



Bite-sized lessons
with big impact
from SLA's Brown
Bag sessions

Stories of grit, growth and
resilience—featuring the dreamers,
disruptors, believers, risk-takers,
visionaries, movers, fighters and
challengers from Singapore.

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THE
IDEA

As Singapore marks its 60th year of independence, we honour the generations who have built this nation through unity, ingenuity, and resilience. SG60 is not just a celebration of how far we've come—it's also a call to action: to continue building a more inclusive, innovative, and sustainable Singapore together.

It is in this spirit that we at the Singapore Land Authority (SLA) embrace the challenge of turning constraints into possibilities. While Singapore may be bounded by limited land, our capacity for innovation and transformation knows no bounds.

As our world becomes increasingly unpredictable and challenges grow ever more complex, it is crucial—now more than ever—that we pause to reconsider how we think, work, act, and engage with our stakeholders.

The Brown Bag sessions were a series of lunchtime conversations initiated to exemplify how curiosity and collaboration can spark meaningful dialogue and inspire new ideas.

In 2021, as the effects of the pandemic continued to reverberate through the lives of individuals and across organisations and governments, we found ourselves asking, "How can we gain a real sense of what is happening on the ground? How do we stay attuned to emerging trends? How can we be inspired to generate new ideas in optimising spaces, beyond purely economic uses?"

One way, we believed, was by bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds, industries, and areas of expertise to share their stories, thought processes, experiences, and lessons. And this was how SLA's Brown Bag sessions began.

In July 2021, we held our inaugural session with Mr Wee Teng Wen from the Lo & Behold Group. Since then, we have had the privilege of hosting over 20 speakers, primarily from the private sector, who shared their stories of resilience, entrepreneurship, and sustainability.

From sports to finance to logistics to fashion to hospitality and entertainment, these conversations have been a wellspring of learning for all of us at SLA. And this book, *Think Unlimited*, extends that spirit outward—to our fellow Singaporeans today, and for generations to come.

At SLA, we are committed to shaping and stewarding Singapore's land and geospatial resources not just with technical excellence, but with imagination and purpose. We aim to engage, co-create, and evolve alongside the people we serve by tapping into the collective talents of our community and embracing a mindset of possibility—realising a vision of space that is not just physical, but filled with potential.

As we reflect on our shared journey and look toward the future, we hope this compilation of stories will serve as a beacon of hope and inspiration for us all to always *Think Unlimited*.

This publication is a collaborative effort between SLA and our distinguished speakers, all of whom generously contributed their time and effort on a pro bono basis.

All speakers featured in this publication were from the private sector when their respective sessions took place between 2021 and 2024.

The content reflects their Brown Bag session, and each

story features them photographed against a State property that best resonates with their professional domain or personal narrative. The ■ **State properties** managed by SLA in this publication are highlighted in colour and with a square.

We extend our warmest gratitude to all the speakers who have participated in these conversations, embraced this project, and shared their wisdom.





ABOUT SLA

The Singapore Land Authority (SLA) is a statutory board under the Ministry of Law. Formed on 1 June 2001, our mission is to ensure effective use of land resources and data for the economic and social development of Singapore.

Our vision Limited Land • Unlimited Space is a creative paradox that aptly highlights our nation's constraints and SLA's commitment in addressing them. The word 'Space' is multi-dimensional, encompassing realms from the physical to the digital. 'Unlimited' represents the extent of our commitment in our quest for solutions and innovations that will contribute to the economic and social development of Singapore.

State Land and Properties

SLA manages about 11,000 hectares of State land and about 2,600 State properties, which are used for residential, commercial, social and community purposes. Through the careful planning and execution of interim uses for State properties under our management, SLA is able to maximise the use of vacant State land and properties in creative and innovative ways to support our nation's evolving economic and social needs.

Geospatial

SLA drives the use and development of geospatial information and technology by fostering a national collaborative environment that encourages innovation, knowledge sharing and value creation among public agencies, private enterprises and the community.

Regulatory

SLA is the national land registration and land survey authority and is responsible for maintaining accurate and reliable land ownership and land boundary systems.



Rachel stands before the ■ **Pasir Panjang Power Station**, which comprises two stations that powered Singapore's industrial boom in the 1960s. Its iconic red-brick design reflects Singapore's early urban transformation. In recent years, the venue hosted shows and events like the Louis Vuitton Spring Summer 2023 trunk show and the immersive exhibition on Singapore's founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's life and legacy.

Conquering a Multi-Million-Dollar Business—and Herself:

Rachel Lim
 on Love, Bonito
 being more than a fast
 fashion brand, her
 unique leadership style,
 and imposter syndrome

From a humble blogshop selling pre-loved clothes some 19 years ago to a multi-million-dollar fashion powerhouse that's Southeast Asia's leading womenswear brand today, Love, Bonito has built an empire that transcends fashion. Instead, its success lies in its philosophy of being in the business of women.

