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Issue 23 Aug 2012

STAR CENTRAL



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2012 COVERGIRLS

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Managing Director Mike Ilagan Editor in Chief Jenny Aluning

Photographers FIN Photograph Archie Karganilla

Senior Contributors Jessica J Shiwani Patricia Higgins Alex H Jade Middleton Alex Lafrentz

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Editor's notes

My family reacted with shock last week when news broke that my dad just had a heart attack. We can't believe that there was anything seriously wrong with him because he's the picture of health! Thank God that he's okay now, weirdly enough though, his heart attack has actually taught me a very valuable lesson - it reminded me of how short life really is. Ironically it has become my teacher. I have learned several lessons from it, lessons that I've always known all along yet failed to acknowledge due to the hustle and bustle of the daily grind.

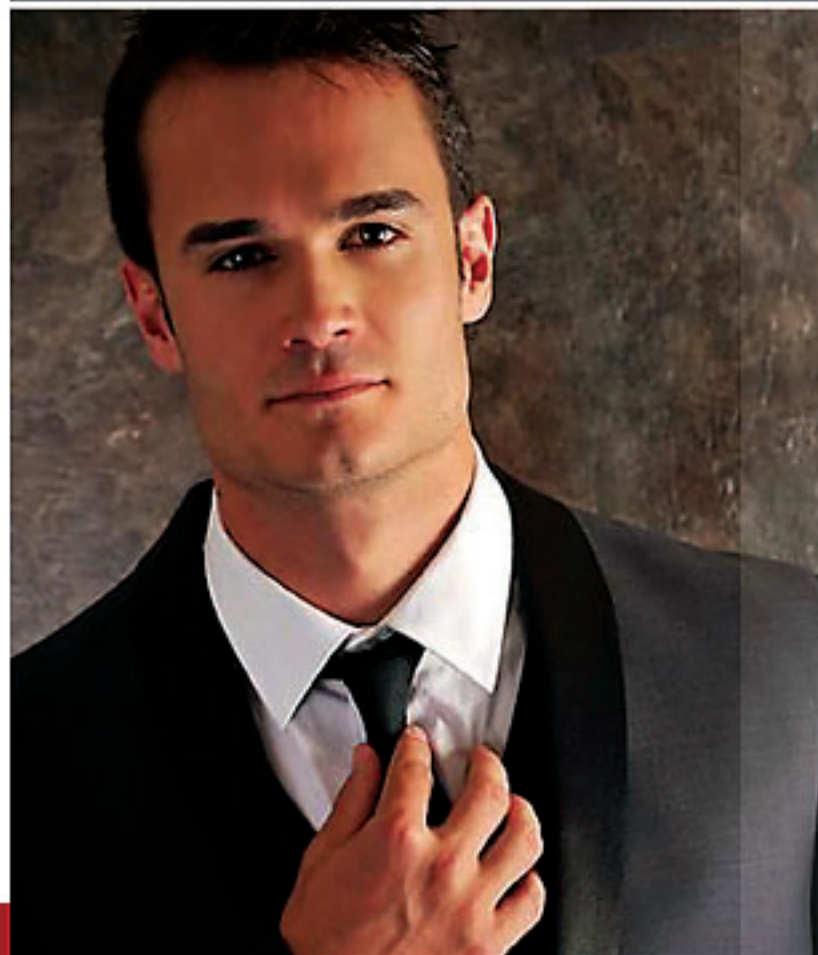
Sadly, it took a big trial like this to bring to mind those lessons and make me realise that life is precious because no one really knows when this wonderful journey of life will come to an end. It can be taken away from us at any second.

Since then I have promised myself that no matter how demanding life gets, I will ensure that I spend quality time with my loved ones. Similarly, you should all spend quality time with your loved ones as well. You should also take the time to tell them how important they are in your life because honestly speaking, they are not going to be around forever.

On a final note, just listen to your heart, because life is too short and meaningless without doing this.

Mike Ilagan
Managing Director

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BEAUTY GURU OF THE MONTH: NOE

Most women remember playing with their mother's make up when they were little girls. But for a lot of women, those playful times were just that...play. Not for Noe Mae Villagonzalo, StarCentral Magazine's 'Beauty Guru' of the Month. For her it was the spark that ignited a lifetime of passion. "My passion for makeup is something innate and something I could not explain..." As a child, "my grandmother was my first model and even if I managed to make her look like a clown, she never said anything discouraging. In fact, she loved it! She is one of my biggest inspirations."

Noe Mae was exposed to the creative world very early on in her childhood. Her parents took her to dance classes, vocal training, guitar lessons and she was active in theatre all through school. But her career as a makeup artist officially began when she was 18 years old. "Back then I did most of my cousins' and relatives' makeup and hair..." She worked on building up her skills until 2010 when she launched her YouTube channel, "COLORismyweapon," dedicated to helping women achieve flawless makeup looks for any occasion. "I wanted to share what I know with others and show them that they can look their best without the hassle." Clearly, her audience appreciates it as to date, her channel has achieved nearly 971,000 views and has

OVER 12,600 subscribers!

Deriving inspiration from "Old Hollywood actresses, such as Sofia Loren, Audrey Hepburn and Elizabeth Taylor" for her classic looks, Noe Mae admits that it is the interaction with "different and unique individuals" is what she most enjoys about being a makeup artist. "Being a part of a person's life is a tremendous honor." Meeting people from many "different walks of life", it is the people who have battled illness and still retained a "sunny disposition about life", that has touched and humbled Noe Mae the most. "It's such a powerful thing to behold. So powerful that it makes you grateful for everything that you have and not focus on the things you can't change."

