

# Scarlet fever

10 red dresses are up for bids in awareness campaign for heart disease, reports IMRAN JALAL



Hansel

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Fashionistas, get ready to see red - 10 fab frocks in that devilish hue go on display from today at the St Regis hotel and from May 18 at Isetan Scotts.

The cocktail dresses, designed by some of the region's design wunderkinds, could well end up in your closet if you bid for your favourite. Public bidding is on until June 7.

'WE WANTED FRESH TALENT TO BE BROUGHT ON TO THE SCENE, KEEPING IN LINE WITH THE THEME OF THE FASHION FESTIVAL, WHICH IS INNOVATION AND INSPIRATION.'

**Georgette Tan, MasterCard's vice-president of communications in Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa, on why rising fashion lensman Joel Lim was chosen as the photographer**

Dubbed Go Red For Women, the campaign is to raise awareness for heart disease, the No. 1 killer of women here.

One in three women dies from the disease each year, going by figures from the Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF).

The foundation and MasterCard, which are spearheading the campaign, have roped in some of the brightest design stars from the region for the project.

They include home-grown talents like Nic Wong of Nicholas, Thai designer Thytatrachaphum Naratjaroonsub and Nurita Harith from Malaysia.

Five young designers, featured at the Audi Fashion Festival's Blueprint showcase yesterday, are also involved. They are Sabrina Goh of Elohim, Nina Nikicio of Nikicio, Gian Romano and Stella Rissa of their eponymous labels and the design outfit Reckless Ericka.

Behind the scenes is rising fashion lensman Joel Lim, who has shot editorials for South China Morning Post's style magazine, Post Magazine.

On why MasterCard chose Lim as the photographer, Georgette Tan, its vice-president of communications in Asia Pacific, Middle East and Africa, tells Urban that he has a reputation for good work.

'We wanted fresh talent to be brought on to the scene, keeping in line with the theme of the fashion festival, which is Innovation and Inspiration.'

When Urban caught up with Lim at D Studiolab at Boon Lay Way, where the full-day shoot took place, the 31-year-old, who is a full-time risk analyst at a foreign bank outside of his shutterbug hours, says that the shots he had planned were 'in line with the foundation's image, which is white with hints of red'.

He adds: 'It is important for the images to have high impact and contrast to make people notice the dresses.'

Urban sneaks a peek at the campaign's photography session and toasts the designers behind the 10 red frocks.

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Bidding for Go Red For Women Presented By MasterCard dresses opens today and ends on June 7. Bidding starts at \$500 for each dress and can be done at the

St Regis Drawing Room or Level 2 Isetan Scotts or on [www.myheart.org.sg](http://www.myheart.org.sg)

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## Hansel

**The designer:** Singaporean Jo Soh, 33

**Claim to fame:** Made her debut at the Mercedes Australian Fashion Week in 2003; her label is carried by boutiques in Australia, Japan and Kuala Lumpur. Design tome Wallpaper listed her in its annual Secret Elite label guide for two years in a row in 2007 and 2008

**Signature look:** Quirky takes on retro-inspired style

**The dress:** Soh's use of the oversized bow at the front is a 'loud and proud symbol of all things feminine'. The classic silhouette of the sheath dress was chosen to make it more 'attractive and wearable so that it increases the chance of getting a higher bid, which means more financial support for the cause'.

## Koops

**The designer:** Singaporean Keith Png, 31

**Claim to fame:** Nominated for Swarovski Designer/Label of the Year in 2004 and 2003 and has dressed A-listers like songbird Stefanie Sun, actress Zoe Tay and Taiwanese model Lin Chi Ling

**Signature look:** Girlicious frocks suitable for all body shapes

**The dress:** Inspired by the 'deep red carnation flower', Png uses silk for the dress, which features 21 dainty strips at the front. The one-week construction, he says, was longer than usual for a short dress but necessary as he had to rearrange and add more petals to perfect the final look.

## Nurita Harith

**The designer:** Malaysian Nurita Harith, 26

**Claim to fame:** Known as the stylist of Malaysian Tatler and as a contestant on Project Runway Malaysia

**Signature look:** Elaborate draping techniques

**The dress:** A flirty off-shoulder metallic dress with a bubble skirt.

According to Nurita, who has a background in sculpture-making before she pursued a fashion design degree at the Surrey Institute of Art in London, the dress is meant to be simple and fun, 'allowing one to style it however one likes'.

