

STAR CENTRAL

Introducing
Anna Kim

ONE OF THE RISING
STARS TO WATCH IN
2021

MEET GRACE
GOOD
THE WORLD
FAMOUS CIRCUS
ACT TO WATCH
OUT FOR IN 2021

HELPFUL
MAKEUP
TIPS
THAT'LL

Blow your socks off



BEAUTY 101

THE STARCENTRAL
MAGAZINE GUIDE TO
MAINTAINING BEAUTIFUL
AND HEALTHY SKIN
DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

MAKE WAY FOR

KRISTIN

VENAE

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Find out more about one of the rising stars to watch out for in 2021



AMBN

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OPENING REMARKS



October marks the 16th-year anniversary of StarCentral magazine and we've certainly come a long way since 2006. Throughout the years we've met and spoken to so many up and coming and fascinating individuals, we've explored various mediums of expression and we've covered hundreds of amazing events. As we put this issue to bed, I would like to thank God for giving us the strength and guidance throughout the years and I would also like to thank you all for your continued support, enthusiasm, dedication and passion towards our publication. I know we have a tremendous team who gives me every confidence that we'll be able to maintain a strong performance throughout 2021 and beyond. God bless.

Mike Ilagan
Managing Director



14 **Celebrity Interviews**
One on one interview with the beautiful Grace Good



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EDITOR'S NOTES

I had a strange start to my 2021. Several things happened in quick succession that had me just scratching my head but at the same time, it filled with the conviction that it meant something. So call me nuts, crazy or just plain idiotic, but I'm going with my gut and I've vowed that my 2021 will be unlike any year I've had so far.

Have you felt that way too? Have you been in that moment where logic is screaming at you: "NO!" but intuition, in a persistent whisper, is telling you: "Go for it!" I believe we all have. But it's our reaction to it that sets apart the DOERS from the DREAMERS. So, maybe following your gut might not work out, but at least you'll KNOW. There is no worse torture than regret, than asking "What If?" over and over again. So, I'll leave you with one of my favourite quotes, written by a young writer named Erin Hanson - "What if I fall? Oh my darling, what if you fly?"

Vicky I
Editor-in-chief

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EMERGING ENTREPRENEUR SPOTLIGHT: ANNA KIM

Anna Kim actually got started in the fashion industry by reading fashion books and learning fashion words used for sewing, designing, and styling. She was initially a student of Seoul National University – her major was International Relations while her second one was European studies. She was curious about fashion and she wanted to be part of that world. It attracted her so much. However, she could not give up her studies and it was quite intense at the time, so she had to learn about fashion all by herself during her free time that she almost did not have.

One day, she attended Seoul Fashion Week where she realized just how much she really wants to be a part of the Fashion world. There were several ways to become closer to the industry that she could do during her undergrad. One of them was to become a fashion journalist. She found a job looking for a journalist and she started to write articles about Korean fashion and events and every week she went to different brands to interview Korean fashion designers.

After her undergrad, she wanted to learn fashion design at a university and get a master's degree. However, she was not allowed to enter because they required an undergrad degree in fashion design so she decided to study at Yonsei University Korean studies and concentrate on Korean costume instead. All her researches were about the history of Korean costume and women of 1920-the 30s. When she graduated she got a diploma with a "Master of Korean Arts".

Since her approach to fashion started academically, after finishing her master's, she wanted to learn the practical part. She wanted to learn how to sew and create patterns and practice to become a professional designer and pattern maker. At that time she already had an idea of how to create her own brand. However, she had to go to China due to personal reasons and she ended up staying there for one year, learning Chinese.

She saw how advanced the fashion industry in China was so she attended more than 50 fashion shows, met lots of people from the fashion industry, bought books about sewing techniques, etc. She learned a lot and was even more inspired to create her own brand. When she came back, she continued to attend her fashion school but at the same time, she started to rent her first office in the fashion center of Seoul, near Dongdaemun Design Plaza. She studied and tried to apply everything she learned. It was a happy time for her, despite all the hardships. This is how she got into the fashion world.

StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Anna to discuss her journey in the fashion world and here's what went down:

What do you like most about being a designer?

I love the feeling of creativity and freedom that you can create anything you want (from your own world). The question you have to sell is "how".



“My advice to StarCentral readers: Start with what you are afraid of the most.”



Downside to being a fashion designer?

Factories, production, control of the process. Dust. Neverending updates and sometimes crazy pace that doesn't let you live a normal life. When you are young it's okay but later on, it becomes harder.

What has been the most memorable experience of being in the fashion industry so far?

Meeting people and seeing how they feel happy when buying or trying on the clothes I made.

Another moment was when Coronavirus started. I had to adapt my business to a new format and I started to teach fashion in my studio in Seoul. Sewing classes, fashion illustration, collection planning, and students' preparation for study at the fashion design department in South Korean universities. I was happy to see how my students are growing. Recently, I continue to teach and show Korean movies related to Korean fashion, read lectures dedicated to the history of Korean costumes online and offline.

Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far?

The most interesting people are my clients and in most cases, they become good friends.

What has been the most valuable lesson you've learned while in the fashion industry. This can be about the industry or about yourself.

I have to think about every step very carefully and think about the whole strategy at the same time. It's quite hard to keep all moments and control

the situation, despite on notes or interns/assistants I have.

Is your family supportive of you being a fashion designer?