But for right now, her full concentration is in completing her degree and achieving her licence. She is studying for a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from the University of San Jose, Recoletos, Philippines. After that, it seems that the sky is the limit. With her family's full support behind her ("Without them, I wouldn't have achieved anything."), Noe Mae plans "to take my channel and my blog up a notch very soon and get more experience and training in the field. Everyone should definitely stay tuned!"

CASSIE VALENTINE

Cassie Valentine is definitely a study in contradictions. The self-confessed tomboy is just as at home riding a quad bike as she is strutting on stage at a beauty pageant! An avid lover of the outdoors, Cassie began her life in front of the flashbulbs at a beauty pageant early last year ("The first time I walked down the catwalk gave me the biggest adrenalin rush..."). She was approached by photographers and agencies and through them, continued to compete in beauty pageants. Most notably, she came in the Top 12 when she competed in Miss Universe Australia for the honour to represent the country in the iconic pageant in December this year.

The down-to-earth Sydneysider has so far carved herself a successful career in the modeling industry and while she loves to "...walk down the catwalk with the lights shining in my face...", it is the girls she meets along the way that she enjoys the most. "Everyone seems to think that models aren't the friendliest bunch but they think wrong. I have made so many friends through this who also have been so supportive in my career." Fellow models such as Karenna Andrews, Zoey Dunstall and Sandra-Lee Carcar have made an indelible impression on the 19-year old - "They are fun, interesting to be around and the most supportive models who I have met."

While there is no denying Cassie's success, "...there has been a moment in my life where I thought I could not make it in this industry...". She counted on the support of her large family (she has 10 other siblings!) to get her through the doubt. "They believe if I have a dream, then follow it, work on it and don't stop until you have tasted success... Never give up something you believe in."

With her sights set on the Victoria's Secret catwalk, Cassie is enough of a realist to always have a plan B. "My plan B is to study really hard towards Media Marketing. I see myself as a brain stormer and always have an idea..." Brimming with beauty, self-confidence, drive and ambition, Cassie Valentine is definitely a face of the future.



ROSIE DAWSON



"It is incredibly empowering to take pride in the way you present yourself, and to own your every strength." This is perhaps one of the most valuable lessons that Rosie Dawson has learned throughout her career so far. Modeling was actually an offshoot that came from one of Rosie's other pursuits - acting. "When I started auditioning more frequently for various roles I became more conscious of my appearance and presentation. It was then that I decided to do a modeling course at Style Academy." She so enjoyed her time there that she decided to begin her portfolio and sign with a modeling agency.

Being a dancer as well, Rosie was fascinated with the parallels between dancing and modeling - "I enjoy having an awareness of my body in a space and working with photographers to create interesting lines for just the right shot...". The 22-year old also enjoyed the "excitement and buzz" that went with a runway show. "...there is a kind of ritual behind creating any look and I enjoy that creativity and perfectionism that comes with the whole scene...". She definitely appreciates the creativity and artistry inherent in fashion.

But Rosie has seen the ugly side of the modeling world as well. Because she did not possess the 'textbook' frame of a model, she has had to endure comments and 'suggestions' to change her appearance to get more work. But this multi-talented young woman (she has trained in both NIDA and in the Sydney Dance Company) has learned to not only accept the way she was, but to embrace it. "I feel when you view yourself in a positive light with equal focus on inner and outer beauty you cannot help but shine..."

For now, Rosie's modeling career is taking a backseat to her dancing one. She is currently working with Arthur Murray International, trained in a multitude of dance styles. She is also neck-deep in rehearsals for a Brazilian Samba/Salsa group performances at the Latino Fever School of Dance. On top of that, she is also working with her dance partner on independent professional floorshows to be unveiled throughout the year. Suffice to say that creatively, the sky is the limit for Rosie Dawson!

CHARLI LEWIS

It says a lot about a person when they overcome their fear. For Charli, lacking confidence in her childhood, instead of withdrawing into herself, pushed her in front of the cameras. "Modeling gives me a boost of confidence that I lacked growing up. Modeling has helped me to be content with myself, to love the way I am and work with what I have." The half-Filipino, half-British beauty also found herself fascinated by modeling – "I find it amazing how such poses can portray different messages in a photograph without even the use of words."

Her first foray into the modeling world was as a finalist for the Miss University competition held at the Arthouse Hotel in Sydney. Thriving on nerves and adrenaline, "...I did my first catwalk and loved it..." After that, she did her first photo shoot with Archie Karganilla. Describing herself as hard-working, Charli made sure that she took the time and practice to "get a feel for what you're doing as a model" so that the photographic results are as amazing as she can manage.

Her inspiration not only in modeling but in her life is superstar, Tyra Banks. "To me she was and is such a strong, intelligent and of course a stunning woman. She inspires me because she is not superficial but instead she teaches her audience, mainly women and young girls that the human body is how it is. The media creates pressure on regular people to look like celebrities but Tyra Banks stands up for her beliefs and is passionate about her views. She expresses the need to embrace your beauty and not focus on your flaws..."

There is a lot more to Charli than being a model. She is also an award-winning athlete, specializing in the long jump, the 100 metre sprint and relays. But her true passion is in Nursing. She is currently in her last year of Bachelor of Nursing at the University of Technology, Sydney and she hopes to specialize in midwifery. "In the future I plan to get my degree in midwifery and honestly cannot think of a better profession for me!"



MEGAN GAUDRY

When one sees this fresh-faced Australian beauty, she brings to mind such Hollywood 'It' girls such as Leighton Meester and Blake Lively. But beneath her flowing blonde looks and dazzlingly friendly smile, lies a down-to-earth 18 year old with big plans, both in front of the camera or away from it.