### Heidi's Secret

**The designer:** Thai Thytatrachaphum Naratjaroonsub aka Timmy, 29

**Claim to fame:** A style staple among Thailand's celebrities, the designer who started the label in late 2005 is also a stylist and costumer.

**Signature look:** Modern vintage chic

**The dress:** The risqué bustier with pockets in front takes its cue from the fairy tale Little Red Riding Hood. Timmy topped the look with a hood, 'adding a touch of fun'.

### Nikicio

**The designer:** Indonesian Nina Nikicio, 24

**Claim to fame:** Showed at local independent design outfit Studio Prive spring/summer 2007 and autumn/winter 2008 shows and was featured last year in Teen Vogue's designer spotlight

**Signature look:** Fusion of menswear tailoring and couture craftsmanship

**The dress:** She was inspired to design the cotton polyester dress, called Sway, while listening to Michael Buble. She tells Urban in a phone interview that she wanted to create a 'body-conscious' dress that could go from a business meeting, with a blazer worn over it, to a night out in the town.

### Elohim

**The designer:** Malaysian Sabrina Goh, 25

**Claim to fame:** In-house designer for London-based Singaporean label Sino London before setting up her own line this year, which is based here

**Signature look:** Gender-bending work - like French collars in androgynous-looking blouses

**The dress:** The heavy folds on the skirt give a strong edge to this dress, which Goh says is for the 'woman who is strong and full of confidence'. She chooses red duchess satin and shiny red polyester to create a dual tone effect of matte and shine when the folds flip.

### Nicholas

**The designer:** Singaporean Nic Wong, 36

**Claim to fame:** The graduate of fashion design at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology is a household name in the local design circuit after winning the Mercedes Benz Asia Fashion Award in 2004

**Signature look:** Subtle tailoring with a minimalist approach

**The dress:** The frothy folds of the dress were created using tough and tightly woven gabardine fabric. Wong says that the fall of the drapes and volume of the tube dress were inspired by the puffs and folds of parachutes.

### Reckless Ericka

**The designer:** Indonesian Ruth Marbun, 24, Singaporean Afton Chen, 22, Filipina Diorelle Sy, 22, and Singaporean Louis Koh, 26

**Claim to fame:** The label, formed this year, was a highly anticipated participant at the Blueprint 2009 show at the Audi Fashion Festival where it made its debut

**Signature look:** High street fashion with classic tailoring

**The dress:** The thick red jersey dress comprises hand-sewn and hand-pleated drapes. Chen says: 'The fabric sculpts the body in clouds of red'.

## Gian Romano

**The designer:** Filipino Gian Romano, 28

**Claim to fame:** Won the Grand Prize at the Filipino Mega Magazine's Young Designer's Competition in 2004 and received a British Council scholarship to study menswear design at famed fashion college Central Saint Martins in London

**Signature look:** Structural garments influenced by the human anatomy

**The dress:** True to his edgy style, Romano added 55cm of zippers into the twill cotton and silk garment for 'a little bling'. The dress, he adds, acts like a cocoon for the human form.

## Stella Rissa

**The designer:** Indonesian Stella Rissa, 24

**Claim to fame:** Awarded Best Young Designer Special Award at Cleo's Fashion Award in 2008 in Jakarta

**Signature look:** Chic designs with bright colours

**The dress:** The clean lines of the dress reflects her design aesthetic. The crimson piece sports a rugged accent of studs on the bodice, something Rissa says represents a 'woman who is feminine yet strong at heart'.

## BID FOR PHONE POUCHES

The glam squad's support for the Go Red For Women cause does not stop at the 10 red dresses.

Local design fave, Ashley Isham, has put his touch of bling on three cellphone pouches. The accessories were for Samsung Ultra Touch handsets using semi-precious and precious stones from Lee Hwa Jewellery.

'The embellished pouches drew inspiration from the opulence of vintage ball gowns,' says the designer, referring to the purple Luxe Lavender pouch with amethyst and blue topaz (far left of Photo 11) and the blue Midnight Onyx that is adorned with a topaz set against a deep blue jacquard fabric (centre in photo of Photo 11).

The monochromatic Ivory Blossom (left, bottom of Photo 11) was inspired by a dress worn by British singer Kimberley Walsh of Girls Aloud at the 2009 Brit Awards. It shines with three round diamonds set around two velvet leaves.

Bid for the cellphone and pouch sets online from today to June 8 at [www.myheart.org/?page\\_id=2205](http://www.myheart.org/?page_id=2205).

Bidding starts at \$1,000 for each one.