My mother supports me a lot, while my father was dreaming about a different future. He wanted me to become a diplomat and work in the Korean embassy. However, I don't see myself working there.

If you could go back in a time machine to the time when you were just getting started, what would you do differently?

I would not like to work with Korean producers, who invited me to their project (movie) to create clothes for the actors. I had to get a deposit in advance. That was my mistake and now everything is pre-paid.

What is the best advice you have ever been given?

My professor from the fashion school after I graduated recommended I continue to develop my own brand rather than go to work for a company. And now I want to say many thanks for this advice.

My advice to readers: Start with what you are afraid of the most.

What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.

I am planning to move to Moscow, collaborate with Russian artists, and continue my activities there together with my business in Seoul, Korea.



ARISING STAR SPOTLIGHT: MEET JAIDA Aneese

Jaida was born in Canton, Ohio. Her passion for singing and songwriting came at a very early age, writing her first song in third grade.

Jaida wrote "F*** love" in 2017, and soon after, recorded it with her Uncle, Producer Thr3fourteen. In 2019 her great uncle, Jazz Artist, "Jimmy B" Baber introduced her to the Houston, Texas production team consisting of Eddie Ferguson Jr, Telford "Jaytel" Birmingham II. Jaida collaborated with this Houston team to finish her debut single, "Liquid."

In addition to influences from her own musically talented family members, some of Jaida's musical influences are: Alicia Keys, H.E.R & Chris Brown. StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Jaida to discuss her journey in the entertainment industry and here's what went down:

How did you get started in the music industry?

Music has always been a part of me, but I got serious about a life in the music industry around 2 years ago. I was discovered by Billboard Jazz recording artist Jimmy B, who then introduced me to producer Eddie Ferguson and Jaytel Bethaford.

What do you like most about singing?

The thing I like most about singing is the songwriting process. Being able to create something off of a single concept and watch it grow and expand into something great. That is what I like the most.

Can you tell us about your upcoming debut single Liquid?

"Liquid" is a really fun, relatable, song about being in love. It's about that feeling when you are so into someone, your body feels like liquid when they're close. The effect they have on you when you just wanna melt, you know?

What sort of person is going to love this single?

I think anyone who's ever been in love, of any age group, would love this single. It's something everyone can relate to. I just feel like it's a light, happy, love song that stays with you, and you'll be singing it all day.

What inspires you to be creative?

To be honest, I am most creative when I am in the middle of the feeling. When I'm heartbroken, feeling frustrated, or even in love. I just feel like I need to get it out on paper. It's like, the only way I can get through what I'm feeling is to write it down, or it will explode inside of me. I'm hoping that when people listen to my music, it can be a way for them to see that someone out there understands what they are going through, and they can use my music to express what they are feeling.

Is there anything special that you do to get into a creative mindset?

When it comes to getting into a creative mindset, I don't have a ritual that I follow step by step. I really just take what I'm feeling and multiply it by 100. Sometimes, I take what someone else is feeling and try to put myself in their shoes. Once I do that, the emotion just takes over from there.

What message, if any, do you try to put into your work?

My message will always be 'I get it, I know what you're going through.' I also try to make sure everyone knows they are worth something and they deserve to be treated accordingly. If you are not being treated that way, then it's time to move on. As well as keeping emotions raw and real when it comes to being hurt. I know oftentimes we feel too tough to say the truth and that's okay because you can just turn on some music and they can sing your feelings for you.

What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?

Seeing as my career has only just begun, I would say the most memorable experience so far is just connecting and growing with my team. Working with my producers, Eddie & Jaytell, has been great. We all just click together perfectly. Being able to experience that and work to make my ideas come to life with guys that I look at like brothers is an experience to remember.

Do you ever find yourself unable to express your creativity to the fullest? What kinds of things inhibit you?

I do sometimes find myself unable to express my creativity to the fullest, it's mostly when I am too busy with everyday boring life and have too many outside distractions. Sometimes I really have to be in a calm or hurtful state of mind to truly dig deep and create what it is I'm looking to create and you don't always get those times periods so when they come, I try to take full advantage of them.

Who is your greatest influence?

Rihanna is my greatest influence because she's a legit queen. Her work ethic and confidence and the way she carries herself and stays humble but savage at the same time. Not to mention her being the world's wealthiest female musician and second richest woman in entertainment behind Oprah Winfrey. Me being a young black female artist and seeing her grow this way is insane and I just have mad respect for her and admire her to the fullest.

Do you feel that you chose your "passion," or did it choose you?

Honestly, I feel like my passion chose me. It's been a voice in the back of my head as far back as I can remember. I never seriously considered pursuing it, and then one day I was kinda like "Hey, maybe you should listen to this voice and see where it leads you". That's when I started working and growing on my craft locally, and recording with some of my uncles who have studios. They all told me to keep working and never give up. So about two years ago I decided to take a chance and jump into this music thing.

If you hadn't chosen your field, what would your alternate field have been?

If I didn't choose to be a singer, I would definitely just be a songwriter and pitch my songs to other artists. If I hadn't chosen to do music at all, I would focus heavily on an acting career.

What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.

My future plans inside my career are to continue growing and connecting with my fans & making music that people can relate to. I also plan to get into acting and collaborating with other artists.