Megan Gaudry may be new to the modeling industry, but she has certainly surrounded herself with the right people to help her navigate through its tricky terrain. She works in the same modeling agency that represents the Miss Universe Australia state finalists! Megan was drawn to the creativity of modeling, as well as the obvious perks – "...getting your hair and makeup done and looking nice and then getting paid for it..." – and of course, to the end results. "Photographers...are very talented and completely surprise you in how good a job they can do."

Even though she is new to the modeling world, Megan already understands that keeping grounded will be of vital importance if she plans to be successful. Her short time has already taught her that having something else to focus on apart from modeling is key and that she should view modeling "as any other profession...as work that needs to get done. Studying for my degree also helps me stay grounded as it is very academic and completely opposite to modeling." She is currently enrolled at Macquarie University studying Bachelor of Media and at its completion is hoping "I can get a career in either public relations, Journalism or news presenting."

With her family firmly supporting her ("They are happy as long as I'm comfortable doing what I'm doing"), and with a good (and very attractive!) head on her shoulders, it is not hard to imagine Megan's career taking off for amazing heights. Whether that career ends up on magazine covers or within its pages, Megan Gaudry definitely has a glittering future ahead of her.



MICHELLE PALMER



Always looking to the future and keen to see where things will take her next has been the main driving force of Michelle Palmer. Aged 23 years old, this young lady has over the years created a secure spot for herself in the modeling world. Interestingly enough, Michelle Palmer had no early training or exposure to the modeling arena and believes that it was the sport of taekwondo that taught her 'discipline and gave (her) a competitive nature'. Michelle Palmer believes that these two clauses played the most integral role in her success apart from the unending support that her family (especially her dad), provided her with.

Michelle Palmer never really intended to become a model and it was only when she was helping some friends with their photo shoots that she realized that she actually 'enjoyed the work so she then 'entered a few competitions online'. This marked the first stepping stone on the path to modeling for Michelle Palmer. Soon a 'friend's uncle' invited her to model for a photography school and from there Palmer was spotted and was asked to participate in Flair 2011.

It was here that she had her first catwalk experience wherein Michelle concluded was 'very different from standing in front of a camera lens' as she was 'required to win over the judges with more than just looks'. Michelle Palmer ranked 3rd in Flair 2011 overall and says that she had an 'incredible time' during the competition. She even mentioned she still gets all nostalgic when she hears the songs that were played during the catwalk.

Amazingly enough, Michelle is not just beautiful, she also brains and a heart too. She is currently studying BA in Social Science and along with it, works in childcare. It is amazing how this young girl, despite having no formal training in the profession, has managed to hold the fort so well. She said the young kids that she works with 'reminds her to appreciate the simple things in life by enjoying every moment' which helps keep her profession in perspective.

Michelle was just recently in London a year ago and she said she wants to 'travel back to Europe for modeling' and also continue to work there. We hope to see this budding beauty more often on the catwalk and in photoshoots of course because her grace and charm are in demand in this industry. Let's face it, Michelle Palmer does seem like a face that will definitely stick around for several years to come.

STEPHANIE HUNT



Even a model of Stephanie Hunt's caliber can get starstruck! The 22-year old, who has modeled for names such as GUESS, Revlon, designer Melba Aros, Lady Jayne, Toscow Jewellery, celebrity hair stylist, David Baball and magazines such as Camilla, RUSSH, Cosmopolitan and FTV, was flabbergasted upon receiving a personal invitation from rising star, Faydee to join him in the video for his new song, 'Say My Name'. "I had always been a HUGE fan of his... I was so excited, but also so nervous that I'd be embarrassing myself... and the icing on the cake was that the video was a great success!" Garnering over 220,000 hits on YouTube, as well as airing on major radio stations and music TV channels such as MTV and V, it has proven to be a huge milestone not just for Faydee but for Stephanie as well.

Stephanie has certainly proven that she can rely not only on her looks for her success but also on her focus, drive and ambition. Added to that is a healthy dollop of good sense! 'Challenges' are a normal part of working as a model ("Modeling has definitely thickened up my skin!") and to Stephanie, one's attitude towards them will define you. "...love and believe in yourself! I know that sounds so corny, but it can be really tough being around intimidatingly successful and gorgeous people and still feel as though you fit the bill. I've learned to overcome this by ceasing to compare myself to other models and rather focus on my own unique strengths so that I can bring something new to the table, rather than trying to emulate others..."

Stephanie's early struggles with low self-esteem has served to spur this young entrepreneur ever onwards. She not only juggles her modeling career with her academic one (she is currently finishing a Bachelor of Commerce degree at Sydney University), she also regularly volunteers at an animal shelter! It "...serves as a great reminder of what my priorities should be, and what really matters in life. Having a healthy balance between work, my personal life, university and my volunteering has been the key to staying grounded for me."

That healthy balance seems to be recipe for success as well with many plans in the works for this talented (she speaks French and plays the piano!) young lady. But to Stephanie, it will always be "...that with self-belief, hard work, dedication and a lot of resilience, you really can achieve anything."



SERIOUSLY *Seriously*

movie of the month

The Dark Knight Rises

Masterful! Powerful! Heart-wrenching! Hang-on-for-dear-life tension! Action-packed! And with just the right amount of dry humor, 'The Dark Knight Rises' is a fitting end to Christopher Nolan's (who is a genius, by the way) Batman trilogy. The movie was just a little shy of absolute brilliance (there are parts where the action and story lagged) but oh my, it was still wonderful. He and his brother, Jonathan Nolan are master storytellers. They really should teach classes on balancing character development with edge-of-your-seat action (the guys behind Transformers could learn a lot!)