With its aim of celebrating and uplifting Asian women with clothes they are “ready-to-live, not just ready-to-wear”, the Singapore-headquartered brand has since expanded its presence internationally in the last decade—into markets like Cambodia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Malaysia, Philippines and the United States, shipping to over 20 countries currently.

But behind the glowing success and global ambition is a story that cuts much closer to our hearts—a personal narrative that gets to the core of what it really takes to make a business and lead a team. Far from business acumen, lofty spreadsheets, or complex innovations, Rachel Lim, co-founder of the brand, says it boils down to something often not talked about, yet the most challenging of all—conquering the self.

Despite her achievements, having been recognised by *Forbes Asia's* 30 Under 30 list, *Tatler Asia's* Most Influential and *TEDx*, she is candid about her struggles and challenges in her journey thus far.

IT STARTED WITH BONITOCHICO

Love, Bonito officially celebrates its 15th anniversary in 2025, but for Rachel, the seeds of the brand were sown when she was 19, in her final year at university. Alongside her friends, Viola and Velda, they sought to earn extra pocket money by selling their preloved clothes

BonitoChico

Love, Bonito

Love,
Bonito

LOVE, BONITO

Rachel launched an apparel business with friends Viola and Velda Tan in 2005, starting with a second-hand clothing blogshop called BonitoChico. In 2010, they rebranded it as Love, Bonito, transforming it into a full-fledged fashion label with their own line of clothing designs.

They chose to create apparel tailored for Asian women, who often struggle to find clothing from international brands that fit or flatter them.

on LiveJournal, a blogging platform with its heyday in the early 2000s, adopting the name BonitoChico.

“BonitoChico rhymes better, and while it means ‘beautiful boy’ in Spanish, many think of it as a reference to fish because of its meaning in Japanese.”

Initially a passion project, it became clear that there was a growing demand that could not be ignored. When the group ran out of items to sell, they used their savings from school breaks to import clothes from places like Thailand and Hong Kong. However, balancing university and this emerging business was challenging, and Rachel realised she needed to make a choice.

“I realised that I wasn’t excelling either in school or in my passion project. When I was in school, I was busy replying to emails, thinking about my stocks and forgetting about my assignments. But when I was at work, I was worried about my assignments and my looming exams. So I wasn’t doing well in either. I knew that I had to focus on one.”

At the same time, she discovered a market gap for Asian women.

“International brands like H&M and Zara were designed primarily for Western women, overlooking our specific needs when it came to body proportions, skin tone, and climate.”

With that, she made a bold decision: to break her government bond, drop out of post-graduate studies in her final year, and venture into the world of fashion design and manufacturing. This decision, she admits, was tricky on so many levels. Not only did she have a five-figure debt to pay back, but she also lacked any formal training in fashion or business. Furthermore, her family was struggling financially.

“It was the year of the financial crisis; my dad was going through bankruptcy, and my mum was working two jobs. And I had to pay off a five-figure sum to break my bond to start the business.”

A MOTHER'S LEAP OF FAITH

However, these hurdles did not deter her, and her mind was set. To complicate things, it was 2009—a time when online shopping seemed risky and unfamiliar.

“I obviously didn’t have that money. The only person I could go to was my mum, and she asked me, ‘Is what you’re doing legal? Will the authorities come after you? Why are people sending you money before they receive or even see and touch their goods?’ It’s something she couldn’t wrap her head around.”

Yet despite her doubts, Rachel’s mother took a leap of faith. And it was only much later that Rachel discovered how extraordinary that leap was.

“She decided to trust me. I later realised that that amount of money was her entire life savings. And that was one of the reasons why I knew I couldn’t fail. It was a real gamble for her. So I had to make it work.”

The costs extended beyond money—Rachel had to sacrifice her social life as well.

“I felt like I was robbed of my youth, haha. While my friends were out at the movies or parties, they’d ask me, but I always had to stay home—working, replying to customer emails. When everyone else was having fun, I was behind a screen and packing at home.”



Rachel with her mum.

LEADERSHIP: A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY

Having never been an employee before, apart from her limited experience as a part-time waitress, and without direct role models, Rachel's leadership journey was anything but smooth. The only reference points and knowledge she had were by piecing together leadership lessons from friends' complaints about bad bosses and media portrayals of entrepreneurs like Steve Jobs. At some point, the self-doubt and imposter syndrome plagued her.

"I tried so hard to emulate what I read about successful leaders. They were glamourised by the media. So I thought, oh, in order to be successful, in order to be a true entrepreneur, I need to run my business like them. When I go home and look at myself in the mirror, I would cringe and wonder, why did I try so hard?"