ENTREPRENEUR OF THE MONTH: GRACE

GOOD

Grace Good is the world-famous circus anomaly. After falling in love with the art of fire and circus 10 years ago, Grace has dedicated her life to entertaining the masses and pushing the limits of her art.

As a teenager, Grace ran away from business school to join the circus—and she has never looked back. The girl who launched her career as a street performer amid the country musicians on the sidewalks of downtown Nashville now co-owns her own circus company and sells in person and virtual lessons to people who want to learn her mad skills and makes bank as an influencer.

Snoop Dog says she's "bringing the heat!" Go-Big show producers call her the "daredevil cirque performer." Wayne Brady was jaw dropped by Grace's one-of-a-kind feats on Fox Network's Game of Talents and Thrive Global calls her the "fire-eating, free-falling, record-breaking, hula-hooping ... girl next door" She's toured internationally with Cirque Dreams and appeared nationally on multiple TV networks. Her fiery videos often go viral on social media, where she has more than 2 million followers on TikTok alone.

StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Grace to discuss her journey in the industry and here's what went down:

Can you tell us more about yourself?

I'm an entertainer—but I'm not your everyday actress or singer. When Snoop Dogg says "This is a show right here, baby!" he's talking about the act where I spin fire hoops while balancing on a giant red ball. The Go-Big show dubs me a "daredevil cirque performer." Wayne Brady calls me a "fire hooper." In all reality, I'm a girl from Nashville who ran away from college to join the circus and never looked back. I'm a self-taught performer who has toured nationally and internationally with Cirque Dreams. You can find me performing almost anywhere people who want to be entertained, from celebrated stages worldwide to network TV shows to TikTok, where I have more than 2 million followers. I also perform for private parties of the rich and famous and large-scale corporate meetings, live, virtual or hybrid. Oh—and thanks to augmented reality, you can find my pic on a soda bottle, scan the QR code and see me perform there as well. Perform dizzying acts, spin more hoops than you can count, drop for aerial silks, and eat fire. I live to bring the excitement of the circus to life for audiences wherever they are. I'm an entrepreneur, producer and circus owner, and entertainer with Grace Good Cirque Entertainment and here to make your

dreams come true! You can follow me and learn more on TikTok, Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter @grace-goodcirque.

How did you get started in the entertainment industry?

I've always loved to make people smile! When I was 18, I discovered hula hooping. Then I began fire dancing. A couple of years later, I ran away from college to join the circus. I'd become so passionate about entertaining that I knew there was nothing else I wanted to do with my life. Like most entertainers in Nashville, I started as a busker on Second Avenue, only instead of singing country songs, I was wowing tourists with my fiery hula hoop routine. It was when I auditioned with Cirque Dreams that my professional career took off. I went from performing on the streets to touring internationally. I think the founder of Cirque Dreams, Neal Goldberg, saw a spark in me and wanted to help me ignite my dreams. I love paying that forward and inspiring others to pursue their dreams.

What do you like most about entertaining?

When I do impossible things—like floating through the air while hula hooping—I get to blow people's minds and inspire them to think again about what we can do when we put our heart and soul into something. Not everyone wants to be a circus performer, but everyone has something that sets their heart on fire. When I entertain, I get to encourage people to think bigger, to find the courage to tackle something important to them and the world. We're all capable of way more than we think we are. I hope that by spinning an impossible number of hoops while balancing on my big red ball, or doing death-defying aerial drops, or performing with my fiery dragon staff that I create the kind of wonder and delight that inspires.

Some people have performance anxiety. I'm exactly the opposite. I have struggled with anxiety my whole life, but when I'm entertaining, I'm completely at peace. It's my zen place. When I'm performing, I feel like I'm fulfilling my purpose. I love to spread joy and positivity.

Can you tell us more about the most recent projects you've worked on?

When stages closed because of the pandemic, I began growing my audience on a new stage—social media. My viral videos on TikTok, where I have 2.3M followers, caught the eyes of TV show producers. My backyard circus appeared on NBC



News, and I appeared on TBS's Go-Big Show in January and Fox Network's Game of Talents in May. I also began offering virtual performances and companies like Morgan Stanley and others are hiring me as they find creative ways to navigate our temporary new normal. I established a residence in Las Vegas during the slower moving time of the pandemic and recently performed in a huge outdoor cirque performance there this summer. With things opening back up, I've been performing in Las Vegas, Florida, Texas, Tennessee, and even Montana. I'm also rehearsing for Christmas shows set for November and December. I'll be doing a one-of-a-kind act that involves aerial straps and hula hoops. During the pandemic, I focused as much as possible on my art. It was my outlet. And I created all sorts of crazy tricks and techniques. I'm excited that stages begin to open back up and live performances are back. I love watching my calendar fill again with destinations around the country.

What are some of the difficulties of the entertainment business?

The entertainment business is confusing, and the circus world is confusing on steroids. Many people are born into show business. Others have coaches. And then there's me. I never even had a gymnastics lesson. In fact, I first learned to hula hoop by watching YouTube. The difficulty is that there's no directions manual. I'm just figuring it out as I go.

What's challenging about bringing an act to life?

Typically, I think the most challenging thing about bringing an act to life is getting into character, but for me, I feel more myself, more alive, when I'm performing than at any other time.

What do you do when you're not performing?