The movie picks up 8 years after the death of Harvey Dent (Aaron Eckhart). Dent (complete with 'Harvey Dent Day'), has been celebrated as the hero that cleaned up Gotham City. But while the citizens of Gotham have lived in peace, the two principal players behind the conspiracy, Bruce Wayne/Batman (Christian Bale) and Police Commissioner Jim Gordon (Gary Oldman) have been left as broken individuals. Wayne has been living as a recluse and so, Batman has also disappeared, while Jim Gordon's family has left him and he is considered by many in the police force to be past his use-by date. But soon, both men are called upon to deal with a new, and very nasty threat.

That threat is Bane, a mercenary/terrorist whose introduction to the audience - via a daring mid-air 'kidnap/rescue' - is nothing short of spectacular. I dare say I would love to know how they pulled off that action sequence! Bane is played by Tom Hardy, already established as a talented actor, but whose performance was largely obscured by the monstrosity of a mask that he wears (but I did see a glimpse of that incredible talent in his last few scenes in the film). When pictures of Bane were first released I was worried that he may become too hard to understand. Unfortunately, that fear was realized as there were definite parts in the movie (devastatingly, some of those parts were where he was describing his ultimate motives), I wished for subtitles to understand him! This was one of the strikes against Nolan achieving that ultimate brilliance.

The second strike also has to do with Bane - and by extension, Nolan - namely his ultimate goal of inciting a revolution to 'give power back to the people.' I know what Nolan was reaching for - he wanted to bring our attention to our changed world. A world where economic upheaval has further driven apart the haves and have-nots, and where we live in a constant state of distrust, not only of our government, but of each other. We live perpetually anxious of the 'trigger-man', or as they are called nowadays, the 'terrorist', among us. When Bane finally revealed his motive, I was left confused. Up until that point, I thought Gotham was happy! Had I missed something?? So, from then on, his subsequent pontifications didn't sit right with me. To me, not enough attention was paid to lay down the foundation to illustrate this so-called unrest in the citizens of Gotham.

Fortunately for Christopher Nolan, there was no strike three. Instead, there was a homerun - in the form of his brilliant cast. Let me make my way up to the top.



Firstly, the wonderful Michael Caine as faithful butler, Alfred. In this third film, he is conflicted about Bruce's choices more than ever, and he had me in tears most of the time as his fear for Bruce grows more desperate, driving him to make a heartbreaking decision. Morgan Freeman as Lucius Fox, head of Wayne Enterprises, is as stately and trustworthy as ever. Gary Oldman as Jim Gordon, gives an impressive lesson on the less-is-more technique of acting. Never losing his stride, he plays a man who has lost everything that matters to him, but still fights with all he has left just because his integrity won't let him do otherwise.

Three newcomers join the cast in this third film. Rich, enigmatic and beautiful philanthropist, Miranda Tate, played by Marion Cotillard. Sassy, sexy and stunning ass-kicker, high society burglar, Selina Kyle/Catwoman (though she was never referred to as Catwoman in the film), believably portrayed by Anne Hathaway. There was no trace of her sweet-as-pie character past in this movie! Then there was Joseph-Gordon Levitt. He has steadily built up a career full of impressive performances and unforgettable characters, and his street-cop-turned-detective-turned-Batman-ally, John Blake is no exception. He was introduced to us as just another cop, but he quickly turned that impression around - witness his first meeting with Bruce Wayne when his earnest attitude gave way and revealed the steel underneath. Steel that will serve him well in his ultimate destiny unveiled at the end of the film.

But this movie is about Batman. About Christian Bale whose recognized reputation for giving up a lot of himself to his performances, is reminiscent of the character that he's lived with for the last 7 years. In this movie, we see the result of Batman's sacrifice in the last film. The Batman is vilified and Bruce Wayne has lost control not only of his life, but of his corporation as well. Even a humorous little scene in which a doctor gives Bruce a litany of his injuries discovered in his x-rays, reveal the cost of being the Batman. Then along comes Bane. Their fight scenes were brutal and at one point, horribly one-sided. He brings Batman to a place he's never had to go before and even we, the audience, weren't sure he can come back from. Bale has been incredible as the Batman and he's proven it here a thousand times over. He brought Batman full circle, dealing with, and coming to terms with the pain that has shaped his life. And is doing so, finally did what Alfred has been begging him to do...move on.

'The Dark Knight Rises' ...not quite five stars but oh so very close! This third film brings to a close a chapter where Christopher Nolan and co, redefined what a comic book movie can be. Where to from here? What if....Christopher Nolan + 'The Avengers'? YES PLEASE!!



By Patricia Higgins

Are you wondering what steps to take to gain success in the acting /modelling or the entertainment industry? Here are some top FAQs answered:

1. Do I need an agent?

Getting signed with an agency is an important step for most accomplished models and entertainers; however, freelancing can be a better option if you don't already have a large body of work behind you. If you didn't obliterate your peers at drama school and/or you aren't 5'9 or taller, 18 - 21 years of age and don't necessarily have that fickle "look de jour" then you will probably have to put some legwork to achieve success in the entertainment industry. This may mean sourcing your own work until you have enough material behind you to approach a reputable agency.

2. What does representation entail?

If you are aspiring to become involved in the entertainment industry you will likely consider approaching the agencies that advertise in the usual job seeker websites. Representation will always come with strings attached. All agencies will take a percentage of your future earnings, whether this is 10, 15 or 20 percent. Some will charge fees to join. Others will encourage training courses with associated costs. With some agencies you will be required to sign a contract with exclusivity (you will need to permission to do outside projects and competitions, even if unpaid) while some agencies can be less stringent.

