



## MasterCard Goes Red For Women

### Ten Unique Red Dresses Specially Designed by Asian Designers to be Auctioned with Proceeds Benefitting the Singapore Heart Foundation

**Singapore, 14 April 2009:** MasterCard, in support of the Singapore Heart Foundation, today announced *Go Red For Women presented by MasterCard* to raise awareness of heart disease – the No.1 killer of women worldwide.

The initiative links back to the international Go Red For Women movement that aims to empower women with the knowledge and tools to take better care of their own and their families' heart health. In Singapore, heart disease and stroke claim the lives of one in three women, but research has shown that only eight percent of women are aware of this<sup>1</sup>.

*Go Red For Women presented by MasterCard* will see ten rising fashion designers from Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and the Philippines each creating their own masterpiece of a red dress to be auctioned for the cause. Designers behind cutting edge brands like ELOHIM, Gian Romano, hansel, Heidi's Secret, KOOPS, nicholas, Nikicio, Nurita Harith, reckless Ericka and Stella Rissa, will take "Inspiration & Innovation" as their design theme. This is in line with the theme of the Audi Fashion Festival 2009 in Singapore, of which MasterCard is a sponsor, where some of these unique red creations will be paraded on the runway.

Vernon Kang, CEO, Singapore Heart Foundation said: "The Go Red For Women campaign, symbolized by the little red dress, is an important platform for us to bring home the message of heart health to women in Singapore. Our collaboration with MasterCard will enable us to get our message across through an avenue that is close to women's hearts: fashion."

"An alarmingly small number of women are aware that the number one killer of women in Singapore is heart disease and stroke. With the right knowledge and tools, women can protect themselves and their loved ones, so this is an important call to action," said Georgette Tan, vice president, Communications, Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa, MasterCard Worldwide. "MasterCard has long been involved in programs reaching out to women to educate and empower them. We would like to encourage our cardholders throughout the region to bid for a little red dress and take a big message from the heart, about the heart, to the women in their lives."

The dresses will be on display at the St. Regis and Isetan Scotts in Singapore and at [www.myheart.org.sg](http://www.myheart.org.sg), where MasterCard cardholders can view and bid for their favorite red dress from 8 May to 7 June 2009. St Regis will display the dresses by the overseas

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<sup>1</sup> Source: The Singapore Heart Foundation

designers while Isetan Scotts will showcase those by the local designers. Bidding will close at 11.59pm on 7 June and the Singapore Heart Foundation will regularly update its website to indicate the highest bid received for each dress. Cardholders who are outbid during the auction can put in a new bid during the auction period and successful bidders will be notified by email. The winning bidders will have their red dresses custom made to size by each designer.

Providing a perfect accessory to the little red dresses will be three limited edition red Samsung Ultra<sup>TOUCH</sup> mobile phone and accessory sets specially customized by Samsung that will also be put up for auction. Each of these three distinctive bejewelled pouches are designed by Singapore-born, London-based designer Ashley Isham in collaboration with Lee Hwa Jewellery, and will add more glamor to the campaign.

The minimum bid for each dress is S\$500, while the minimum bid for each phone S\$1000. All proceeds will benefit the Singapore Heart Foundation.

More details on *Go Red For Women presented by MasterCard* will be available at [www.myheart.org.sg](http://www.myheart.org.sg), [www.mastercard.com/sea](http://www.mastercard.com/sea) and [www.mastercardmoments.com](http://www.mastercardmoments.com).

*Go Red For Women presented by MasterCard* is among other initiatives that MasterCard has undertaken to support, educate and empower women. These include the U21 Global Scholarship for Women in Travel and Tourism, which was launched in 2006 to provide scholarships to working women professionals to develop their leadership skills and realize their full potential in the area of travel and tourism, as well as support for the Payatas women in the Philippines through the Rags2Riches social entrepreneurship program. MasterCard has also supported the All China Women's Federation on several initiatives.

MasterCard has dedicated significant resources to knowledge leadership in the women's space. Its ongoing annual MasterCard Worldwide Index of Women's Advancement measures the socio-economic development of women across 21 markets in Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa. It has also released numerous proprietary research reports and insights on women consumers, including publishing a book  *Holding Up Half of the Sky: The New Women Consumers of Asia*<sup>2</sup>.