I honestly love what I do so much and I spend a lot of my downtime playing with hula hoops and training. It doesn't feel like work to me. But I recently found a new hobby I love! Since I

started dating a professional BMX and mountain biker, Kurtis Downs, I have fallen in love with mountain biking. The thrill and adrenaline rush are similar in many ways to what I do on stage. I enjoy going on trips with Kurtis and seeing amazing views. I am also a huge social bee and I love to host. During my downtime from performing, I'm usually going out with friends or hosting gatherings at my house. I recently turned my townhome into a roller skating rink for my 28th birthday!

Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far?

Being in the circus industry, I meet extraordinary people all the time. Some of my favorites have been artists I met on the Go-Big Show! But if I'm honest, the most interesting of them all to me is Kurtis. He's intriguing to me because we are so different – he's flipping bikes and I'm spinning flaming hoops – and yet we are so much the same. And he is just an amazing human being. He's definitely the most interesting person I've ever met.

If someone is going to make your life into a movie, who would play you?

Well, I doubt she would want to, but I would love to see Ellen Degeneres do it! She's known for delivering a jolt of joy, which is exactly what I set out to do in every show. She's playful and she loves to dance, so I think she'd be a natural. She said that as great as the Ellen show is, it's just not a challenge for her anymore. So what's she going to do? And I would love to teach her how to hula hoop!

What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.

Inside my career, I hope to one day soon create my own production, a spectacular circus show that tours the world featuring other acts and my own. I've always been an entrepreneur at heart and that's on my professional bucket list.





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MISSION: Our mission is to present the most unique and compelling original Australian content by tapping into the hottest local talents and events.





MAKE WAY FOR
Kristin
VENAE

Could you please tell our readers a brief background about yourself and how you started in the entertainment industry?

We always had music playing growing up and my sister and I would put on performances for the family since my mama was a singer we would always sing before bed. When I was 15 I started writing songs and I became a member of 'Ritmo de tropical,' a Latin group that performed around the Latin scene. I was hooked, I spent the next few years doing anything that put me around other musicians, I took a job at the entertainment quarter across from channel V and got to see and interact with many amazing artists. I organised the Ryder for Rihanna and NeYo during their record company parties, watched on the stage corners the sound checks and the backstage workings, networked a lot, and was lucky to have attended record company plaque presentations where I got to hang out with bands like INXS. I would chat about music, get tips and tricks, and worked with other musicians. I then met Tim Newsom from 'trout fishing in Quebec' and 'the Magnificent compañeros' and we just gelled musically and wrote music together.

What do you like most about singing?

Singing and performing is thrilling, it really is a rush, once the nerves disappear and you give in to the soul part of it you feel like you're soaring.

Can you tell us about your upcoming album?

'Black Widow' is a fusion of light lovey pop and a darker fantasy rock/pop blend. I really feel it embodies all my musical influences and creativity and I hope it makes people feel at times uplifted and also comforted by shared experiences.

What sort of person is going to love this album?

I hope it's anyone of any age, I hope that I've made a record that is relatable in some way to everyone and that it embodies some connection regardless of your genre preference.

What inspires you to be creative?

It's anything really, it can be a melody hook, or even a word someone says. A real-life experience or just simply a fantasy, similar to a mini-movie idea.

Is there anything special that you do to get into a creative mindset?

No, it's very organic either the song lyrics or at least base are written within minutes or I scrap the idea till later when it inspires me.

What message, if any, do you try to put into your work?

To just be you, to be confident and strong, and to stand up for yourself but to also allow yourself to be vulnerable and open to love.

What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?

I love hearing my songs on the radio and briefly interacting with Prince is at the top of the list.

Kristin Venae is a triple threat performer with soulful and rhythmic vocal tonality. Starting her live performance tours and artist development as a member of various bands such as the Latin group 'Ritmo De Tropical', 'Loose minds', and 'The Magnificent Companeros'. Her highly anticipated debut album 'Black Widow' is a nostalgic and refreshing blend of Pop/RNB/Rock & soul. She was influenced as a child by artists such as Prince, Michael Jackson, Mariah Carey, Whitney Houston, and Ricky Martin - influences that give a unique blend of genres from start to finish.

Her debut single 'Still Here' has been described as an 'ode to love.' Its first review described Venae as having 'the same gripping and soulful vocal eminence as Shania Twain, Celine Dion, and Mariah Carey. Venae is not only an exciting new musical artist to watch out for but also a model and actor appearing in the upcoming Kyle Lovett feature film 'Lickerish'. Keep an eye out for her next single release for 'I am Woman', 'Still Here' and 'Lullaby' which are available now on all streaming platforms.

StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Kristin to discuss her journey in the music industry and here's what went down:



On the set of 'Lickerish' film

Photo Credit: BeautyCosmo and Juliet Taylor

an exciting thing. Plus, you get to meet other amazing focused, and creative people. I love getting lost in TV and movies so to be even a small part of that is just everything.

Do you feel that you chose your "passion," or did it choose you?

It 100% chose me, based on my DNA, my star sign traits, my personality the people I'm drawn to and the talent God has gifted me.

If you hadn't chosen your field, what would your alternate field have been?

That's a hard one. I was in hospitality and I loved it but I sustained a very bad injury so I try to look at it as fates redirection.

What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.

