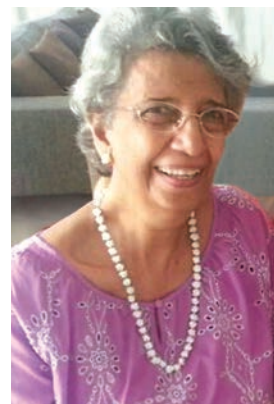


THE FUTURE IS FEMALE

To mark International Women's Day, we asked notable male personalities who they admire and have shaped them as individuals. Meet the 14 awesome women (by our 14 awestruck guys)!

BY NATALYA MOLOK



LEAENA TAMBYAH

Pioneering Social Worker & Advocate for Special Needs Children

by TAN CHUAN-JIN
Singapore's 10th Speaker of Parliament

"Leaena is a woman who I greatly admire and respect. As one of our pioneering social workers, she's dedicated her life to helping others, especially children with special needs. Notably, she started the first school for children with several disabilities, as well as a pilot project called the 'Teach Me Programme' that helps disabled children with normal mental abilities to study in mainstream schools. Leaena retired as senior adviser to the Asian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA) in 2013, and was inducted into the Singapore Council of Women's Organisation's (SCWO) Hall of Fame in 2014. Helen Keller once said, 'Life is an exciting business, and most exciting when it is lived for others.' Leaena has indeed lived to help others, and our society has been enriched by her selfless devotion."



JOAN CHEN

Actress

by RUSSEL WONG
Celebrity Photographer

"I have always admired my close friend Joan, whom I've known for 20 years! She seemed to have a great balance between her career and family, which is quite tough in show business. I feel she has achieved so much professionally and, at the same time, has raised a great family with two girls. She's living proof that it is possible to do both! We always discuss the family versus career issue: Do you do any movie and give up time with your family, and how often do you do it to make it work? She told me, 'A director has so many actresses to choose from, but my daughters have only one mother!' This explained everything to me about where her heart was. Incidentally, I think surrounding yourself with inspiring people, whether women or men, always helps! But I must say, a woman sure brings something different to the table and cannot be ignored."



INFORM

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



VANESSA PARANJOTHY

Co-Founder, Freedom Menstrual Cups

by NICOLAS TRAVIS
Founder of Allies of Skin

"Vanessa runs a business that empowers women and changes their lives for the better. As a man who has never had to deal with periods, she's shown me so much I don't know, and so much I can do."



DR CHEONG KOON HEAN

Urban Planner, Architect & Chief Executive Officer, Housing Development Board

by PROFESSOR TOMMY KOH
Ambassador at Large

"I admire many women in Singapore, and one of them is Dr Cheong. She is an inspiring leader who has done an outstanding job at the Housing Development Board, as well as the Urban Redevelopment Authority and the Ministry of National Development. Dr Cheong was also a member of the Singapore team that defended the nation in a legal dispute with Malaysia over our land reclamation activities in the Straits of Johor and Tuas. She spoke so well at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, in Hamburg, Germany, that I think she won the case for Singapore. I believe it is important for men to be brought up by and surrounded by competent and inspiring women, because in many countries and societies, women are still treated as second-class citizens. It is very important for men to treat women as their equals."



OPRAH WINFREY

Talk Show Host

by GLENN ONG
ONE FM 91.3 Radio DJ

"Oprah never fails to inspire! We all know women who love her, but for me personally, I believe her strength, focus and opinions on the state of the world, especially on environmental and human rights issues, have certainly garnered the respect of men like myself. Plus, after her recent Golden Globes speech, she's now being encouraged to run for US President in 2020! Why her, you ask? Well, that's easy. Oprah emerged from an extremely tough childhood. She's a woman who worked her way all the way to the top, through sheer hard work and determination! A true inspiration indeed!"



INCH CHUA

Singer-Songwriter

by NATHAN HARTONO
Musician

"Local musician and all around bad-ass Inch has been one of the trailblazers for local musicians and aspiring artists for years. Not just with her musical pursuits, but in her pursuit of excellence in performance art, philanthropy, education and environmentalism. To me, she's a human dynamo of inspiration, and I'm also proud to call her a friend."