She recalls how the company used to make their employees do StrengthsFinder tests every year and how the results would always unsettle her.

"I would look at my top five strengths and think—why am I all about the soft skills? Where are my hard skills? I felt embarrassed. And I was joking with one of my colleagues then, saying I felt like a clown. Why do I not have the hard skills that everybody has? And she just said to me, 'You know, Rach, what you have is not what we have.'"

And that simple, yet profound response struck a chord in Rachel. It was the epiphany she needed to grow in confidence. That day on, she stopped belittling herself and comparing herself to others, and instead focused on exploring her unique strengths.

"I read up more about my supposed strengths and discovered what they're about, and how I can use them to my advantage. And slowly I grew in confidence to be the leader I am today. So my leadership style? I am firstly a people's leader."

HIRING GREEN FLAGS

Having figured out her leadership approach, the hiring process became a lot easier. Rachel knew exactly what she was looking out for, and what she did not want.

"People interview so well nowadays. They walk in, they know exactly what to say. Even before you ask a question, they will say whatever you want to hear."



The Love, Bonito creative team out on shoot for their 2013 summer campaign. Rachel is pictured in the middle, in a cap.



Love, Bonito was voted "Best Blogshop" in the Nuffnang Asia-Pacific Awards in 2009. Pictured from left to right are Viola, Rachel and Velda.

LEFT

Love, Bonito's Summer 2025 Collection features an elevated neo-nautical aesthetic, blending timeless classics with contemporary design.

This realisation shaped her unconventional hiring process. Rather than relying on traditional interviews, Rachel insists on taking candidates out of the corporate or interview setting.

"We meet their peers; they meet the team. We go for drinks; we go for dinner. If possible, I love to meet them with their partner, their spouse. I want to see how they are like outside, how they are with someone else, and how they treat the wait staff. These are all very telling."

Then, after this preliminary stage, Rachel says two key qualities separate standout candidates. First, a genuine growth mindset and curiosity to learn, and next, those who give credit to others rather than claim singular glory.

"I've met a lot of people who have been in the industry for the last 40 years. They say they know everything about marketing. But when you ask them about TikTok, they're like, 'Oh, I'm not sure how TikTok is going to be in the future.' Then, it's also about how willing they are to give credit to others... that's very telling for me. You don't think, 'Oh, I was the one who built this'... but really rightfully acknowledging the team."

THE POWER OF COACHING AND MENTORSHIP

When asked about her toughest leadership challenge, Rachel's answer cuts right to the core.

"I think the first thing that comes to my mind is myself. I always think that if a leader can overcome and get over himself or herself, he or she can get over anything. Before we lead and manage others, we need to lead and manage ourselves."

This daily practice of self-awareness manifests in her constant internal checks, and she cites these as some examples: "Am I reacting out of ego and pride or because it's truly against my values?"

Clearly, Rachel has no qualms admitting that leaders need guidance too, and she has never shied away from seeking out mentors and coaches in her life.

"I have a life coach. I grew up playing competitive sports. So I know the power of a coach to guide you, to look for your blind spots. We talk about any issue—my marriage, staying with in-laws, juggling motherhood and work. It's like a mirror that helps reflect back what I need to see."

For Rachel, her breakthroughs came when she stopped trying to have all the answers and instead started asking herself the right questions. She proves that sometimes the strongest move is admitting you can't

RIGHT

In 2020, Love, Bonito opened its 5,597 sq ft flagship store at ION Orchard, designed to create an immersive experience that reflects the spirit of the Love, Bonito woman—her lifestyle, inspirations, and sense of style. The space features highly Instagrammable photo ops, along with curated touchpoints to explore the brand's signature staples.



“COURAGE

COMES

BEFORE

CONFIDENCE.”



Rachel and her husband, Leonard, and her kids.

go at it alone—that's why she sought out women leaders like DBS' Tan Su Shan as mentors.

"For me, mentorship doesn't have to be an official and formal relationship. It can be very fluid and casual. But firstly, to get a mentor, you need to be very thick-skinned. Email, LinkedIn and ask for recommendations from mutual friends. And be absolutely prepared when you get that chance. You only have one chance to make an impression, and make sure that you're worth someone's time."

Now she benefits from reverse mentorship too, learning TikTok trends from Gen Z team members.

"Mentorship goes both ways. It's what you can get from others and what you give in return."

And in particular, one mentor's wisdom has stayed with her: When things go well, don't let it get to your head. When they don't, don't let it get to your heart.

"Life comes in waves. What matters is protecting your mind, spirit, and emotions."

MARRIAGE AND MOTHERHOOD

Being the strong, determined career woman that she is, what then is Rachel's stance on marriage and family? Having grown up in a boisterous environment surrounded by two brothers and 18 cousins, all boys, Rachel says she always knew she wanted to be a mum.