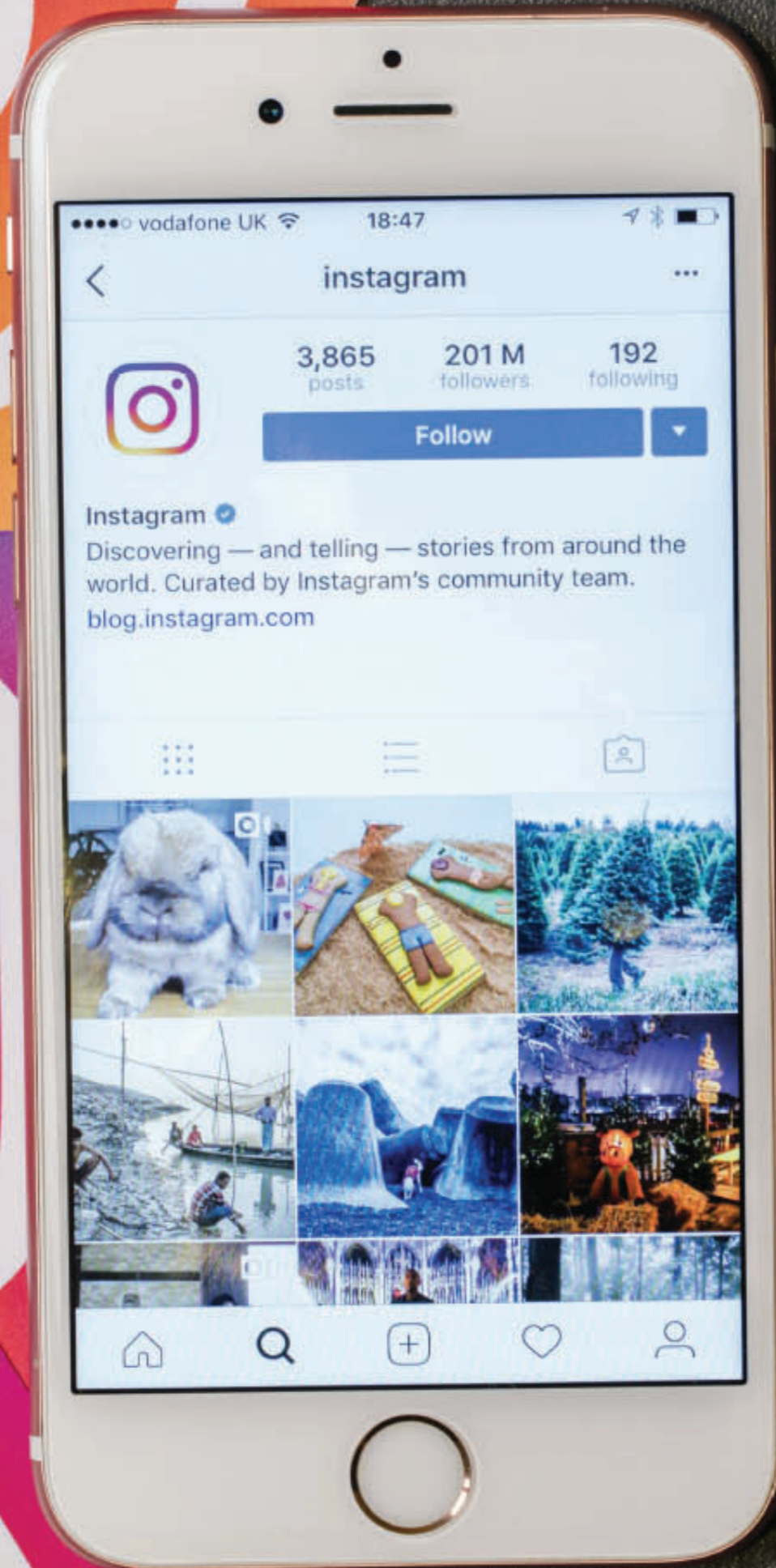
I just shot for Kyle Lovett's feature film "Lickerish" so I'm looking forward to the premiere, it's got an amazing script, Kyle is the lead and the director and I'm really looking forward to spending time with the amazing cast; Clare Griggs, Troy Honeysett, Corey "sauce" Brown, Darren George, Pat Carter to name a few and the amazing crew it was such a pleasurable experience and releasing more music of course and more photoshoots with Beautycosmo photography. Outside of the entertainment industry, I'm just looking forward to hopefully some type of normalcy where I can hug my friends and see their beautiful faces.

Do you ever find yourself unable to express your creativity to the fullest? What kinds of things inhibit you?

Yeah and I think that's location and budget. It's hard as an indie artist you don't have access to extensive session musicians and different producers or endless recording studio hours, famed orchestral performers, or choirs to create the perfect version of a song that exists in your mind. You just do the best you can to stay true to your vision.

We also note that you're a model/actress - What do you like most about being a model and an actress?

With modelling I love the glamour part of it, the dress-up aspect, the clothes, brands location the creative part is fun. With acting, it's exciting to play a character or another person and you're reacting to situations as something other than yourself and that's



THE *Instagram*

Charade: A Theatrical Performance of An Identity

By: Jenny Hu

In the age of social media, identity is performance. A performance where you showcase the shiny parts of yourself. Kumbaya. Life is a utopia.

How do you know it is a utopia?

The social media ecosystem, Instagram uses simple affordances such as "Likes" and "Comments" to increase the engagement of posts or profile pictures as signifies approval from others. The algorithm determines the ranking of the object in question and depending on its mood it would accelerate or decelerate on the Instagram totem pole.

