales, typically up to 50%. They may also require exclusivity, since they're putting time into marketing you, and only make money when your work sells. Good managers want a win-win situation, where you grow as an artist and they grow with you.



Work with a Team

Artist colonies have traditionally been where creatives come to share energy and ideas, and one of the strongest strategies to market yourself is to find like-minded friends or allies.

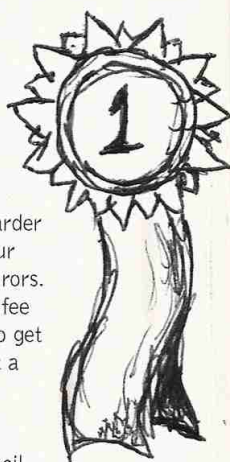
These days, a multi-disciplinary team of co-creators is a trendy way for you spread a very wide net in terms of marketing your name. Art and design collectives (like locally-based Phunk Studios) are on the rise, providing artists with an expansive scope of projects that span across art, design, publishing, fashion, music, film and interactive media.



Enter a Juried Show

Juried shows are where pro and amateur fine artists go head-to-head. And the more prestigious the show, the harder it is to get in (some shows reject 97% of entries). If your goal is to win, then research previous winners and the jurors. Juried shows also offer cash prizes, but there's an entry fee which can be substantial. If your goal isn't to win, but to get your work noticed by people in the know, placing well at a show will make you more attractive to galleries and collectible to buyers.

In Singapore, organizations like the Singapore Art Council and Singapore Biennale provide juried platforms for artists to make their mark.



Find a Gallery

Art galleries are traditional places where up-and-coming artists get seen (and sold). Any successful gallery will have an "eye", so before approaching them (avoid busy periods like major art shows) to sell your art, assess your work vs. what they carry. Better still, start networking – an introduction from a mutual friend gives you a better chance of them taking you on.

Galleries normally contract you either for a specific piece or potentially offer you a show (either solo or multi-artist). They will also charge commission, often 40-60% depending on their caliber. Galleries are also active in promoting their pieces at art shows (like Art Stage Singapore), where artists can potentially get further recognition.

So you've got the talent to create... stuff. An intriguing sculpture. A spectacular photo. A kick-ass piece of illustration. But, you don't really have a clue about where to go, but you do know that you want to hone your craft a little bit more before heading out into the big wide world. Maybe you need just a bit of inspiration.

Meet PHUNK Studio, a local arts collective group that's made waves in the design world. The group works with artists and designers from a range of disciplines – ranging from film to illustration and photography – to work on a variety of exhibitions and projects. Their art have been featured on the walls of The Butter Factory, and they have worked with MTV for the creative direction for MTV World Stage Live 2010.



PHUNK, Butter Factory

WHO ARE THEY

Founded in 1994, the quartet comprising of Alvin Tan, William Chan, Jackson Tan and Melvin Chee is the A-Team of the local design industry at the moment, with major brand collaborations and solo exhibitions under their belt.

Their recent exhibition "Empire of Dreams" at Art Seasons Gallery was predominantly hinged on the idea of fantasy, featuring whimsical typography and acrylic paintings of mythical creatures with their kaleidoscopic pop of colours. The underlying message "In the empire of dreams, you are the king of its destiny" struck a chord, particularly because as youths, we have many aspirations – most of which get crushed along the road of life.

Previously exhibited as part of the "Panorama: Recent Art from Contemporary Asia" exhibition at the Singapore Art Museum, their illuminated installation "Electricity" featured architectural highlights of modern metropolises like Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo seamlessly integrated together, showcasing in intricate detail the vibrancy that each of these bustling cities exudes.

RISEN FROM THE ASHES

Behind PHUNK Studio's success story lies a painful setback. In late 2011, their move from LASALLE College of the Arts to a new space in downtown Singapore was meant to be a fresh start to pave the way for greater progress, but within a devastatingly

short span of two days, the warehouse that functioned as temporary storage for their works caught fire and years of hard work were razed to the ground. Fate might have dealt a cruel blow to the contemporary art and design collective, but instead of giving up on their creative ventures, PHUNK Studio went on to shake up the design scene.