Top 5 must-read FAQ'S that any aspiring actor, model and entertainer should know about!

3. How can I make sure I get more experience/find work?

It's not to say that there is anything wrong with the conditions an agent puts in place. They can help create a solid reputation provided your agent actually finds work for you. If you have very little experience in the industry it can be hard to be selected by casting directors. Since agents are intermediaries sometimes it may feel like you are just another number on a long list. Agencies can never guarantee you work - if you are completely inexperienced in the field then it becomes near impossible. Don't be taken for a ride, make sure you are prepared for the industry before you sign on with anyone.

4. How can I build a portfolio?

At the very least, you will need some footage (a "show reel" of your work as an actor) or a series of quality photographs (a "portfolio" to send to a casting agent or open casting) in order to have a chance to audition or attend model castings. You will need a "headshot" to begin. Acquiring a clear, high resolution photo of your face is the first step in setting yourself up as a marketable professional. My advice is to find a reputable photographer who specialises in the field you wish to work in as the style of photography will differ slightly according to the genre. Make sure the photographer is reputable by checking websites and feedback - do your research and Google as much as possible, especially on forums and industry specific sites.

Armed with a headshot, you will now have a point of reference to build a portfolio. Time for Print (TFP) shoots are a good place to build a portfolio. TFP means that you model for a photographer/brand/team and exchange experience on an unpaid basis to produce material for mutual benefit. Student films are a good means to acquire valid acting skills and show reels.

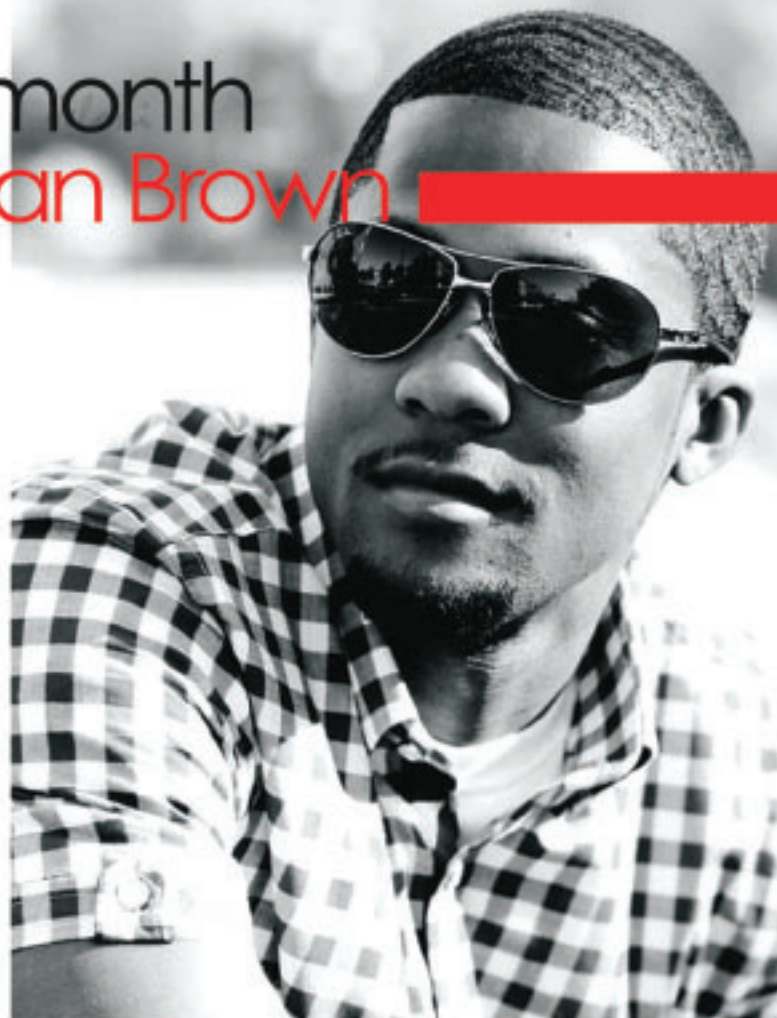
5. How can I stay safe and reputable in the field?

It is important to be careful when attending shoots/casting and projects. Always take a chaperone with you when you first meet with a photographer or other individual. Always make sure somebody knows where you are and what you are doing at all times. Be clear about your policy on nudity, even if you are fine with it still be clear on the particular kind of nudity.

Being reliable and professional is the most important element for success in the industry. Make sure you can deliver on commitments. Read briefs and follow directions - plan auditions and castings with plenty of spare travel time. Always be courteous to make up artists and stylists. It goes a long way and they deserve respect, of course. Make sure you can take direction and a lot of criticism and be willing to work hard. Most important of all - keep smiling!

male artist of the month

Nathan Brown



"I love the way I feel when I'm singing/performing. I just let loose and let the music take over." Watching Nathan Brown, aka Jacobi, sing will leave no one in doubt of the truth of that statement. He not only sings the words, but he feels them. "When you see me sing or perform, you will know that I'm feeling it because the expressions I have are priceless." And it is this evident love for the music that has earned Nathan the title of StarCentral Magazine's male artist of the month.

Singing in church since he was 6 years old, performing is nothing new to Jacobi. But his first public performance wasn't until his high school graduation in 2007. "I sang 'Let Go' by Dewayne Woods, and played the piano," and since then, there was no stopping him. For him, his most memorable performance was in 2010 when he sang at the 'Art of Music' talent show in Atlanta, Georgia, USA. "It was the first time I ever sang one of my original songs publicly, and I won first place!"