Although it is part of the social media equation, there is a participation aspect to it. The user feels like they need to present themselves in a certain way to gain social capital and engagement.

But why do we perform our identities online?

The Insta-Beast and Its Motivations

Social media is cited as a cause that exacerbates and amplifies pre-existing societal problems. Unrealistic beauty standards. Social Media. Echo Chambers. Social Media. Coming across a cat video that happens to prevent you from doing your assignment the next day. Social Media.

However, before examining the Insta-Beast, we have to discuss why the motivations to perform identity exists in the first place and how it snowballed into a problematic medium to this day.

In the case of Instagram, there are initially six motivations as to why people want to use the platform, according to a 2016 study, "Identities in Flux: An Analysis to Photographic Self-Representation on Instagram" by Sofia P. Calderia:

- 1) Sharing; the wish to enjoy the photographic activity jointly with others.
- 2) Documentation; the urge to capture, record, and preserve transient experiences.
- 3) Seeing; the urge to see the world through the eyes of others and to be able to present one's viewpoint.
- 4) Community; the thrills and incentives of social interaction and a responsive audience.
- 5) Creativity; photographic production as an artistic effort marked by a strong aesthetic aspect; and finally.
- 6) Therapy; the idea, expressed by a small set of users, of Instagram's photographic and social activities as being, in a certain sense, generative of "well-being", or even "healing"

for emotional or psychological instability.

However, in her study, she cited a 2013 master thesis of Zane Verdina, who explored how two of the initial motivations—community and sharing is closely-tied with identity:

"Identity, that aims to create a visual self-representation in online environments, of triumph, the ability to announce an achievement publicly, and of fun, the simple usage of photography as a means to escape boredom or monotony."

Dopamine Hits and the Social Media Ecosystem

The identity charade on social media plays in heavily at this point. Following trends, subscribing to a particular aesthetic, speaking into existence an agreeable popular opinion, and adhering to mainstream conventions are the many ways of gaining social capital.

According to the Harvard University researcher, Trevor Haynes notes that Instagram is built to be addictive and captures your attention.

"When you get a social media notification, your brain sends a dopamine along a reward pathway, which makes you feel good."

As dopamine activates the reward centre of the brain, the person is beaming to the influx of likes, which in turn gives them an ego boost. In a sense, they are confirming that they are subscribing to the modern standard of beauty, materialism, or hedonism.

It is a common practice on Instagram, to trial and error the ebbs and flows of the algorithm. The objective; to top the previous dopamine high by amassing more likes and followers. It can take forms of posting an aesthetically pleasing brunch, fitness routines, OOTD, or travel photos.

Perhaps, they went to a popular high-end fine dining restaurant and ask their significant other to take a picture of posing rather "elegantly" to the static ambiance of a restaurant. Contorting their torsos and their faces at a 45-degree angle, whilst looking down at the decadent yet small plate of fillet mignons, pensive beyond all reason.

When their significant others took their photos for the 'gram, they add a filter and go through the rolodex of captions stored in their heads from previous brainstorming sessions.

Suppose this benign action of taking a photo at a fine dining restaurant spirals out of control, the dopamine high eventually will turn into an addiction. Users solely depend on Instagram as a source of decadent external validation from strangers. (Hence, the semblance to drug or gambling addiction.)



The actions mentioned above are what constitutes to the overall "fakeness" of social media. It portrays the user as being one-dimensional; highlighting the acceptable and low lighting the unorthodox.

Although starting as an innocent app where the initial motivations are sharing social activities amongst your friends, the commercial side of Instagram reinforces a sense of conformity on the platform.

Advertising and brand sponsorships have created a breeding ground for the micro-celebrities, known colloquially as, "Instagram influencers" who bank on their appearances. The more conventionally beautiful you are, the likely you become an Instagram influencer, the more likely you are to conform to the unrealistic aesthetic.

Due to the Instagram feedback ecosystem, the culture of Instagram encourages vanity and superficiality to thrive. To reach a certain dopamine quota, Instagram influencers may opt to digitally enhance their looks and upkeep a luxurious lifestyle to rally support from their followers.

According to researchers from the University of Sydney, they found out that users who frequently use Instagram have a strong desire to belong.

"The greater desire to belong accurately predicted more frequent Instagram use, and more perceived social support, both in general and from significant others or friends. However, the frequency of Instagram use alone did not predict perceived social support. In a nutshell, this means that people with a strong desire to belong are more likely to use Instagram."

The Reflection: Mitigating the "Je ne sais quoi" effect.

It's easy to criticise and poke holes at a phenomenon without participating in the game. Therefore, I have participated in the game of Instagram, quite moderately. I have to admit that I have failed multiple times to attain 100+ Likes per photo and amassing a following.

A) I view my Instagram as a documentation tool and update it without knowing that I was participating in the game.

B) I don't use Instagram as a money-making machine.

C) The friends I have are not avid Instagram users; somewhat, detached from their phones.

Or, the reasons above are all not valid. I don't know how to play the game.

I'm at a crossroads where I question the ethical implications of performing my online identity and only showing the "highlight reel" of my life. It begs the question "Who do I want to impress?" and "Why do I post in the first place?"

"Do I, to an extent, want to have external validation from strangers and feel good for myself?"