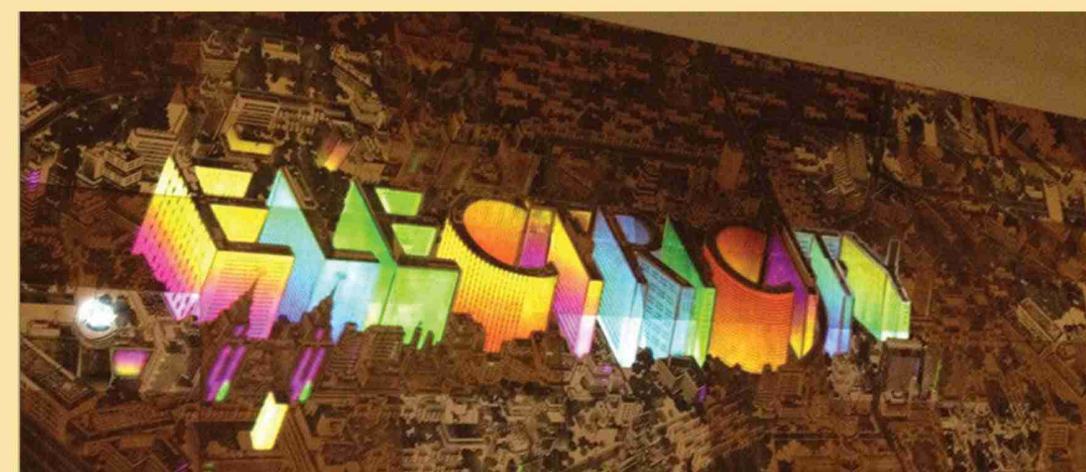
PAVING THE WAY

From being commissioned by Uniqlo to design t-shirts for the Uniqlo UT Pop-Up and by OCBC to create funk pop-art inspired designs for the Frank card, to being one of the 3 local designers to create art pieces for the highly-anticipated HBO Game of Thrones art exhibition in Singapore, their artistic streak keeps getting stronger.



PHUNK, OCBC Frank Card

In a way, it is symbolic how strong teamwork and a common goal can lead people to achieve bigger things. After all, if they started off with nothing more than a "collective dreams... and a Mac on the table with four chairs in a rented space in Chinatown", so can you.



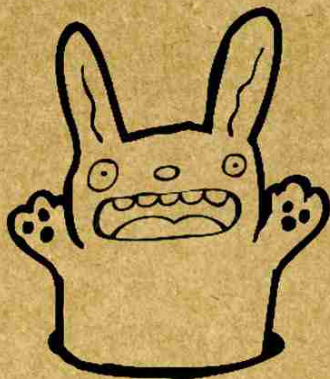
PHUNK, "Electricity" installation at SAM

CULTIVATING YOUNG TALENT

They are eager to cultivate a new generation of young designers too, starting with their TRANSMISSION: LAB project in 2010, which saw them collaborating with students from LASALLE College of the Arts to give like-minded artists a platform to explore their talent under their mentorship programme. Their efforts continued with TRANSMISSION: Kaleidoscope last year, with Noise Singapore supporting their apprentice x artist collaborations.