### ***Go Red for Women Presented by MasterCard: The Ten Designers***

#### **E L O H I M – Malaysia/Singapore**

Inspired by structure, forms, androgynous, symmetrical and asymmetrical silhouette designs, Malaysian born Sabrina Goh is known for her use of colors, texture and intricate unexpected details. Her works incorporate elements of both men and women's wear, alongside different textures of fabrication to contrast matt and shine. With vision and talent, this is one designer set to go places.

*“To me, the red dress serves as an alarm to encourage all women to be strong - not only in appearance but also in their inner being. Women are meant to be beautiful. “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”. The most beautiful of women is the nakedness of their true self. Have faith and believe in yourself that you do not need to camouflage or pretend to be in*

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<sup>2</sup> Author: Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, economic advisor, Asia/Pacific, MasterCard Worldwide. Publisher: John Wiley & Sons (Asia) Pte Ltd, 2006.

power. Real powers are in you and believe that you have it,” said Sabrina Goh.

### **Gian Romano - Philippines**

Filipino designer Gian Romano is well loved for his emphasis on form, concept and construction. His collection, which combines forward thinking, minimalism, streamlined shapes with hints of utilitarian elements, has been strongly influenced by his travel experiences, music and street culture. His solid and well-thought through pieces combine sharp tailoring juxtaposed with a devil-may-care attitude, and have gained him a cult following among those looking for outfits which are easy to include in any wardrobe yet strong enough to go unnoticed.

*“The whole inspiration of my red dress came while I was watching Romeo and Juliet, in a song by Kym Mazelle entitled Young Hearts Run Free. I wanted to create a dress that was ageless, and which celebrates the human anatomy. Given that the dress is specially designed for the Heart Foundation, I was inspired to cut part of the dress to where the heart is,”* explained Gian Romano

### **hansel – Singapore**

Described by the fashion elite as a “total original”, Jo Soh is one designer to watch for her unique take on retro-inspired styles and juxtaposing of strong and subtle shades. hansel has garnered many accolades and won fans from across the region, with the label being carried in boutiques in Japan, Australia, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Her collection blends a sense of quirky playfulness with understated minimalism, as she pulls together unexpected elements to create highly-wearable pieces.

*“The gigantic bow is a loud and proud symbol of all things feminine. This dress was designed for the strong, confident woman who simply loves being a woman and looks after her mind and body,”* said Jo Soh.

### **Heidi’s Secret - Thailand**

Thyatrachaphum Naratjaroonsub or TIMMY has a following among the trendsetting celebrities in Thailand, and is best known for his combination of modern vintage chic with a feminine touch. While he has expanded his fashion repertoire as a stylist and costume designer, he continues to provide prêt-a-porter to the fashionably forward.

*“The semi-formal cocktail dress has a touch of Thai handicraft, and is inspired by the evergreen fairytale “The Little Red Riding Hood”. The dress cuts a clean silhouette, reflecting the simple and basic philosophy that the brand is well-loved for, while delighting with its details. Taking the concept of the little red riding hood further, the dress boasts cutworks of little hoods all around the cape of the dress and its hem, making the piece unique and adding a touch of fun”* said TIMMY.

### **KOOPS - Singapore**

Known for his customized dresses, Keith Png has dressed many celebrities including model Lin Chi Ling, top Singaporean actresses Fann Wong and Zoe Tay and singer Sun Yan Zi. Working mainly with silk and cotton, KOOPS boasts an impressive collection of dresses which have been specially tailored for a range of body shapes and curves to help enhance

one's assets. KOOPS' limited pieces have gained a following among women who are looking for unique, stylish and quality pieces.

*"Inspired by the deep red carnation flower which symbolizes one's aching heart of love, I have created my dress using 21 silk satin strips cut on the bias and sewn down on the raw silk bodice to create the curves and layers which resemble the petals of a carnation,"* said Keith Png.

#### **nicholas - Singapore**

nicholas is the brainchild of Nic Wong, who is renowned for his attention to details, symmetrical simplicity and understated designs. Integral to Nic's culture is the juxtaposition of contrasting elements: modern and classic, asymmetry and order. He is best known for his clean cuts and structured style. While his designs may be understated, the textural and structural details that litter his designs have won him many fans among the fashion crowd.

*"This red dress is inspired by the puffs and folds of huge parachutes sashaying high in the sky. It is meant to evoke a sense of freedom and bliss, of one that is not weighed down by a heavy heart and worries of the world, but floating and beholding every scene and sight there is to see,"* said Nic Wong.