Yet when her turn arrived, and her husband who's 14 years her senior was eager to start a family, she hesitated. When she finally decided to try, reality proved humbling.

"I felt like I wasn't ready. So I put it off year after year. But one day, I just decided, okay, you know what? We're just gonna try. I feel that I was ready in terms of the help that I needed. So we finally tried, but I didn't know it would be so hard to have a kid. I took it for granted. I thought it was like the movies, you know?"

Finally, after two years of trying, at the beginning of COVID-19, when she was at her most stressed and all the stores were closed, Rachel got pregnant. In December, her son, Oliver, was born.

"For once in my life, I realised there's something more important than work. And when I told my husband, he said, 'Huh, not me?' I think I have learnt so much on this journey of being a mum. It's one of the most beautiful feelings in the world."

Motherhood brought profound joy but also hard lessons about balance. A mentor's advice became her compass, and for Rachel, marriage unexpectedly emerged as the most fragile.

"You need to know which balls are glass and which are rubber. I tend to neglect my husband. There was once, he told me, 'I can't believe I'm finding out about your store opening through LinkedIn.'"

Today, she navigates the constant juggle with clearer priorities. It's an ongoing adjustment, but one that she says has reshaped her understanding of what's truly important.

"My marriage is my glass ball. It takes a village to build a strong home, just like it takes a village to build a strong brand."

LIFTING OTHER WOMEN UP

As a mother, daughter, wife and sister, Rachel knows the importance of supporting other women. And for her, success is as much about lifting other

women along the way. This conviction birthed LB Create, the brand's social impact arm dedicated to empowering underprivileged girls across Asia through education.

"I believe Love, Bonito is not in the business of fashion. We're in the business of women. Fashion is just our vehicle. So we commit to supporting girls in lower-income cities annually. Education is the gateway to an empowered woman. When one woman finds her footing, she reaches back to pull up others."

In Singapore, Rachel partners with the Changi Women's Prison to help former inmates rebuild their lives, and collaborates with Daughters of Tomorrow to support single mothers. She views these efforts not as charity but as extensions of Love, Bonito's mission.

"With great influence comes responsibility. We're constantly exploring how to make the world better in our own little ways."

NO ONE PATH TO SUCCESS

When it comes to what it means to be successful, Rachel challenges the notion of entrepreneurship being regarded as the only route to success.

Her perspective crystallised during a talk at NUS, where she asked students about their entrepreneurial ambitions. "99% raised their hands," she recalls, amused by one student's generic question: What do you think I should start?

Rachel's response was pointed.

"You become an entrepreneur because you're passionate about filling a market gap, not because it's trendy. People today get it wrong. They think being an entrepreneur equals success. It's not true at all. Not everyone should be an entrepreneur. Just like I don't think everyone should be a teacher or CEO of SLA."

Rachel believes this narrow view overlooks individual strengths. And her advice is refreshingly simple:

"All of us are gifted and wired very differently. There's a different path to success for each of us. Take time to discover your strengths, weaknesses, and superpower – then go in that direction."

Success, to Rachel, isn't about job title but alignment. True achievement comes from playing to your unique abilities, whether that's building companies or contributing to someone else's vision.

MORE THAN A PHYSICAL STORE

When Love, Bonito opened their first physical store in 2015 in Malaysia, Rachel faced widespread scepticism from everyone, from investors to

the media. At a time when headlines declared "retail is dead" and competitors went online, Love, Bonito decided they were ready to open physical stores. And more than a point of sale, they became community hubs.

"Everyone was trying their best to go online. So they asked us, 'Why do you want to waste money and incur overheads and stress?' But we truly believe that the future of retail is wherever customers are at. And the fact is they are both online and offline. Having a physical presence also builds a sense of community and connections. In a siloed, digital world, people crave real connections."

This philosophy shapes everything from store layouts to staff training—

Rachel's leadership principles:

1. People-first philosophy

"Our first core value is people matter. We will do everything to develop you... to really be there for you."

2. Radical self-awareness

"I need to ask myself, 'Am I the right leader now?' If I'm not wired to run a series C-stage company, then bringing in people smarter than me is key."

3. Ego-free growth

"It would have been the company's downfall if I held on for pride. If I'm standing in the way, I'm gonna get myself out of the way."



Dione Song (LEFT) joined Love, Bonito in 2017 as Chief Commercial Officer and was promoted to Chief Executive Officer in 2021. Rachel credits her as being “instrumental in elevating [the brand] from startup to scale-up, and from a regional business to a global brand.”

service teams don’t just process transactions but offer styling advice and emotional support. Rachel shares one touching story of a breast cancer survivor who frequented their 313 @ Somerset store.

