

# Happy birthday to a special girl

by **Soo Wern Jun**

A FASHION icon no stranger to ladies, Barbie has always represented that a woman has choices. Even in her early years, Barbie did not have to settle for only being Ken's girlfriend or an inveterate shopper. She had the clothes, for example, to launch a career as a nurse, a stewardess, a nightclub singer.

Celebrating her 50th birthday, the inspiration for Barbie came as creator Ruth Handler watched her daughter Barbara playing with paper dolls, how she and her friends used them to play adult or teenage make-believe, imagining roles as college students, cheerleaders and adults with careers.

Commemorating this iconic event, Barbie celebrated in style with five Malaysian designers, namely Eric Choong, Khoon Hooi, Melinda Looi, Datuk Tom Abang Saufi and Datuk Lewre Léw. The four fashion designers each created three Barbie-inspired masterpieces embellished with brilliant Crystalized™ Swarovski Elements in celebration of Barbie's 50 years of timeless splendour, while one masterpiece from each designer is decked with a matching stiletto.

The elaborate designs were paraded at Café Stelle, Pavilion Kuala Lumpur by models made up in a mixture of styles both fresh and reminiscent to Barbie's signature looks. Selected pieces were up for auction and raised a total of RM42,500 with portions of proceeds donated to Rumah Nur Salam, The Kechara Soup Kitchen, Badan Amal Kasih Sayang Malaysia



**Khoon Hooi's pink Barbie-inspired dress.**



**Eric Choong's stunning red Barbie-inspired dress.**

and Pusat Penjaan Kanak-Kanak Cacat Taman Megah.

Barbie collector dolls were also on display in Parkson Pavilion, featuring Barbie Dolls of the World and Celebrity and Designer Collector dolls. There were also five pieces of Barbie from renowned

international designers, namely Betsey Johnson, Vivienne Tam, Nicole Miller, Koi Suwannagate and Nanette Lepore.

For more information, visit [www.barbiemedia.com](http://www.barbiemedia.com).