The R&B singer/musician/songwriter credits Michael Jackson for inspiring him not only musically, but how to be a performer as well. "I've always connected with him and his music. Growing up, I used to imitate Michael, from his dance moves to his voice (still do it now). His interpretation of music is one of the main reasons I love performing. He is the most innovative performer/artist to walk the face of this earth, in my opinion." Clearly, Nathan has taken the lessons he's learned from Michael Jackson to heart as his YouTube channel, "Nathan Brown a.k.a. Jacobi" has garnered over 51,000 views and has nearly 450 subscribers. He has also been named as a Sony Sound and Image Showcase Global Emerging Artist.

Nathan aims to be in music industry for a very long time, performing for audiences around the world and to continue to make "...music for the rest of my life... I want to leave a good impression on those that listen to

my music and see me perform." But the Alabama State University graduate (he graduated with a degree in Computer Information Systems) knows that this will not be an easy road. "There have been plenty of times that I felt like giving up because it seemed as though nothing would ever happen. But overtime, I've realized that if it's meant for me, it'll happen.... The most valuable lesson I've learned is to NEVER give up on a dream!"

Armed with his impressive talent, drive and positive attitude, Jacobi will be one artist to watch out for.



female artist of the month

Kristina Hu

To her, the performance is the most important. It's "...being able to take your own spin on a piece of music and share it with others – a truly liberating feeling. Performing music is truly an art form, as it is so much more than just the music - it's about using your body language and visual elements to tell a story to the audience."

Beginning with her very first piano recital at around 5 years old, Kristina had found herself dominating many a competition. She's competed in numerous local and state recitals and competitions. She counts two experiences as being her most memorable on stage. One was in 2009 when she had the honor "of performing as a soloist at the Kennedy Center's Millennium Stage as the Junior Division winner of the Asian American Music Society's International Piano Competition" in Washington, DC, and again at the Kennedy Center in 2010, when she won 1st Prize in the 25th Annual International Young Artist Piano Competition. "All of my hard work and hours of practice had paid off... I remember being extremely nervous when I went up to the stage to perform for the judges, but my worries melted away under the spotlight..."

This creatively gifted young artist (she also enjoys dance, writing short stories and poetry), also has academia in her future with her preparing to enter Harvard University in September 2012. "...education is extremely important to me...I hope to continue updating my YouTube channel and making music alongside my college studies..." There is no doubt that music will always be part of Kristina's life. She has just released two covers on iTunes – Skrillex's 'Scary Monsters and Nice Sprites' and Equinox's 'First of the Year'. Wherever it takes her, her love for music and performing, her creativity and unique ability, will ensure TheUnsungHeroine a place as an unforgettable musician.

Finding something that one is passionate about, AND being able to be really good at it, is a dream for most people. Not for Kristina Hu, otherwise known as TheUnsungHeroine – StarCentral Magazine's Female Artist of the Month. This Asian-American young lady was born with an amazing voice and an uncanny ability to be able to play music by ear. Her YouTube channel, her platform for her personal projects which fuse classical piano with mainstream pop/dubstep hits, has received over 2.2 million views and has over 15,000 subscribers. Not bad for a 17-year old! But for Kristina, it goes beyond the notes.



Ramon 'Mona' Balesteros
Hair & Make-up Artist

Location
1/53-57 Rooty Hill Road North Rooty Hill NSW 2766
(Upstairs, above Kamayan Food Plus)

Contact Details
tel no. 02 9675 4045
Mob# 0450 604 990

Email: salonderamon@gmail.com

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StarCentral's Sexiest Woman of the month, Kimberly McDermott, or otherwise known as Kimberly Bear in the modeling world, started her life in front of the cameras as a professional ice skater. It was on the ice that she was first spotted by a modeling scout and approached to appear in a magazine. Kimberly can rely on that grace, elegance and power essential in ice skating to take her further in her career. As well as an older sister, who happens to be a beautician, to give her some helpful tips!

29-year old Kimberly is originally from California, USA. She now calls herself a Sydneysider and has made Australia her home. Though relatively new to the modeling industry,

sexiest woman of the month Kimberly Bear

she has already quickly learned some valuable lessons such as to "always go with your gut instinct! Whether it's something not feeling right, or which shoots you opt to do". She also always never attends a photoshoot alone - "It can be a bit dangerous with some of the shady people out there..." Despite that, the versatile singer and actress, has enjoyed being able to portray different characters while modeling, "and getting to play dress up, like any girl does!" And having a friend in the music industry has enabled her to meet some fascinating artists such as Priscilla Presley and Michael Bubl !

But being exposed to the entertainment industry, as well as working in a career where sometimes the outside means more than the inner quality of a person has meant that Kimberly has had to figure out how to keep a level head. "I never take myself very seriously. I have a somewhat wicked sense of humour..." On top of that, she has a strong support system consisting of family, her husband and great friends "who make sure I stay true to myself...they know this is what I am passionate about, and want me to follow my dreams, and ultimately be happy..."



After taking some time off after giving birth to a "beautiful baby girl" last year, Kimberly is anxious to get back in front of the cameras and expanding her portfolio. So far, she will be appearing in Australian country singer, Benn Gunn's new video, "I Like Girls Who Drink Beer", as well as being a Top Finalist in prestigious photography studio, Remember Forever's search for new featured faces for their print ads, and having a bit part in Aussie filmmaker, Jadin Meyer's, 'Hannah's Zomble'. Also armed with a BA in Event Management, Kimberly Bear plans "....to have as much fun with this business as I possibly can, for as long as I possibly can."