“There was this lady; she shared with me that she was diagnosed with breast cancer at the end of 2018. And every day after her chemotherapy over the last year, she would make a stop at the Love, Bonito 313 store because that was her safe space. And it’s not that she’ll buy something every trip, but just having someone to talk to, who doesn’t judge her, who just lets her sit in the fitting room to cry for a bit if she wants to. That’s what’s missing in retail today.”

The other advantage of a physical store, Rachel says, is also that you get instant and accurate feedback from floor staff. Recalling frustrated boyfriends cornered for feedback in fitting areas, she suggests for customers to approach Love, Bonito’s staff instead.

“At Love, Bonito, we pride ourselves on being very honest with our customers. If you don’t look good, if it doesn’t flatter you, we will tell you. So if we say it’s nice, it’s really nice. And if it doesn’t work out, we’ll give you something else to try until you’re happy. But ladies will always listen to their partners. And the partner will, for some reason, always say it’s okay. My advice for women is to ask any of us on the floor. Please don’t ask your partners. Don’t put them on the spot; it’s unfair to them.”

STAYING ATTUNED TO MARKET NEEDS

Rachel attributes Love, Bonito’s enduring success to one non-negotiable principle: In an era where trends change overnight, the brand has mastered the art of rapid adaptation, and the need for humility.

“It’s important to stay close to the ground, close to our customers’ preferences and needs. Something that worked last month doesn’t work today. We can’t dictate trends from some high place—we need to listen.”

This customer-first approach requires market-by-market nuancing. The team constantly studies “how they’re shopping, how they’re browsing”—insights that inform everything from product designs to marketing campaigns. “What works in Singapore may not work in Hong Kong,” Rachel explains.

Physical stores play a crucial role in this learning process. Sales associates become frontline researchers, gathering qualitative insights that algorithms miss. Whether through styling conversations or observing fitting room behaviour, these human interactions provide “an additional layer of insight” that keeps the brand authentically connected to its audience.

“Data shows what’s selling, but only face-to-face interactions reveal why.”

By combining data analytics with old-fashioned customer intimacy, Love, Bonito maintains its edge—proving that in fast-fashion, the most sustainable trend is staying genuinely customer-obsessed.

LESSONS IN HINDSIGHT

Rachel’s reflections on her entrepreneurial journey reveal hard-won wisdom. The self-confessed former “imposter” struggled with comparison and uncertainty, saying this personal work remains ongoing—“a continuous journey of self-awareness”.

“Looking back, I would have taken the time to get to know myself better. I struggled with comparison, insecurity, uncertainty, not knowing who I am, who I’m not, and being an imposter. I wish that I could have stabilised myself more and centred and rooted myself

quicker. Because then, as a leader, when you're grounded, you're self assured, the level that you can lead at will be different."

Her next lesson came through suppliers and manufacturing battles. When Love, Bonito transitioned from imports to original designs, Chinese factories dismissed the young female founders. But their persistence paid off eventually.

"We were knocking on the different factory doors in China, begging them to take us seriously, you know, take our 单 (order) in. They looked at us, a couple of young girls, and they closed the door on us. Because firstly, the MOQ (minimum order quantity) is too low. And secondly, they don't know any other fashion businesses run by young girls. So they obviously didn't take us seriously at all."

After six months of rejections, one manufacturer finally took pity on us—he gave us his extra production line—and remains a key partner today.

"I really believe in being persistent, and I think that the doors will open for you if it's meant to be."

The prejudice extended to logistics. Rachel recalls how one of the biggest local players demanded to "speak with our boss", then lost interest upon realising they were in charge.

"So we reached out to the company one day and asked for a meeting with their management to see how we could work together to deliver our packages. And they were like, 'Oh, not until you send us your boss.' We were like, 'We're the boss.' Then they weren't interested."

This frustration indirectly led to Ninja Van being their first customer when Rachel recounted her nightmare stories to founder Lai Chang Wen, who was only beginning to start his business then. Till today, they remain good friends.

IMPOSTER SYNDROME

Even after building a fashion powerhouse, Rachel still fights that nagging voice whispering "You don't belong here." A conversation with a high-flying friend who works in finance revealed how universal this struggle is.

"I think as women, imposter syndrome hits us a lot more than our male counterparts. Like my friend, even as a top director, when her boss



cheak (formerly known as butter) is an activewear brand established in 2020 by Singaporean co-founders Olivia Yiong and Tiffany Chng. Today, it is the sister brand of Love, Bonito, jointly committed to empowering women with high-quality and affordable activewear with an Asian fit.

LEFT

To mark International Women's Month, Love, Bonito held The Trailblazers Summit in March 2025 to celebrate the strength, impact, and resilience of Asian women.