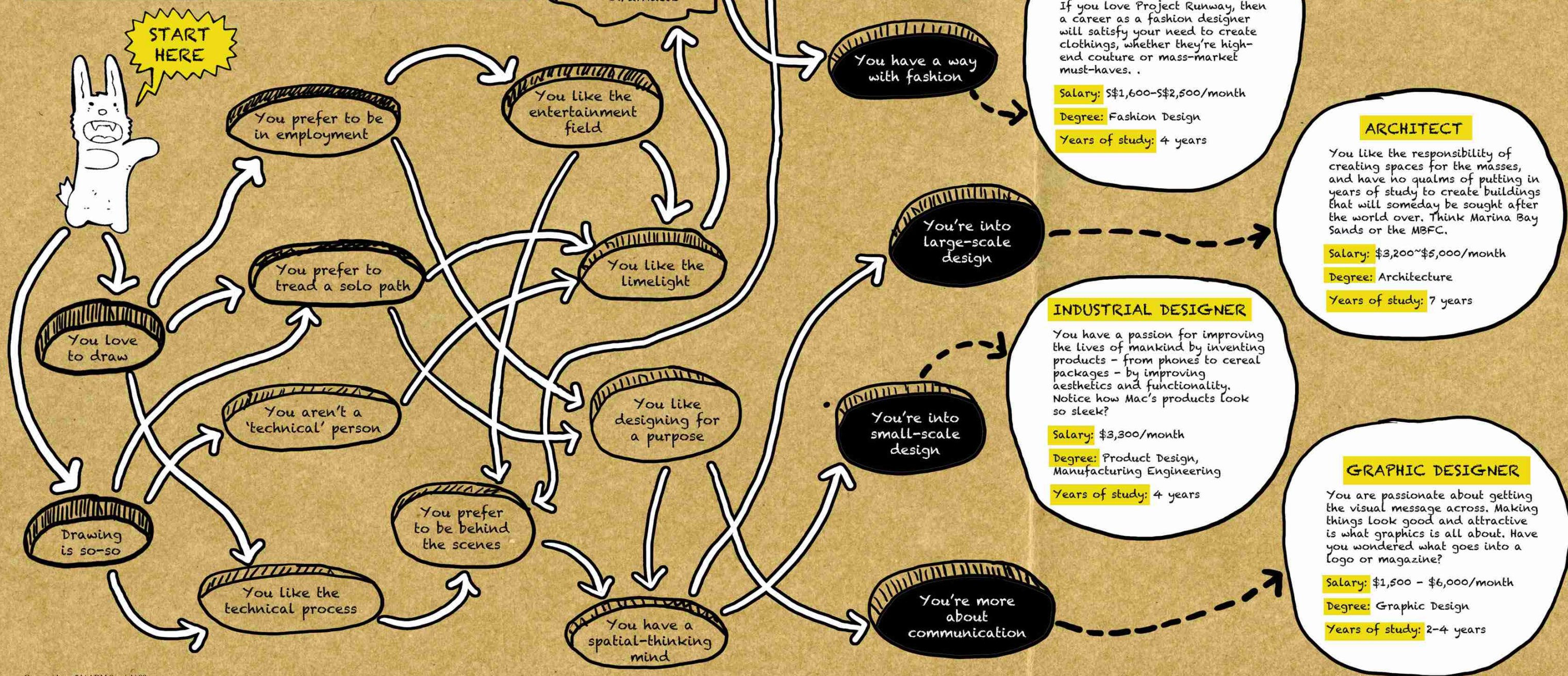
Down the Rabbit Hole

Which design path is right for you?



The field of design is undeniably wide, and while some of us have a firm idea of the path we'd like to go down, rest of us might prefer to 'leave our options open'. So, to help you on your path to your future design career, here are some basic questions that will hopefully lead you down the right rabbit hole.

As it is obviously not scientifically-proven, your best option is still to grab your counsellor for some sound advice.



BY ANGELA LOW

BEYOND THE ART: ALTERNATIVE CAREERS

Let's face it. Not everyone is born to be a designer, musician or artist. Not everyone has the creative ability to draw, design or sing. Does that mean a passion in these industries will only remain a passion for such people? Not if you don't want it to be! Here are alternative careers in art and design!