Australia) Wagin Woolorama Fashion Parade this year. The quick costume changes and that thrill of being on the catwalk was something the 23-year old "...hadn't

sexiest man of the month Daniel Berenger



experienced before..." Now signed with Vivien's Model Management, it won't be long before that portfolio becomes more comprehensive.

Before stepping into the limelight, Daniel admits that "I have always been quite modest and seen myself as one of the crowd..." Now "...modeling has giving me a sense of self-confidence." He also delves into the world of acting with tips from his brother, who's been a performer for some time. "...He has been a great help in giving me the advice I needed to help me grow..."

Daniel also enjoys the "diverse demographic" of individuals that he has worked with, describing it as "...an incredibly eye opening and worldly experience."

After getting over their surprise, Daniel's family (he is one of eight children!) are now "...my biggest supporters and help me in any way they can..." And in an industry where runaway egos are commonplace, his friends have helped him "...maintain that sense of humility." For the full-time licensed aircraft maintenance engineer, modeling has opened the door to a new world.

Daniel plans to develop his portfolio in Perth and in the future, work and live abroad. His short time in the industry has already taught him to "...take chances..." and as some opportunities "...only come around once...", it's clear that StarCentral's 'Sexiest Man' will no longer be found on life's sidelines.

For StarCentral's Sexiest Man of the Month, Daniel Berenger, being new to modeling was no hindrance. The Zimbabwe-born model only started modeling a year ago and at first, kept it a secret from his family and friends. When they "...found out that I was getting involved in acting and modeling, it came as a bit of a shock to them..." But now the secret's out and everyone's paying attention.

Daniel's first professional modeling exposure was being picked to be one of ten models for Perth's (in Western

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GROUP OF THE MONTH: INTERPLAY CREW

The Interplay Crew is a shining example that 'age' is no barrier when one has the talent, drive and ambition to go for their dreams. Originally formed out of Interplay School of Music and Art in Rio Rancho, New Mexico, USA, this teen pop singing group sensation has achieved the unprecedented feat of coming in tied for first place as StarCentral Magazine's Best Group of the month! Comprised of five (Balle, Lauren, Nick, Sasha, and Teagan) incredibly talented vocalists who "...utilize advanced harmonies along with a high-energy, hip hop style of dance," Interplay Crew first performed together in October 2009 at the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. All five teenagers share a deep love for music as well as "...the drive to have a successful career as a musician." When they perform, they all enjoy the "...feeling we get seeing the audience respond to our performance, and knowing that we are getting to do something few people are able to do."

As a group made up of five individuals, it is easy to imagine

that melding all their different personalities would be a challenge but "...we had to learn to put aside our differences and work together as a team..." This they have done so successfully that Interplay Crew can be found performing at almost every major event in New Mexico including "...the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta, New Mexico State Fair, Freedom Fourth, Summerfest, Pork & Brew, Taste of New Mexico, Arts in the Park, Corrales Harvest Festival, Rio Rancho's Winterfest...", the list is endless! They have also performed as the opening act for jazz artist, Sonia Kitchell as well as for Ryan Star, winner of CBS's Rock Star Supernova, at the Albuquerque Summerfest.

For the moment, Interplay Crew is busy at the annual Vocalize U 2012 Artist Intensive Summer Event in Los Angeles which is another "...step closer to our dream of making it big!" But while fame and fortune beckon, Interplay Crew will always "...strive to be positive role models who have committed to use their talent to support their schools and community..."



DUO OF THE MONTH: ALISSA AND LYZ

Best friends. Singer/Songwriters. Sisters of the heart. And another title to add to their resumé... StarCentral Magazine's Best Duo Group of the Month!

Native New Yorkers, Alissa Liebler and Lyz Morati have been performing as individuals for years before deciding to join forces, creating 'Alissa & Lyz', to compete in their high school's battle of the bands called 'Elwoodstock' early last year. "The first night that we ever performed as Alissa & Lyz was such an amazing experience for the both of us...we both realized that our ticket to success was each other!"

It was the start of great things for the two multi-talented 16-year olds. Soon, they had started a YouTube channel (their music has garnered over 30,000 views and nearly 250 subscribers!) where they perform covers from a diverse range of artists from Carly Rae Jepsen, Jason Mraz, Rihanna and Colbie Collat. They also found themselves in demand for variety shows, gigs and school performances. "It's a great feeling when someone says they can relate to something we wrote, or that they love listening to us, or that they're inspired by us...being with each other on stage and getting to work with each other is an added bonus!"

But their greatest inspiration is Taylor Swift. "She inspired the both of us to start writing music...she showed us that bad things happen to good people and there are healthy ways to cope with the experiences that happen to us..." They also inspire each other to keep persevering and keep going with their music, "...even when we get stuck on lyrics or are going through hard times..." At no other time was each other's support so important as when they performed at a battle of the bands in a neighbouring town where the audience were, for once, not made of people they knew, and the bands they were competing against were mainly rock bands! "...you can imagine the looks on their faces when we walked in with cowboy boots and flannel shirts on!" But by the end of the night, they had earned their respect, "gained more fans and we challenged ourselves."

Following in the footsteps of their favourite artist, Alissa and Lyz plan to be country singers/songwriters. In the near future, they hope to be able to compile their original songs to be recorded into an album. But it is being able to perform for their fans that drives them most of all "...we want to be the voice of the underdog. We perform to speak for those who want to be heard." With voices like theirs, Alissa and Lyz will not likely be ignored.