#### **Nikicio – Indonesia**

Established in 2006, Jakarta born Nikicio believes in conceiving something that will outlast trends and seasons yet is distinct in being innovative and fun. Classic cuts with high end constructions are found in many of her signature works, with inspirations from menswear tailoring and ready-to-wear pieces infused with couture craftsmanship. With each piece comes a personal attachment, an opportunity to bring people to "a comfortable place to conceal, take the load off and dress up".

*"This dress is made to celebrate the survivors (of heart disease) and women in general. It allows women to feel amazingly sexy, feminine, and powerful at the same time. The dress is made to sway,"* said Nikicio.

#### **Nurita Harith – Malaysia**

Nurita Harith's passion lies in the Arts and the use of interesting silhouettes. Her background in sculpture has given her an eye for structure and details, and is a huge influence on her style. The new 'It' girl in the Malaysian fashion scene, this Tatler stylist was one of the participants in the "10 Rising Stars" show at the Malaysia-International Fashion Week 2008 and has a growing following among the rich and famous.

*"A touch of silver piping is applied on the shoulder and waist panels for definition and to lift the garment. Having silver against the red is meant to evoke the sense of 'light' – signifying positivity, hope and possibilities. The dress is meant to be simple and fun, allowing one to style it however you like it. It's all about possibilities and feeling positive!"* said Nurita Harith.

#### **reckless ericka – Singapore**

reckless ericka is, a quirky, contemporary high street fashion brand by 4 young designers - Afton Chen Ruth, Marbun, Diorelle Sy and Kavya Bagamane. Focused on balancing classic

tailoring with more avant-garde use of silhouette and colors, and constructing avant-garde silhouette with classic details, the pieces produced have been a refreshing combination of edginess and quirkiness.

*“A woman of empowerment gathers strength from the road ahead. A woman of tenacity will not let fear rule her life and she is not afraid to step out of her fears. A woman of inspiration does not avoid mistakes, but turns them into unexpected blessings. A woman of strength holds grace in her heart, and it shows. The dress encompasses the spirit of confidence and power. Red, gathered, pleated, tucked and puffed-up with voluminous swags of fabric – the dress is conceptual yet wearable. Pieced together with irregular shapes and folds, the fabric sculpts the body in clouds of red,”* said Afton Chen.

### **Stella Rissa – Indonesia**

Stella Rissa has been recognized as one of the creative reservoirs for today’s most talked-about young designers. Her collection boasts of daring pieces which speak of fresh ideas and unexpected details. Simple yet intricate, wearable yet striking – Rissa offers a style which is endearing and fresh.

*“This red dress is not just a fashion work of art - it goes beyond by revealing the true sanctity of a woman. The details and colors chosen are symbols representing all aspects of a woman’s life. Red is a symbol not only of strength, but also of positive spirit and motivation. The slight touch of black shows imperfection, yet it is not something that we should avoid or be afraid of. We need to accept and make the best of it - because often life is not about perfection, but rather the journey towards perfection and completeness. Therefore, let’s embrace life!”* said Stella Rissa.

### **About MasterCard Worldwide**

MasterCard Worldwide advances global commerce by providing a critical economic link among financial institutions, businesses, cardholders and merchants worldwide. As a franchisor, processor and advisor, MasterCard develops and markets payment solutions, processes approximately 21 billion transactions each year, and provides industry-leading analysis and consulting services to financial-institution customers and merchants. Powered by the MasterCard Worldwide Network and through its family of brands, including MasterCard®, Maestro® and Cirrus®, MasterCard serves consumers and businesses in more than 210 countries and territories. For more information go to [www.mastercard.com](http://www.mastercard.com).

### **About The Singapore Heart Foundation**

The Singapore Heart Foundation (SHF) is a non-profit charitable organisation committed to promoting heart health in Singapore, as well as preventing and reducing disability and death due to cardiovascular diseases and stroke. Established in 1970, SHF fulfils its mission through educational programmes highlighting preventive measures against heart disease to the public. SHF supports community-based research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the landscape of heart disease in Singapore. SHF also focuses on rehabilitative care in its SHF-Isetan Foundation Heart Wellness Centre for recovering heart patients. In addition, SHF offers assistance to needy heart patients for emergency relief as for treatment. For more information, please visit [www.myheart.org.sg](http://www.myheart.org.sg).

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