Panel discussions at the one-day conference generated bold conversations on mental health, wellness, career and motherhood with influential icons such as Tan Su Shan, CEO of DBS Bank, Yip Pin Xiu, seven-time Paralympic gold medalist, and Nicol David, former world squash champion and philanthropist.

RIGHT

In 2019, the brand opened its third—and largest—physical store at Funan Mall.

Spanning over 6,000 sq ft, the space blends physical and digital retail (“phygital”) with features such as an innovative queue system, an AR walkway, and Instagram-worthy corners.

Shoppers also enjoy services like an express counter for online pickups, in-house alterations, and access to personal stylists.



praises her, she thinks, ‘He’s just saying it to make me feel better.’ We downplay our achievements like reflexes.”

The revelation came through an unlikely source—Reese Witherspoon’s Oscar-winning performance in the movie *Walk the Line*. “She said that every day of filming *Walk the Line*, she was crying and fighting to not show up for filming at all because she struggled so much with imposter syndrome. She kept thinking to herself: she can’t do it, she’s not good enough. She even begged her lawyer to cut off the deal because she just couldn’t do it.”

Yet Witherspoon persisted by clinging to this truth: “If someone gave me this role, they must believe in me.”

This story was a lightbulb moment for Rachel and sparked this valuable insight.

“We think and expect to wake up feeling fully confident before we take up that promotion or before we can achieve something. But it’s actually the other way around. We have to show up and prove to ourselves with little wins to build the confidence before we combat imposter syndrome. So you realise, courage comes first before confidence.”

Today, she views imposter syndrome differently—not as a weakness, but as motivation.

“I think that the best people have a tension between imposter syndrome and confidence because, at the end of the day, it’s important to have that to keep you grounded, hungry, driven, and constantly wanting to learn and grow more. So it’s all about managing that and the voices in your head, which goes back to self-leadership, self-management, and self-awareness. If you can conquer yourself, if you can conquer the voices in your head, you can conquer anything.”

Rachel has proven herself to be much more than a successful fashion entrepreneur—but an influential thought leader and inspiration to many. And her secret ingredients? Not the hard skills she was once ashamed of not having, but the finer, more subtle personal and relational abilities that have contributed to her most meaningful win—conquering the self.



**When I think unlimited,
I think of...**

the quiet strength within all of
us to keep evolving. Not in loud,
flashy ways, but in the slow, steady,
unseen work of showing up, even
when we're unsure, afraid, or
stretched. It's the belief that we're
not defined by where we started or
what we were told we could be, but
by who we choose to become.

I am unlimited when...

I lead from a place of deep align-
ment—with who I am, what I value,
and how I choose to live. I am
unlimited when I embrace the ten-
sions, the unknowns, the failures—
and still choose to try. That's when
I feel most free, most grounded,
most alive.

I N D E X



↑ Once a British military barracks in the 1800s, **■ Dempsey** has evolved into a vibrant lifestyle and dining destination near the Singapore Botanic Gardens. Nestled in lush greenery, it blends colonial heritage with modern charm, featuring a mix of restaurants, cafés, boutiques and sports and wellness establishments. Remnants like tiled-roof structures and old playing fields hint at its military past. Today, Dempsey is celebrated both locally and internationally as one of Singapore's premier spots for dining and leisure.

LEFT: Dempsey was originally the site of a nutmeg plantation that later became Tanglin Barracks for British troops in the 1800s. The site was also once the headquarters of the Far East Land Forces, and later the headquarters of the Ministry of Defence (MINDEF) and the Central Manpower Base (CMPB).

➤ Built in the mid-1960s as married quarters for British military personnel, **■ Chip Bee Gardens** has transformed into a trendy lifestyle enclave. Once home to expatriate teachers after the British withdrawal, it now features a mix of residential and commercial spaces, blending heritage with contemporary charm. Known for its distinctive 1960s-style design, the estate is now popular for its eclectic blend of local lifestyle and F&B brands, including quaint cafés and homegrown brand names.



➔ ■ **Dignity Kitchen at 69 Boon Keng Road** is a social enterprise-run food court staffed by individuals with disabilities and from disadvantaged backgrounds. Operated by Project Dignity and founded by Koh Seng Choon, engineer turned entrepreneur and recipient of the Straits Times Singaporean of the Year 2024 award for his efforts, the outlet offers meaningful employment through skills training and food service roles. Housed in a striking red State property since 2021, it serves affordable local hawker fare and baked goods in an inclusive environment. Beyond being a vibrant dining spot, Dignity Kitchen stands as a powerful symbol of empowerment, mental health advocacy, and social change, aligning with broader efforts to promote dignity and opportunity for all.