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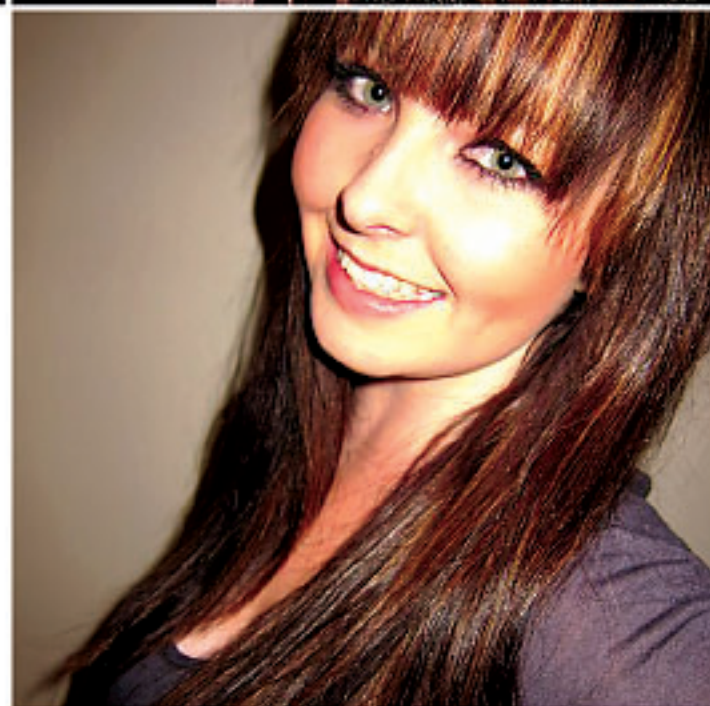
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TOUGH FIVE INTERVIEW WITH STARCENTRAL'S
BLOGGER OF THE MONTH: CASSANDRA



1. Tell us your name and something about yourself.

My name is Cassandra McBlane aka 'Cassie' and I am a 21 year-old aspiring writer who has a keen passion for language and the art of English. I am currently studying in my third year at Deakin University in Melbourne for my Bachelor of Professional and Creative Writing (Arts). I have always had a determined mind about establishing a career in the field of writing and journalism even at a young age, and I have since approached many aspects in the industry. My experience now ranges from blogging, reviewing, novel and story writing, poetry, public relations releases, feature articles and prose.

2. Give us a brief description of what your blog is all about.

I started The 'Foreverthings' (www.theforeverthings.com) to post my own writings to a small audience. Eventually, though, my blog gained a lot of public attention through social networks, and my readership grew to hundreds of subscribed followers. With this in mind, I decided to keep my blog consistent and flowing with news articles, celebrity gossip and my own takes on life itself.

3. Tell us about one of your worst habit or quality?

You could ask anyone that knows me well enough, and they would all give you the same answer; my worst habit is definitely my constant obsession to correct people's grammar, punctuation and spelling. It becomes difficult to log on to a social network site when there are many, many errors that pop up on the screen in front of me. But on the other hand, my friends learn a lot about English in my presence!

4. What was your most embarrassing moment?

I am definitely a clumsy person, so I find myself tripping over my own feet most of the time, but for some reason I remember one certain incident in high school where I managed to trip over myself and fall flat on my face. I am still haunted by it when my friends recall it now, but it definitely made for a good story when

it came to writing about my memories from my adolescence (if I'm allowed to call it that yet).

5. Choose a movie title for the story of your life.

The Notebook, not because it is romantic and has me reaching for the tissues time after time, but because I find myself always documenting the things I enjoy and making sure I capture everything I do in some sort of notebook, so that in the future, I can reflect and tell myself I really set out to do what I wanted to. I want to be able to look back on my life and smile with the thought that, even though I am not fearless, I am a risk taker in my own mind and life experiences.



TOUGH FIVE INTERVIEW WITH STARCENTRAL'S
ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH: PHILLIP

1. Tell us your name and something about yourself.

My name is Phillip Fernandez, I have a beautiful wife, Denise and I have been blissfully married for 37 years with bringing 4 children into this world. We got married in Kempsey NSW where my wife was born. I am a Portuguese Eurasian, born in Singapore and came out here at 16 years of age back in 1970. I then completed my year 12 and moved into retail management where I met my beautiful wife, we were both Management trainees at the time. I was 21 years old and my wife was 20 years old when we got married and we never looked back. I have also since tertiary educated myself along my successful journey.

We started life with very little but we both had drive and ambition with mutual goals and vision. We travelled overseas because of my overseas positions, and of course we took our children with us so they had the opportunity to study in various schools overseas. This gave them a very open-minded view of the world, and even though they are all very successful now in their chosen careers we are still a very tight and close family.

My career span was over 30 successful years with international giants like Schwarzkopf, Revlon, L'Oreal and Redken to name a few. I started my first job in Sydney as a Sales Representative and then very quickly moved up the ranks and finally held various senior management roles such as National Sales Manager, General Manager and Human Resource Director that extended over Australia and New Zealand with exposure to Europe, Asia and USA.

2. Give us a brief description of what your business is all about

Wizards Business Consulting specialises in identifying the real people issues and obstacles through NLP and Time Line Therapy and therefore makes it easier to develop and execute simple people systems and strategies that produce results. I ask for Excellence in the Self and this varies from person to person. This in turn empowers and up skills both Business Owner and staff. I work on the Causes rather than the Symptom. Feel free to visit my website 'www.businesswizards.com.au' if you want further information.

3. What are you most grateful for in life?

My family, children and my grandchildren.

4. If you knew that everyone you know was going to die tomorrow, who would you visit today?

I would visit my Dad, sister and my children, with my wife of course.

5. What do you think is the difference between being alive and truly living?

If you are breathing, you are alive. That's pretty simple. But truly living is all about what you do with your life and finding that balance between a sustainable lifestyle and doing what you love and contributing positively to the world we live in.