FASHION DESIGN

FASHION BUYER

Doesn't it already sound like the best job ever? Essentially a profession where you get paid to shop, the fashion buyer needs to be equipped with a passion for fashion and an eye for clothes. And get this: part of the job is to attend fashion shows locally and overseas! In fact, it's intrinsic for them to travel to study the current styles. The buyer has to predict fashion trends and select the future articles of clothing to be featured in stores 5 to 7 months later.

Fashion buyers also play a part in deciding how apparel is presented in a runway show or displayed in retail outlets. It's such a crucial role there are different levels of the job, ranging from trainee buyers to buying directors.

SALARY: \$30,000 - \$100,000



FASHION MARKETER

If foreseeing trends isn't your cup of tea, perhaps marketing would be a more suitable career path. Fashion marketers are the ones to advertise clothing brands, take care of the customers' desires and do it all using business strategies. In short, their job is to get people to buy the clothes they want them to buy.

The fashion marketer enhances the product, be it a plain white t-shirt or a couture dress, so that everyone would want to put it on top of their shopping lists, or at least on top of their wish lists.

SALARY: \$66,000 - \$133,000

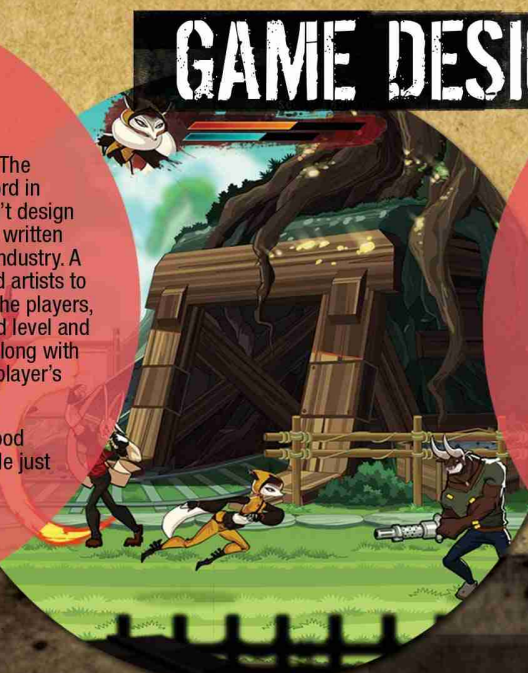
GAME DESIGN

GAME WRITER

Super Mario. Angry Birds. Grand Theft Auto. The Legend of Zelda. Did these words strike a chord in your heart? Want to create new games but can't design at all? No matter. If you've got the chops for the written word, there's still a place for you in the gaming industry. A game writer works closely with the designers and artists to craft a story. Not just any story – it's the story of the players, the setting of the game, the plot in each quest and level and all the specifically different characters involved, along with dialogue. This job contributes a huge part to the player's experience.

Though it's no walk in the park to become a good game writer, you've already won half the battle just by loving to play.

SALARY: \$60,000 - \$150,000



GAME PROGRAMMER

The name of this occupation may turn a few heads away. But really, it's more than just computer codes. It's the bridge between the design and the actual game. Though it sounds dull and tedious, programmers actually get to experiment with the sound and graphics, bringing the game and its characters to life. Furthermore, game programmers are in high demand right now and there are so many specialisations to choose from – game engine programming, artificial intelligence programming, gameplay programming, etc.

With enough practice and a dose of determination, game programming can be really rewarding as the finished product will definitely make the process worth your while.

SALARY: \$75,000 - \$128,000

RECORD PRODUCER

The music master in the studio, a record producer mainly mixes and masters the musicians' song recordings. These days, the music producer's job scope occasionally includes song composition, the mentoring and coaching of talents, and forming a sonic direction for the artiste's music.

Record producers should have an excellent ear for different sound elements. They are the ones responsible for those radio tracks that become addictive ear worms; most of them maintain low profiles, as the other half of the work is in the artiste's hands. Although looking at how certain artists simply can't sing live, even if their lives depended on it, the record producers can be something of a magician behind those studio knobs and buttons.

