

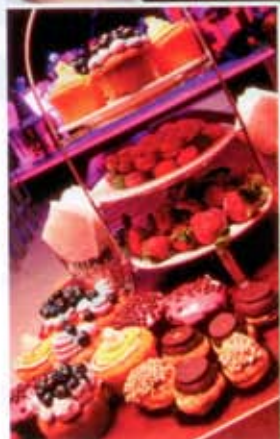


Glamour Queen

Hong Kong celebrity stylist Karen Ng blows into town with a star-studded launch party for her new company here.

It was almost like déjà vu of the Star Awards as Fann Wong, Fiona Xie and a bevy of other artistes crowded the Bellini Room at St James Power Station. The stars were there sipping Bellinis on 15 December though not to pick up trophies but to celebrate the newest darling to join the celebrity stylist set, Karen Ng. The party also doubled as her birthday celebration. Sophistication was her choice of vibe for the night, easily done in a stunning Roberto Cavalli dress flown in from Hong Kong.

Ng, a Singaporean, already cosily tucked under the wing of David Gan, has been in Hong Kong for the past 13 years and was a freelance stylist to a number of the celebs there (she can't reveal names as the stars prefer to take credit for their style). She returned last year to set up her own image consultancy and fashion styling business, Glitz by Karen N.G. Despite Ng being the birthday girl, it seemed like the best presents of the night went to the best dressed, Mr and Ms Glitz, Christopher Lee and Georgia Lee, who received a business class ticket each to Phuket with a stay at a luxe resort spa going for \$3,000 a night. The total prize value was a whopping \$15,000. ■



MAKE YOUR IMAGE WORK FOR YOU!



Want to be you but better looking, more self-aware and better smelling even? These five image and lifestyle professionals will take you under their wing and turn out the super put-together you you've always dreamt about. By Melissa De Silva.

Karen Ng wears her own dress by Sophia Kokosalaki, bangles by Roberto Cavalli and Tiffany, Wolford stockings and shoes by Gucci.

Catch Some Star Dust

KAREN NG
Celebrity Stylist

FRESH FROM A 13-YEAR STINT IN HONG KONG, CELEBRITY STYLIST KAREN NG RETURNS TO SINGAPORE SO REGULAR MORTALS CAN ENJOY HER MAGIC TOUCH.

“Actually Fiona was not confident of showing her legs in her Gucci outfit and wanted to wear a long gown...”

Fiona Xie at the 2006 Star Awards.

CELEBRITY STYLIST KAREN NG ON HOW TO SPEND YOUR SALARY SO YOU LOOK EXPENSIVE.

Rule 1: Spend 25 to 30 per cent of your salary on clothes.

“Spend it on a good jacket one month, or a skirt and pants, or two shirts. In one year, you have 12 new pieces, and you can mix and match them with accessories to create 88 outfits!”

Rule 2: Go for Quality

“When you pay for quality, the fabric is different and the piece lasts longer because you take care of it better, too. If Celine does a feminine, chic dress or jacket, and Mango or Zara does the same design, you can immediately spot the difference. It’s a matter of whether you want to look expensive. Just ‘invest’ in one piece a month.”

Glitz by Karen N.G.

Glitz provides image consultancy, fashion styling, personal shopping and wardrobe management services. Prices start from \$300 an hour and packages can be tailored.

revolving pillar, mounted with a plasma screen on one side, so she can check herself out in the mirror on the other side.

But what makes Ng leave her Frette sheets in the morning to troop to her chandelier-studded office is not vanity — though the woman does gleefully proclaim: “I love dressing to kill!” — she is just well and truly besotted with fashion. She tells me this while flipping colour printouts of collections from Style.com. Spending \$600 a month on fashion magazines is normal. Starting out with a luxe floral business in Hong Kong eight years ago, her dealings with tycoons and artistes turned to friendship and landed her invites to parties where she wowed high-profile guests with her dramatic style. She kept fielding questions on her style and how she put her outfits together and finally got the idea to get into the image consultancy business. After taking intensive courses in image consulting and fashion styling at the First Impressions Training Centre in London, she returned to Hong Kong to do freelance styling for her glitterati friends.

But Ng isn’t just interested in dressing up the star set. Her clients for services like image consulting, wardrobe management and personal shopping services, include “office women and secretaries”, too.

The Consultation

Any service starts out with a technical analysis of your measurements and proportions, then pinpointing your wardrobe personality (classic, eclectic, dramatic or casual), and conceptualising a look for you based on these and your budget and lifestyle. Ng will tell you what sort of cuts and fabrics suit your body type and what colours suit your individual colouring. You’ll also be given a celebrity style icon to observe. “If a skinny woman wants to look like J Lo and that’s not realistic, I will ask her why she wants to channel that. If she wants to look sexy, I would recommend she pick someone sexy but also skinny, like Giselle, as a style icon,” explains Ng. And if having to choose the ultimate cocktail dress makes you want to head for the nearest gin and tonic instead, Ng’s personal shopping service will do the work, sourcing an array of outfits perfect for you. All you need to do is turn up at the store to try them on. Give her six hours and she can help you shop for a new wardrobe. And legwork is not a problem. “Shopping, she breathes, “is my favourite part of the job”, even if it’s shopping for somebody else.

There’s a new woman in town who’s making Fiona Xie very happy. Xie and a gaggle of other artistes have personal stylist Karen Ng to thank for their show-stopping looks at the Star Awards last year. “Actually Fiona was not confident of showing her legs in her Gucci outfit and wanted to wear a long gown. She was still trying to shop for one on the day of the awards!” titters Ng, who returned from a 13-year stint in Hong Kong where she did freelance styling for two years, for stars there. Ng’s look for Xie was about length: “I told her, we’ll do your hair up high, and with so much detail on your blouse, no one is going to look at your legs!” The reluctant Xie obeyed and was declared by the media as best-dressed star.

Turn a corner round an uninspiring corridor in the bowels of Ngee Ann City Tower A and you virtually step into another universe — the universe of Glitz by Karen N.G. A chandelier bathes the reception in its honey glow. Baroque scrolls dance on the walls and heavy silk curtains are drawn to create a shadowy cavern. This room reflects the likes of a lady of leisure’s *boudoir*.

Ng stalks into the room in cherry red, patent Gucci platforms, gold stockings and a Sophia Kokosalaki bubble dress. She adores posing for the camera, practically devouring the lens with her eyes during the photo shoot. Mid-pose, she asks that I help her swivel the