↩ The charming row of restored 1930s heritage buildings at ■ **52-56 Kampong Java Road** will soon become a vibrant multi-disciplinary arts sandbox for experimentation, creation, and collaboration. Originally residences for municipal officers, the buildings sit along a road named after Javanese gardeners who once sold produce along Arab Street. Awarded to 19SixtyFive Pte Ltd via a joint tender by SLA and the National Arts Council, the space will feature acoustically treated studios, galleries, and performance venues. It will also host live performances, arts markets, and arts festivals - enriching Singapore's artistic landscape and fostering creative growth.



➔ Built in 1956, the ■ **Former Bukit Timah Fire Station** served as part of the post-war Fire Service expansion and features distinctive elements like a hose drying tower and the Colony of Singapore's coat of arms. Decommissioned in 2005, the 0.86ha site—comprising the main station, firefighters' quarters, and Station Master's residence—has been gazetted for conservation. Strategically located near the Rail Corridor and nature reserves, it is now set to be revitalised by LHN Facilities Management into a mixed-use community node, offering co-living, heritage, and nature experiences with sustainable, zero-energy features while preserving its historic character.





↑ Originally known as Flagstaff House, the **Former Command House** was built between 1937 and 1938 as the residence of Malaya's senior military commander. Designed in a distinctive Arts and Crafts-inspired style with pitched roofs and brick archways, the house later provided lodging for royalty, a president in office and senior military figures. In 2007, UBS, the Swiss investment bank, made it its business university's Asia-Pacific campus. Now a national monument, the State property continues its legacy as an elegant event venue, blending heritage, architecture, and history with quiet distinction.



↑ The former St Andrew's Mission Hospital at **5 Kadayanallur Street** provided respite and care to impoverished women and children in its early years, with a unique triangular air well in the middle of the building to let in natural light and ventilation. Originally built in the 1920s, it has served various purposes over the years, including as a government medical store, an outpatient dispensary and an office space. It has most recently been transformed into **KADA**, a creative lifestyle and wellness hub with co-working and co-living spaces popular with the youth. The building, one of Singapore's earliest Modernist structures, houses one of the nation's oldest electric lifts, still in operation today.

1. Crowd of onlookers during the opening of the outpatient clinic at Kadayanallur Street (1964).
2. Maxwell Road outpatient dispensary (1989).



↓ Launched in November 2024, **The Foundry** is a collaborative hub for social purpose organisations housed in the former Elections Department building at **11 Prinsep Link**. The Foundry is a result of a partnership with The Majority Trust, SLA, Tote Board, and the Singapore Government Partnerships Office with its 17,000 sq ft space housing over 20 non-profits and social enterprises. With an aim to foster a vibrant ecosystem, The Foundry supports idea incubation, community-building, and collaborative innovation to address Singapore's evolving social challenges.



➔ ■ **1925 Quarters at 79-95 Hindoo Road** is situated in a beautifully restored row of red-brick, two-storey building in the heritage Little India precinct. Originally built in 1927 to house junior Asian staff of the Municipality of Singapore, this State property has been transformed into a modern co-living space by Eco-Energy Pte Ltd and Cove Living Pte Ltd. The building retains its distinctive colonial architecture, featuring pitched roofs and fair-faced brick columns, and reflects the shared history of other municipal quarters in the area.



↓ Opened in 1937, ■ **Old Kallang Airport** was Singapore's first purpose-built civilian aerodrome and was hailed as the world's most modern at the time. Described as the "finest airport in the British Empire", it gained international recognition, with aviator Amelia Earhart praising it as "an aviation miracle of the East". The Art Deco terminal later housed the People's Association from 1960 to 2009 and is now part of a conserved site with a hangar, service blocks, and an entrance gateway. Since 2011, it has hosted a variety of events, from arts and culture to corporate launches.

4. Immigration check point (1948).

5. Aerial view in 1957. The foreground shows Nicoll Highway, while the circular control tower can be seen beside the highway on the right.

↑ ■ **New Bahru at 46 & 58 Kim Yam Road** occupies the former site of Nan Chiau High School, a historically significant educational institution that was first the Nan Chiau Teachers' Training School established in 1941. Today, the site has been reimagined into a dynamic lifestyle destination that blends residential, retail, and commercial uses. Developed by the Lo and Behold Group, it houses an exciting collection of homegrown brands and offers community-centric spaces and activities, and is well visited by locals and international tourists.



3. Nan Chiau High School in 1993.

4

5

➔ Built between 1952 and 1953, **■ Pasir Panjang Power Station** began with Station A, which was named when Station B was added in 1965. Its iconic red-brick design reflects Singapore's early urban transformation. Together, the two stations powered Singapore's industrial boom in the 1960s. In recent years, its arresting architecture was the stunning backdrop for the staging of shows and events, including the Louis Vuitton Spring Summer 2023 trunk show and the immersive exhibition on Singapore's founding Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's life and legacy.

BOTTOM: Aerial view of Pasir Panjang Power Station (1957).