Even a broader question, "Does any of the social media performance mean anything in my measly existence?"

As I spiral down the existential doom of angst, I came to realise the dopamine hits, the external validation, and sharing only the "highlight reel" on social media is justtheatrics. A part of me wants to "attain Insta-Hoe status fame," but another part, I never cared for playing the game in the first place.

I don't know. ("Je ne sais quoi", is synonymous with "the air of uppity exclusivity" meets "the allure of the unattainable," that Instagram exudes.) As I scroll through the countless posts, I came to realise that I should opt-out of being a slave to the Instagram algorithm. In due time.

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SNEAK PEEK: CELEBRITY HOMES UNLOCKED THE GODFATHER MANSION

One of California's most historic and opulent mansions, a honeymoon love nest for Jack and Jackie Kennedy, and a big star in movies such as *The Godfather* and *The Bodyguard*, the famous Hearst Estate has finally sold. The only question is the final price.

Newspaper magnate, yellow journalist and two-term Democratic congressman from New York, William Randolph Hearst, the inspiration for the Charles Foster Kane character in *Citizen Kane*, and actress Marion Davies began their torrid love affair in 1917. He was 53 and married while she was a 19-year-old chorus girl when they moved in together at his world-famous Hearst Castle in San Simeon, California. When he agreed to downsize from the imposing 69,000-square-foot estate, Davies bought him a smaller mansion in Beverly Hills - where they lived until his death in 1951. Previously known as *The Beverly House*, the mansion has been a frequent filming site used as a backdrop for the movies *The Godfather* and *The Bodyguard* and Beyoncé's music video, *Black is King*. The home was also where Jack and Jackie Kennedy stayed during the Southern California segment of their 1953 honeymoon. Mrs. Kennedy was so excited to be staying in such a stunning estate, she wrote a four-page letter about her stay, which is framed along with photographs that are on display at the home. The mansion was later used by Senator Kennedy as the West Coast headquarters for his 1960 presidential campaign.

Behind iron gates on 3.5 acres and down an 800-foot driveway past a five-room gatehouse, the impressive 30,000-square-foot mansion first comes in to view. On entering, there is such a volume of space that one is focused only on its vast size. The living room has 22-foot-arched ceilings that are hand painted. The room also serves as a screening room with wooden shutters that can be closed to block out light. The family room is also used as a second screening room. There is a magnificent two-story, hand-carved, wood-paneled library where the pattern in the carpet replicates the same ceiling pattern. The billiard room's fireplace surround is from Hearst Castle and is one of eight in the house. The pool table is from 1868 and is one of only three like it still in existence. An Art Deco nightclub is on the lower level modeled after Hugh Hefner's former Beverly Hills club, *Touch*, with the club's original etched glass and doors.

Outside the Hearst Estate, the Olympic-sized pool is fed by two reflecting pools that spill into the main pool surrounded by terraces, manicured lawns, columned pergolas and splashing fountains - an area that can accommodate up to a thousand guests. Tucked into the landscaping is a tennis court with its own pavilion. Ancillary improvements include two staff/guest apartments, a pool house and a two-story, five-bedroom gatehouse.

Having been on and off the market during the 40 years it has been owned by financier-and-attorney Leonard M. Ross, who was forced into bankruptcy in 2019, the Hearst Estate was listed in August 2020 at \$125 million. In April 2021 the price was dropped to \$89.75 million and in June down to \$69.95 million. After reaching the June price, the estate received multiple offers which were reviewed by the bankruptcy court. A price of \$47 million was accepted by the court, but during the final proceedings will be open to a brief auction in the attempt to garner a higher price before the gavel falls. Regardless of what happens before the gavel hits its mark, Mr. Ross will be saying goodbye to his exquisite mansion, and it will move forward to welcome a new set of owners and guests.

The property is co-listed by Anthony Marguleas of Amalfi Estates, Gary Gold of Hilton & Hyland, Zizi Pak of Rodeo Realty and John Gould of Rodeo Realty, all located in Beverly Hills.

Photo Credit: Jim Bartsch | Source: [TopTenRealEstateDeals.com](https://www.TopTenRealEstateDeals.com)





SIX BEST *Makeup Tips*

Correcting Make-up Application Fallacies

By Chi de Jesus

If you want to update your techniques in applying make-up, here are some make-up fallacies and some useful tips to get you started on a fresher and smarter use of make-up.

TONING IS JUST ANOTHER WAY TO CLEAN YOUR FACE. The secret to perfect-looking make-up is perfectly taken care of skin. One should never forget the important triumvirate of skincare – cleanse- tone-moisturize. Interestingly, I've met women who feel that toning is an unimportant step thinking that it's just another way to clean the face. Sadly, they can never be more wrong. Toning brings back the face's acid mantle that protects the face from bacteria. This mantle is taken out after cleansing and comes back after 20 minutes – and a lot can happen in 20 minutes. If you don't want more bacteria on your face, start toning.

NEED TO COVER UP, PACK IT ON. Foundation can be a bit tricky but understanding your skin type and tone allows you more elbow room in choosing the right foundation for you. However, after choosing the right foundation, some women go to town with applying it thinking that it's the "cure-all" or "erase all" for all facial skin imperfections. This can lead to packing up which causes caking and dried-up faces or more pronounced lines at the end of the day. The term "less is more" can never be said enough when applying foundation. It should be enough to even out your face and allow coverage to extend to the neck and the chest (depending on how low the neckline is).