CHRISTIANE AMANPOUR

British-Iranian Journalist
& Television Host

by SHINJI YAMASAKI
Chief Executive Officer, RE:ERTH

"I really admire Christiane because of her strong belief in the necessity to provide quality journalism, and having the willingness, determination, and bravery to go head first into dangerous and often life-threatening situations to provide it. I think it's important for men to surround themselves with women for a myriad of reasons. In a business environment, women bring alternative ideas to the table. My partners, Celestine Koh, Winnie Lim and Toh Ziling, have shown me that. It has been my experience that women's thought processes and views on subjects can be totally different, perhaps due to being more 'in-touch' with their emotions or creative; but by having women freely express their opinions, it allows for a much better balanced and stable business environment."



PRUNELLA SCALES

British Actress

by ADRIAN PANG
Artistic Director, Pangdemonium

"I've been doing lots of research on dementia for Pangdemonium's upcoming production of *The Father*. So I've been moved and inspired by the experience of Prunella who is living with Alzheimer's disease, but is determined not to let her condition stop her from acting."



PHOTOS: THE STRAITS TIMES/THE NEW PAPER/ALIENETTE COLD FIRE/SPH RADIO/THE CELEBRITY AGENCY/TPG NEWS



MAY SCHOOLING

The Straits Times Singaporean of the Year 2016 &
mother to swimmer Joseph Schooling

by JOSEPH SCHOOLING
Olympic Gold Medallist

"The woman who I truly admire has to be my mum, May. She has loved me all my life, looked after me, spoiled me and, of course, supported me in my dreams. Without her, I would be lost and maybe Singapore would not have its first Olympic gold medal."



MOTHER TERESA

Missionary & Humanitarian

by TAY PING HUI
Mediacorp Artiste

"The first person whom I can think of is Mother Teresa. Her charitable organisation, the Missionaries of Charity, has a presence in 130 countries, providing food, aid, family assistance and medical help to thousands of people. For me, it's not about her religion nor her fundamental beliefs, but purely of her as a human being. Her unconditional love and selfless sacrifice for the destitute and those in the lowest denominator of society was why I chose her. She once said, 'We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.' I believe that when a group of people come together with a single, unified thought or dream, they become powerful beyond imagination, and with that, they can achieve great things. She taught me that."



PROFESSOR YAP HUI KIM

Head, Paediatric Nephrology Division,
National University Hospital

by DR KEVIN CHUA
Family Physician

"I've always looked up to Prof Yap, who set up the paediatric renal service with dialysis at the National University Hospital. I was extremely intimidated by her during our first encounter, but later realised that she is a gentle soul who cares deeply for her patients. She also works extremely long hours, often going the extra mile to look after her patients."



PRESIDENT HALIMAH YACOB

President of Singapore

by ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
MUHAMMAD FAISHAL IBRAHIM
Senior Parliamentary Secretary for the
Ministry of Social and Family Development

"A woman I greatly admire is Madam Halimah Yacob. She is a strong leader who has a heart for the people that she serves. Madam President has contributed to Singapore in various capacities – be it as a labour leader, a parliamentarian, Minister of State and Speaker of Parliament. In all these roles, she has advocated for the rights of workers, fought for opportunities for single mothers and children of poor families, as well as healthcare for the disabled and elderly. As the first woman President of the Republic of Singapore, Madam Halimah is an inspiration."



ALIENETTE COLD FIRE

(aka Katchry Jewel Golbin)
Visually-Impaired Singer

by HOSSAN LEONG
Actor

"Born blind in a small town in the Philippines, Aliénette did not let her disability stop her from getting third-place in the 11th season of *France's Got Talent*."



IRENE ANG

Founder & CEO, FLY
Entertainment, & Great
Women Of Our Time
Awards, Arts & Media
Category Winner, 2010

by CHUA ENLAI
FLY Entertainment Artiste

"Irene is a woman I really admire. She is such a go-getter. She has the ultimate rags-to-riches story. And I'm not saying this because she's the CEO of FLY! I don't admire her just because she's rich and successful; she also has a lot of drive. Whatever she wants, she'll go and get it. But she does it with empathy and love. She dreams big when many of us forget to dream. This is a competitive industry. I've met people who think differently from her. Some are nice about it, some are not. But she doesn't let that get her down. She has thick skin! We can all learn from her on how to shake it off! Just don't get her to dance. She's not that good at that."

