



Rebel with a Creative Cause

Kelley Cheng, Founder/Creative Director, The Press Room

Ms Kelley Cheng shares on how being a rebel with a creative cause has paved unexpected opportunities in her inspiring journey to success in this Meet-a-Designer (MaD) session.

GREETED BY THE ARTISTIC graffiti walls of the old building where the Night & Day bar resides, the participants had a sense of her unconventional ways as they ventured apprehensively along a narrow passageway that led them to her creative space.

Her creative stance might have attributed from her ups-and-downs as a teen pursuing art. She was discouraged by her family to do art professionally because it was deemed not pragmatic. To satisfy her parents, she pursued architecture instead. However, her passion for art, books and magazines had always endeared her to live her dream - running her own publication. With talent, sheer determination and hard work, the creative rebel allayed her parents' concern with the birth of a magazine called iSh. With iSh, she was the Jack-of-all-trades - the founder, the

writer, the photographer, the graphic designer and even the delivery girl!

Her big break began when she was discovered by the owner of a major publishing company while delivering her magazines. She was given the challenging task of being an editorial director. She described this as her "new design brief" and it proved to be nothing intimidating at all. "When I look at the design brief, I do not see it as a measure of the struggle but excitement and opportunities!" she reminisced.

As a designer, her maxims are "be good and brave". Ms Cheng believes that there are so many designers in the market and it is a given that one needs to be really good to be noticed. What comes next is to have the guts to do things differently and the confidence to do it well. These are traits that exemplify her passion for designing.

With the passion and rebellion streak in her, she even supports local artists by providing opportunities

for them to shine in a global creative industry. Not only does the bar cum art gallery showcases works by established artists, it was also a platform for aspiring and talented local artists. On top of her busy schedule, she still gives back to the community by doing some projects for free, for example, a book publication for a buddhist priest.

With the many opportunities that she undertook, her accolades has led her to what she is now; 3-time SOPA (Society of Publishers Asia) Award winner, the Editor-in-Chief of Singapore Architect magazine, and she runs her own publishing & design consultancy The Press Room. In addition, she owns two F&B outlets, 15 minutes and Night & Day. She is indeed living her dream.

As an educator, I believe Ms Kelley Cheng has exemplified qualities that could be useful for our pupils - diligence, pride, tenacity, passion and challenging normality. These could possibly form the very formula for our pupils to live their dreams.

The rebellious flavor of the Night & Day Bar | Gallery | Friends



Comments from the participants

Experiences that I enjoyed or valued at this session

- "Yet another inspiring journey of a designer who is truly authentic."
- "The honest and heartening account of a person's life that gives others the motivation for betterment"

My biggest take-away from this session

- "The need to be good before taking brave actions."
- "Do not just rebel, rebel with conviction and a cause!"

What I want to explore with the students

- "Great ideas which are not necessarily complex or expensive to make. Just simple, effective and beautiful."
- "Their desires and needs, to help them live their dreams."

This sharing deserves
9 out of **10**