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THE DESIGNER – Eric Choong

March 20, 2012

This week, NPM will feature Malaysia's remarkable talent Eric Choong – his beginnings as well as his Bridal and Evening Wear Collection 2012 themed Goddesses of Olympus. In this first post we feature Eric's background while in the second post readers can feast their eyes on the beautiful collection that just hit the scene. Enjoy!

Material: Courtesy of Wedding Treasures Sdn Bhd

FASHION, for Eric, is a calling. Growing up, he discovered a fascination for clothes and design while flipping through his mother's imported magazines from Hong Kong and Japan. At seven, he produced his first sketches; by 13, he was a sought-after designer among his school teachers who got him to design outfits for their tailors to make.



Eric Choong with his models in his Bridal and Evening Wear Collection 2012.

Still, a career in fashion was by no means a choice profession for a Malaysian-Chinese boy back then. However, Eric's mother was adamant that her son should be allowed to do what he loved and clearly had the talent for. Against her husband's wishes, she supported his decision to study fashion design in Hong Kong. She was his heroine, muse, cheerleader and mentor, and remains to this day, his inspiration.

Upon graduating from the Hong Kong Institute of Fashion Design in 1986, Eric honed his design and tailoring skills in Hong Kong before returning to Kuala Lumpur in 1990 to start the Eric Choong Evening label. Based on his philosophy that fashion should be an expression of individual style and personality, the label quickly gained a reputation among the fashion set for its impressive creations that transcend fads with timeless beauty. Eric also broke new ground with the way he integrates Malaysian cultural influences into his sophisticated designs.

Encouraged by the success of his eponymous label, Eric ventured into made-to-measure bridal-wear. Eric Choong Bridal was a natural extension given that his clients had started requesting he design their bridal trousseau. His penchant for the extravagant and luxurious translated into breathtaking wedding gowns sealing his reputation as a leading bridal wear designer.



Eric tends to his model during one of his many showcases.

The Cocktail and Corporate Design labels followed in more recent years stemming from his desire to extend similar standards of fashion design to a wider group. His concern about providing the best for his bridal and corporate clients also saw the expansion of the Eric Choong labels to include Eric Choong Flowers, an award-winning floral design service.

Since striking out on his own, Eric has received numerous awards and accolades recognising his talent. He was nominated by the Malaysian Tourism Board as one of Malaysia's Top 10 Designers for three years running (1990-1992). From 1997 onwards, he was regularly invited to represent the country in fashion shows such as the ASEAN Designers' Fashion Show (1997), Asia Pacific Young Designers' Show (1998), Asia Pacific Bridal Summit (2001), Show of Asian Cultural Garments (Asia Annual Conference of Cultural Exchange, 2003), Swarovski Asia Fashion Tour (2004), Sydney Bridal Fashion Week (2009) and Pakistan Fashion Week (2010), to name just a few. Over the years, he has actively engaged in fashion platforms and events involving China and batik.

Eric also collaborated with leading luxury brands and media titles in the likes of Chopard, Cartier, Bvlgari, Tiffany & Co., Moët & Chandon, CNN, Malaysian Tatler & The Star (Malaysia). In 2006, he picked up the Best Costume Designer award at the 19th Malaysian Film Festival for his work in the film 3rd Generation. The following year, he was named Designer of the Year at the Malaysian International Fashion Week 2007; his label Eric Choong Kuala Lumpur also won the Best Collection Showcase of the Year.

Eric's personal and professional journey is documented in his autobiography In Full Bloom, published and launched in 2009. Conceptualised and authored by Eric himself, the book took two years to complete. The first release is in Mandarin; plans to translate the book into English are being considered.



Eric strikes a pose with his models at a previous event.

Eric's design philosophy is best encapsulated in the essence of the Eric Choong woman. In designing for the strong, independent and passionate woman with a sense of individual style, he favours creative boldness and rich fabrics, textures and colours, paired with impeccable technical acumen. Each creation is preceded by a careful study of fabric, drape and movement and an astute understanding of how these elements come together to dress and flatter the feminine frame. Vintage elements and heritage sewing techniques are seamlessly paired with contemporary details and interpretations. The Eric Choong Kuala Lumpur labels epitomise global glamour for women with an innate fashion sense and appreciation for what looks and feels beautiful.

Wedding Treasures Sdn Bhd owns and manages the Eric Choong Kuala Lumpur labels comprising of Eric Choong Bridal, Eric Choong Evening, Eric Choong Cocktail, Eric Choong Corporate Design and Eric Choong Flowers, which are housed in a jewel box flagship showroom located in the upmarket and fashionable Bangsar area.

The full-fledged design house provides a complete range of fashion design services: made-to-measure, ready-to-wear, contract designing and manufacturing; as well as floral designs and venue decoration. Driven by artistic, modern and luxurious design and style, and a high level of customer service, the Eric Choong labels hold impeccable customer appeal.

The company collaborates with leading global and local partners in the wedding industry, and produces all collections in company-owned ateliers in Malaysia.

Wedding Treasures is led by Eric Choong, the Creative Director and Principal Designer, and Managing Director Ee-Ling Loo.

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Posted by The Team at 3:03 AM



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Eric's Fashion of the Goddesses

March 20, 2012

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Material: Courtesy of Wedding Treasures Sdn Bhd

"I WAS introduced to Greek mythology after watching the movies Clash of the Titans and Immortals and since then I have been inspired by a pantheon of Greek deities. All those handsome men and beautiful women, embroiled in drama after drama of love, passion and vengeance, from Heaven to Earth to Hell and back - what's not to love?



Bridal and Evening Wear Collection 2012 themed Goddesses of Olympus.

This collection draws from the fascinating stories of Greek. Each piece conveys their unique personality. Women of today have generally been identified with the expressive personalities and mythical powers of the Greek goddesses. Following on, I wanted to extend the goddess metaphor beyond their spiritual and romantic lives to their dresses, from the sensual and alluring to the strong and serene.



The collection is a play on soft and hard, rigid and fluid elements. Silk chiffon and taffeta are my dominant fabrics and I infused many Grecian influences into my gowns; empire line, one shoulder, draping, transparency and braid. Each piece modernised and made unique by texturing them with layers, ruffles and flounces, using additional fabrics such as lace, organza and tulle.



On all the pieces, I have also incorporated a hand-braided waist belt and/or straps inspired by the olive wreath worn on the hair of the goddesses symbolising peace and prosperity. The red palette of the evening gowns symbolises passion, courage, sacrifice and loyalty, inherent characteristics associated with the goddesses. To add a touch of opulence and sparkle, each piece is embellished with Swarovski Elements.



To pay tribute to the beauty and strength of the Greek goddesses, I've named each gown after the important and prominent goddesses- Aphrodite (Olympian goddess of love and beauty); Athena (Olympian goddess of war and wisdom), Demeter (Olympian goddess of harvest), Hera (Queen of the Olympian goddesses and Olympian goddess of marriage) and Nike (goddess of victory).



This collection is very special to me as it commemorates my bridal and evening-wear label spanning 21 years today. I would like to express my heartfelt thanks and appreciation to our business associate, JIMMY CHIA LUXURY, for designing and producing all the beautiful footwear to complement this collection.

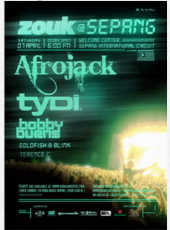
I sincerely hope that you like the new collection and we look forward to seeing you in our store soon.

Sending you my very best,

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