SALARY: \$20,000 - \$1,000,000

MUSIC



MUSIC MANAGER

Often portrayed as the money-minded one in movies, a music manager takes care of the business side of the music industry and advises his or her artistes about career decisions and such. Like a music producer, the manager ensures the limelight is cast on the artistes, instead of themselves.

One word that best describes this job is "promote". This is because that's what they do. It's the most vital part of music managing. It ranges from overseeing the production of CD labels and posters to booking shows.

SALARY: \$40,000 - \$114,000

ART CRITIC

If you can't create art, critique it. With a good amount of knowledge in art history and art appreciation, all an art critic needs to do is to visit a whole lot of art exhibitions, galleries and museums. Over time as one's eye for art develops, an art critic's opinions can become very highly valued. At times, their reviews trigger lengthy debates as well.

Many art critics start small within obscure blogs. With more experience, these critics could be featured in newspapers and art magazines and earn a regular spot eventually. For the expert critic, one can even venture into getting published.

SALARY: \$20,000 - \$76,000

ART DEALER

Isn't it easy to lounge around gorgeous works of art and get paid for it? Well, that's just the surface of what an art dealer does. The real deal encompasses a little bit more than just buying and selling art pieces in galleries. Aside from seeking masterpieces internationally, art dealers also actively select new artists to advocate in art galleries.

Art dealers should be equipped with the know-how to verify the value of art pieces and distinguish a fake from an authentic. The knowledgeable art dealer can do so just by analysing the colours, the structure and all the way down to the brush strokes.

SALARY: \$30,000 - \$118,000



FINE ART

LEARN ABOUT THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY

A degree programme like the Bachelor of Creative Industries offered by Queensland University of Technology is designed to cater to the 'creative professional' rather than the pure content creator. It allows you to develop a wide range of skills in the creative and performing arts, media and journalism, and design, supplemented with studies in business, IT and law. Armed with the understanding of the creative industries, the creative process and business, graduates find jobs in a wide range of sectors, often managing 'creatives' in roles like film & TV producers, fashion merchandisers, managers for theatre companies and business development for design firms and game developers. Careers as 'creative professionals' are in demand and often more stable than content creators, artists and performers.

All salaries are annual, and based on an average.

GOOD VIBRATIONS

making it in the music industry

So you fancy a career in the music industry? Does the limelight excite you, or do you prefer to be the mastermind behind big artistes? If you're one of those lucky few who has the freedom to chase your musical dreams, then you'll really need a few sound strategies to help you get started.

The music industry in Singapore is still relatively small, although it's growing in leaps and bounds, thanks to the recent profusion of numerous music festivals and of course, social media. But, if you're a newbie in the business, how do you get your name out there?

GETTING THE GRADES

"To get started in the industry, you have to first be aware of what you like, whether it's indie, pop or hip hop," says Ryosuke Imai, music producer at Tiny Voice and pioneer of hip hop in Japan.

As with many careers, it's often a smart idea to start with education, and a degree in music or musical instruments gives a good foundation. If you're more into classical music, that is. If you're already at a conservatory, then your career path is pretty much set - you can opt to be part of an ensemble, a soloist or even a teacher. Education is highly valued in the classical scene, with musical competitions (or concours) adding a feather in your cap.

For those into pop, hip hop and/or rock, there are no hard and fast rules. You just need to know the basics, but these don't apply to certain genres - for example, hip hop doesn't use scores, as it's about tempo. Looking good helps, but having a large pool of followers helps even more. Then there's practice, practice, practice. If you don't have stage confidence, but love to create music or beats, then a career behind the scenes - like a producer or DJ - might be up your alley. Looking good is optional, but having good connections (and good ears) definitely helps.

If you're unsure of your musical path, an education in music might help. A Bachelor of Music at Australia's QUT allows you to experiment with a wide genre of music, in addition to other essential skills like songwriting and music production.