↑ The **■ Ridout Tea Gardens** in Queenstown was once home to Singapore's first Japanese-themed community garden, later redeveloped in 1980 into a traditional Japanese Garden (RIGHT) with ponds, pavilions and bridges. In the late 1990s, the site was transformed into the McDonald's Ridout Garden outlet, blending modern dining with the location's tranquil past. Today, it stands as one of the few recognisable flagship McDonald's outlets worldwide, drawing families for its food as much as its unique and scenic setting.





↑ The **State Land @ Margaret Drive**, once the site of Hua Yi Secondary School or previously known as Hua Yi Government Chinese Middle School, is now home to a restored public running track. Established in 1956 as Singapore's first government-aided Chinese secondary school, Hua Yi was renowned for its academic excellence and sports achievements. After relocating in the 1980s, the school left behind its legacy at Margaret Drive. The newly restored running track honours its historical connection to education and sports, providing a community space for residents to enjoy.



↑ The Team Singapore Wall of Fame at **8C Jalan Kledek** features a vibrant mural celebrating Singapore's Olympians and Paralympians. Created by graffiti artist Ceno2, it showcases Team Singapore athletes Nur Syahidah Alim, Shanti Pereira, Maximilian Maeder, Loh Kean Yew, and Yip Pin Xiu for their sporting achievements on the world stage. The location also houses the Vintage Camera Museum, home to over 1,000 cameras that offer a fascinating glimpse into photographic history. It's a unique landmark in Kampong Glam where sport, art, and photography come together.

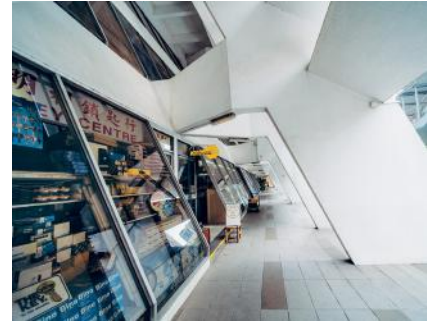
↓ **Smith Street**—named after Sir Cecil Clementi Smith, Governor of the Straits Settlements—is a heritage-rich enclave in Chinatown where conserved shophouses and pedestrian-friendly spaces bring the area's storied past to life. Once known as Hei Yuen Kai or "Theatre Street" and home to the iconic Lai Chun Yuen Theatre, Smith Street has been rejuvenated with exciting lifestyle concepts including local favourites and international brands while preserving local Chinese culture. With its unique blend of history, culture and architecture, Smith Street is a living showcase of Chinatown's enduring identity and evolving vibrancy.



↓ EtonHouse International Education Group's headquarters at **6A and 8 Stevens Road** occupies a pair of conserved colonial-era heritage bungalows managed by SLA. Once a residential property—including the former home of philanthropist and businessman Lee Kong Chian—the heritage site has been thoughtfully repurposed into a serene, greenery-filled office space. Retaining elements like timber floors and arched doorways, the design features biophilic elements and clever adaptive reuse.



➔ The ■ **Tanjong Katong Complex**, a familiar and iconic landmark in the heart of the Geylang Serai area, is set for rejuvenation. These include plans to dedicate a portion of the redeveloped space to tenants representing traditional Malay trades, preserving and celebrating the heritage and culture of the Malay community. With its deep historical roots and strong cultural ties, the revitalised Tanjong Katong Complex will continue to serve as a vibrant hub, honouring its past while evolving to meet the future needs of the community.



⤵ ■ **Temasek Shophouse at 28 Orchard Road** was known for its distinctive architecture. Built in 1928, it was one of the first buildings in Singapore to feature spiral staircases. The social impact hub will expand to include restored units at **14, 22, and 38 Orchard Road** with reinstated historic features such as its Shanghai plaster façade, further highlighting Orchard Road's transformation from nutmeg plantations and motor showrooms to a place of renewed purpose for people, planet, and community.



↑ ■ **Vidacity** is a sustainability innovation hub located at the former Loyang Primary School (RIGHT), now creatively repurposed as a space for green entrepreneurship by City Sprouts. The site features co-working areas, workshops, and living labs focused on urban farming and sustainable technologies. Home to startups in fields such as agriculture, water treatment, reusable materials, and waste innovation, Vidacity brings together a community dedicated to building solutions for a more sustainable future.



↩ The former community centre at **10 Kampong Eunus** is now home to ■ **Vivistop Kampong Eunus**, Singapore's only non-profit makerspace dedicated to children and youth. Operated by Vivita, the space offers hands-on workshops, camps, and competitions that introduce young learners to robotics, AI, and emerging technologies. Supported by public sector and community partners, this SLA-led initiative has transformed the State property into a vibrant hub for creative learning and empowering the next generation of tech-savvy changemakers.



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