CONCEALER GOES UNDER FOUNDATION. If you are worried about blemishes or spots that you'd like to conceal on your face, do not pack it up with foundation – you can use a concealer to do the trick. However, which comes first? In several articles that I have read, this can be interchangeable. My thoughts on the matter say otherwise. This technique simply encourages one to use more products more to even out the tone. Ideally, after applying the foundation correct for your skin tone and type, concealer comes dabbed in very specific areas to camouflage the blemish. Add a little translucent powder so the concealer can stay in place. Applying the foundation on top of the concealer may move the concealer prompting you to add more product to achieve the coverage that you want. This technique provides more control over the use of the product.

ANY DARK COLOURED MAKEUP CAN BE USED TO CONTOUR. When push comes to shove, sometimes women use any dark coloured make-up as a contour. Remember that contour helps in creating the ideal shape for your face. So if you use other products it may not achieve the look that you want given that these products may be created from different powders that tend to reflect light than absorb them like how contour powder does. Using the proper product makes the corrective technique more invisible to the naked eye.

SKIN LOOKS THE BEST WITH A HIGHLIGHTER. If contour powder absorbs light to create the proper shadows on the face, highlighters are made of material that magnifies the reflection of light making the area pop and become more noticeable. This is used to make the cheeks, chin, and nose bridge more obvious especially when there is none. However, applying more highlighter makes the face look oily and wet especially on a hot summer day which a lot of times make it look unsightly. It also emphasizes blemishes and other skin imperfections like lines and wrinkles. So whoever said that you need more highlighters so you can be seen a mile away may just be saying that to sell you more products.

ALWAYS RETOUCH WITH POWDER. Yes, powder may take out the moisture caused by your sweat after a long day. But, it may cause your make-up to look murky and cakey at the end of the day. The best thing to do is to get a facial tissue and dab it all over your face to absorb all the excess oil from having the make-up the whole day. This allows your skin to "breathe" and look more relaxed. If you add more product immediately, your pores would just want to open up more to dispel all these foreign materials from your face. You may also use a personal sponge which can be re-usable or disposable depending on your budget. Just don't forget to sanitize it properly. After taking out all the unwanted moisture from your face, brush on a light layer of translucent powder or HD powder to refine your look.

The transformative powers of make-up can be awesome. However, the best make-up is still invisible – highlighting the freshness of your face and not the individual products.

7 WAYS TO MAINTAIN YOUR *Beauty Routine* DURING THE PANDEMIC

By Chi de Jesus

A lot of disruptions have been happening to most of us because of this pandemic. We almost were ready to see more people cozy up in gatherings at home this coming winter. But the current outbreak says a gigantic "NOT!"... So I guess my wishful thinking has to get grounded by the current facts of life. Am sure, everyone's familiar with these disruptions so let's narrow it down to just being [tadaaaa!] beautiful.

You may think that work from home and virtual meetings give you more time for yourself and get things more done at home. But wait! A lot of times, uncertainty ruins our ability to create that necessary routine to seamlessly get your perfectly done visage out of the door to attend this thing we call life. This article goes especially for the working ladies out there. If the usual routine would be waking up, having breakfast, taking a shower, doing your usual skincare routine, and then make-up before going to work, these times have made everything erratic. Regular schedules differ but your skin's needs do not.

The standard skincare and make-up routine now become second place to fixing your room, doing work while eating your favourite treats, and binge-watching till you fall asleep. Here are some ideas to help you keep your glow until the next face-to-face time comes back again.

Start and end the day with skincare. To immediately get it out of the way, as soon as you wake up, cleanse-tone-moisturize. This will keep your skin hydrated no matter what you're doing the rest of the day. At night, before watching that series you've been wanting to see, cleanse-tone-moisturize before you become a couch potato and fall asleep in front of the TV.

Always apply a thin layer of sunblock. UV rays can still reach you even if you're inside your home. By doing this, you do not only prevent skin damage by UVB's but also slows down the skin's aging process.

Hydrate. Drink a lot of water. This provides the right hydration that keeps your skin supple and fresh.

During meetings that do not need you to be on cam, slip a moisturizing mask while you're attending the meeting. Stress can also be a major source of skin deterioration. Doubling your moisturizing routine can help take out the stress on your skin.

The break also gives your hair the breather it needs from the application of heat and other sculpting products. You can apply a coconut mask or just plain coconut oil to refresh your scalp and replace the moisture that it loses from the extreme heat or cold. Tie your hair in a high ponytail or a simple low bun to concentrate the effect of the coconut oil and appear neat on cam.

Put Vaseline on your heels or the whole sole and wear socks. This helps moisturize your feet and dissolve the hard skin you get from constantly wearing heels.

Wear nude moisturizing lipstick or a coloured lip balm to keep your lips from drying up or capping. Taking care of your skin or putting on the right make-up shouldn't only happen when people are looking. It should be something that never goes out of your routine because you have to look good for yourself and not anybody else.

Keep on being beautiful.

Source: The Australian Filipina



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a wide-brimmed white hat, a white short-sleeved dress with ruffles, and brown boots, is sitting on a sand dune. She is holding a brown crossbody bag and sunglasses. The background shows a beach with waves and a blue sky with light clouds. Two wooden posts are visible in the sand.

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