ALMOST FAMOUS

So you've established (amongst your friends, that is) that you have the talent, and the looks. And managed to score gigs at clubs or restaurants. If you think that all you need next is to wait for a record label to find you, then you'll be waiting a long time. These days, record labels want proven artistes before considering a contract - meaning you'll need to already have a fan base, some songs under your belt, and prove that your music can make money.

This could be a stumbling point in Singapore, as many artistes are hesitant about throwing themselves fully into their music, preferring instead to have a proper job to supplement their interests. That's a challenge that Singaporean rapper Kevin Lester, the LionCityBoy and ex-engineer initially had, having worked a mundane job at a large corporation before focusing full-time on his music.

To get yourself noticed, you need to market yourself. This is how those with a foundation or education in business or marketing get a leg up. Still, there isn't a secret formula - you've got to work to get your break.

COME SOCIAL

So how do you get publicised? If you're savvy with social media - especially Youtube - then your problems are half over. Don't underestimate the power of the Share button, as it could potentially make you the next Psy. Sure, he may be a grad of the prestigious Berklee School of Music, but it wasn't until he hit Youtube that he became the sensation he is today.

Plenty of artistes have started out as Youtube celebrities - think Carly Rae Jepsen, Ryan Higa and David Choi, all of whom were in Singapore very recently. Local bands like The Summer State and The Sam Willows have also made it big on Youtube, catapulting them to fame significantly faster than just playing at endless gigs.

There are 2 good reasons for using Youtube: firstly, you can get interactive feedback unlike at live shows (which helps you hone your skills), and secondly, your name could easily go viral. Especially if you harness your Facebook and Twitter accounts.

If you've got several songs recorded, you'd be tempted to upload them once a day, or week - but uploading them all at once means that those who're intrigued may be able to watch more, since they might forget about it the next day. Remember, record companies want to see that you have more than just one hit.

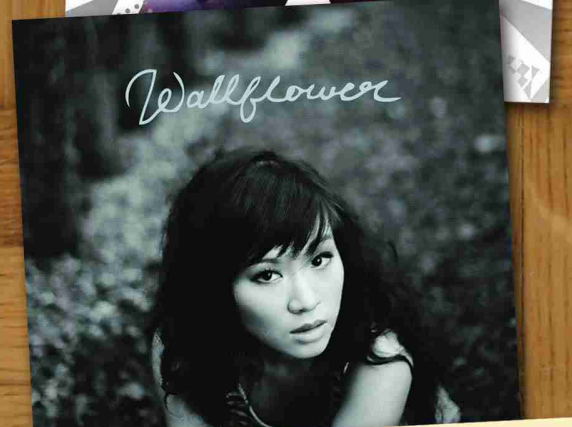


BEHIND THE SCENES

Admittedly, being behind the scenes requires more business sense than pure performing, and you can acquire that knowledge at courses such as a Diploma in Music Business (at SAE Institute), which teaches elements like copyright and artist management, in addition to real hands-on projects.

If business is not your thing, something like a Diploma in Audio Production gets you started in the industry, whether it's for music, film or advertising. If you're the type who doesn't like the limelight, a career behind the scenes could be for you - and that doesn't necessarily mean it's any less rewarding either.

While Leonard Soosay may not be a household name, he's been credited to the success of local acts like Inch Chua, Electrico and The Great Spy Experiment. While Tiny Voice has produced hits for Japanese and Korean bigwigs, including Ayumi Hamasaki and Big Bang. Even if your name isn't on the frontline, being linked to a multitude of hits - for some - is just as good as having performed it yourself.



WHERE TO GO FROM HERE...

In the end, whether you're looking to get yourself signed onto a record label or landing yourself a job at a recording studio working with major artistes, know your strengths and constantly work on them.

A good attitude seems to be the clear criteria when it comes to success with record labels and recording companies. While many appreciate good talent, there is always room for improvement, and your willingness to learn or change will be what makes or breaks you. As Imai advises: "Be humble and never forget where you came from."



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