

# VIVA!

LIFESTYLE BY BENETON PROPERTIES

04  
3Q 2009

Malaysia's  
**shining stars** in  
performing arts

**Tropical Chic**,  
the VIVA way

8 ways on how  
to live **green**  
in apartments

Songbird

**Janet Lee**  
takes center stage



# People

**Janet Lee puts the 'Viva' in vivacious. From her bubbly laughter and warm smile to her mile a minute replies, everything seems to excite and inspire a response from her.**

A singer by profession since 2005, Janet is carving a name for herself in the theatre scene through musicals that leverage her stunning voice and sparkling stage presence.

Janet confesses to being an 'off-beat-loony' entertainer among friends but feels more comfortable being known as a professional singer and performer.

"Entertainer is a title that I'd reserve for the future, I have more miles to travel in the performing arts before I'm ready to carry such a title and all the expectations that come with it," Janet said, deprecatingly.

Listening to her performances now, the early influences of Natalie Cole, Barbara Streisand & Broadway show tunes can still be discerned but filtered through a layer of interpretation that is uniquely Janet.

"I was fresh out of my Chinese medium school back in Taiping and was just making sense of what those amazing songs meant and the depth of emotion those truly great singers were able to wring out of every note," Janet explained on her formative influences.

Like many gifted singers, she cannot pinpoint when she started to sing, perhaps from the time she could copy a tune at the age of five or six, or even earlier.

"What I remember is that singing gave me pleasure and joy so I haven't stopped singing. I've never thought of myself as a talent to be discovered but more of a self-starter," she clarified with a laugh and a hint of steely determination in her eyes.

Janet is not a presence to take lightly and when she sets her mind to a cause or a project, she aims to complete it, and to complete it to the best of her ability.

"I loved singing and decided that the way to improve was with professional guidance, so I enrolled for private singing lessons in year 2000. My first singing teacher of eight years was baritone Cha Seng Tiang. Currently I am trained by Singapore-based soprano Nancy Yuen, when my schedule permits. I also attend master classes for classical singing when possible. Outside of my regular classical singing tuition, I'm a self-taught singer in the non-classical repertoire, though I've started thinking about singing lessons to improve my singing in Mandarin and Chinese dialects.

"I guess I discovered the singer in me. As I stick to what I love doing, my boyfriend, family and friends who are my strongest supporters nurture me and fire my dreams," she said.

Janet values her support network highly.



MALAYSIAN

JANET LEE

Singer, Performer and Green Activist Soon to Take VIVA by Storm



"When I decided to become a full time entertainer, my best friend and boyfriend held my hand - literally and figuratively - when I took the plunge. They are still my greatest cheerleaders. I don't know if I would have had the courage to step on this unconventional path if not for them," she explained.

Although Janet has not had any formal music education, she intends to master the basics of piano-playing later this year. Janet's repertoire is rich and varied spanning Chinese oldies, Western classical, jazz standards & show tunes.

Janet remembers her first paid singing gig, and the first song she sang there

'Moon River', fondly as **among the highlights of her career because it drove home the realisation that this was what she wanted to do, and that she could make a living doing what she loved.**



Years later, she landed a role in a Chinese musical, Butterfly Lovers by Dama Orchestra, and that was when the acting bug took hold. Being part of the M! The Opera family and working with Saidah Rastam's music are among the other career highlights that she treasures.

Janet is focused on the future and lists her current project, the role of Lulu in Dama Orchestra's production 'I have a Date with Spring' as her meatiest and most challenging role thus far.

She looks forward to the opening of the VIVA Mall as the location is central to many of her 'go-to' places such as KLPAC, Istana Budaya, No Black Tie and other live performance houses, as well as being a stone throw away from some of her favourite hawker food haunts along Jalan Ipoh.

**"I heard about VIVA Mall from friends about two years ago, that it was going to be a young, upbeat, urban, stylish, green mall, and I liked the idea.**

It will be interesting to see how it develops," Janet explained mischievously.

She is excited at the prospect of a green mall and community, and hopes to see facilities at VIVA Mall that will encourage the sorting and recycling of inorganic waste into plastic, glass and paper; and perhaps the disposal of organic waste in the form of composting.

"It will be very good to use low-energy lighting at common areas - it may not be as warm and provide the same rich ambience as incandescent lighting, but it's much better for the environment. I also like the idea of VIVA having a grocery that carries local & home grown foods," said Janet, letting her green side take centre stage.

This professed 'Greenie' has been making simple changes to her lifestyle to help preserve the environment by using less air-conditioning, switching off all lights when she is out, using low-energy lighting and appliances and separating her trash and recycling waste from her home whenever possible.

Janet enjoys staying in as much as going out with reading, watching movies, cooking and eating among her stay at home favourites, while shopping at flea markets and uncovering great deals on vintage items are among her favourite out of home activities. Janet is equally partial to a spot of pampering and splurges on spa treatments regularly to unwind and de-stress.

Catch Janet Lee in the role of Lulu in 'I Have A Date With Spring The Musical', the first Malaysian musical adaptation of the award winning play by Hong Kong writer & director Raymond To or find out more about Janet's upcoming performances and activities at her website [www.janetsing.com](http://www.janetsing.com)



## I HAVE A DATE WITH SPRING

MUSICAL ADAPTATION OF A PLAY BY TO KWOK WAI  
A Malaysian premiere not to be missed. Best Screenplay Award at the Hong Kong Film Awards  
Production staged to critical acclaim in Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai

FROM 10TH OCTOBER 2009

PENTAS 1, KUALA LUMPUR PERFORMING ARTS CENTRE (KLPAC) | TEL: 03 4047 9000  
TICKET ANAKAS | TEL: 03 7711 5000 • [www.damaorchestra.com](http://www.damaorchestra.com) | TEL: 03 6021 9107

SPONSORED BY

## A Dama Orchestra Production: "I Have A Date With Spring - The Musical"

A Malaysian premiere not to be missed! Winner of the Best Screenplay Award at the Hong Kong Film Awards. Critically acclaimed stage productions in Hong Kong, Singapore and Shanghai.

Be entranced by the latest Dama Orchestra production of "I HAVE A DATE WITH SPRING - THE MUSICAL", a Cantonese musical adaptation of the nostalgic and heart warming play by To Kwok Wai, set around the night club scenes of the 60s to 80s.

A strong cast of 30 very talented Malaysian actors/actresses - led by Tan Soo Suan in the principal role of Butterfly Liu and Janet Lee in the role of Lulu - will bring the dramatic story to life in this memorable staging through high drama, exquisite staging and melodious music of Chinese Oldies as performed by Dama Orchestra.

From **October 10th to November 1st** at Pentas 1, Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (KLPAC). Tickets from RM60 to RM275.

For enquiries and reservations contact **Dama Orchestra** at 03.6021.9107, email [dama@damaorchestra.com](mailto:dama@damaorchestra.com) or visit [www.damaorchestra.com](http://www.damaorchestra.com)

