

# WINGSPAN

THE YALE-NUS ALUMNI NEWSLETTER  
ISSUE 11

## PET CORNER

Our alumni's pawstively  
adorable pets!

**Also in  
this issue:**

Our annual holiday  
book roundup





# MESSAGE FROM THE VICE PRESIDENT

*Trisha Craig, VP of Engagement*

Dear Friends,

I love this time of year. People are anticipating a little downtime, spending time with family, and recharging; and in Singapore, the continuous display of lights that grace the city's streets from Deepavali to Chinese New Year make it magical. Campus is extremely quiet as students have departed and the stillness allows some time for reflection.

When I think back over this year, I'm amazed at what we have accomplished with the alumni community. So many of you were deeply invested in the process of consultation and writing a constitution and forming an alumni association that will keep you all connected in years to come. We are so grateful to everyone who took the time to nominate fellow alums for positions in the association and proud of all those who ran and voted in the elections. All of us at Alumni Affairs are looking forward to working with the Yale-NUS Club and supporting their growth as they work hard to represent all of you. See ExCo President Xuan's message below.

This was a year when we could all finally travel and I loved meeting up and catching up with groups of alumni in Boston, London, New Haven and Washington. Similarly, President Roberts and Cole Lim in the alumni team had a great time hosting alums in different cities like London, New York, and Seattle. Looking forward to more of those in 2024. We're also thrilled when alumni plan and host gatherings as you did this year, and we hope groups of you will continue to do that.

The year-end edition of Wingspan is one of the things I look forward to because it has the holiday book list, which I just love. Scroll down for some absolutely marvelous recommendations - from contemporary fiction, to faculty authors, to explorations of industries, to history, to current events, there's something for everyone. My wish for you as we round out 2023 is that you find time to curl up in a cozy corner and delve into a great book.

Finally, I have a personal request for the Class of 2019. We recently sent out the alumni survey to you. Like many of our peer institutions, we ask alums at the four-year mark what they are up to and get their reflections on their path thus far. We continue to do this both because the results are part of the Yale-NUS legacy (we're thrilled but not surprised at how our alums are making their mark) and also because it will help Alumni Affairs and the new Yale-NUS Club be more responsive to you. Please take a few minutes to fill it out.

Wishing all of you peace and joy!

*Trisha*

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Our annual holiday booklist for your reading pleasure



# EXCO'S CORNER

*Khwa Zhong Xuan, President*



On behalf of the inaugural Yale-NUS Club Exco, we would like to say a couple of "thank you"s. To the Alumni Task Force - thank you for the months of hard work and important conversations that got us to where we are today. To all the members of the alumni who accepted nominations - thank you for stepping up to do the work. And to everyone who voted in the elections - thank you for trusting this team with the immense responsibility of setting up our official Alumni Society.

Much work has been going on behind the scenes as we prepare the final documents we need to register as a society in Singapore. As things begin to firm up, we'll be sending out updates through existing platforms, so do keep an eye out for more updates from us! If you have any feedback, thoughts, or concerns, feel free to drop us an email at [yncexco@gmail.com](mailto:yncexco@gmail.com).

Image of the Yale-NUS Club Exco, missing Ami, who had to leave the meeting early and refuses to be photo-shopped in so as to preserve the symmetry of the image. Photo provided by Khwa Zhong Xuan ('20).



## CALLING THE CLASS OF 2019

# Fill out the Alumni Survey

Alumni surveys are a way for schools to understand alumni trajectories post-college, hear alumni reflections on their experiences, and find out how to best meet the ongoing needs of alumni. This is more important than ever as we think about the future.

+ You'll get the limited-edition alumni socks for your participation!

Please check your emails for the survey link. If you have not received the email about the alumni survey, please check your junk or spam mail folder. If you still can't find the email, or have any questions about the survey itself, please feel free to contact us at [alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg). Thank you!

## Support the Digital Legacy Projects

by giving your consent





# PAWSITIVELY PURRFECTION

We shine a spotlight on the many four-legged family members in our alumni's lives!

By Siddharth Mohan Roy ('25)

## MEET FRISKY



Frisky is Yoon Thiri's (Class of 2022) adopted cat. Based on the fake birthday that the vet gave him, he just turned 1 in July! Photos courtesy of Yoon Thiri ('22).

Thiri initially started fostering Frisky through the NUS Cat Café. However, as time passed, Thiri developed a connection with Frisky, and found herself unable to part with him. At first, she thought that she was not prepared for the commitment. However, Thiri's parents suggested the idea of adopting him. They assured Thiri that they would assist in caring for Frisky during her absences from Singapore.

Thiri describes Frisky as "the king of the house." Despite his occasional naughty antics, Frisky remains a good boy who has completely won over Thiri and her family.

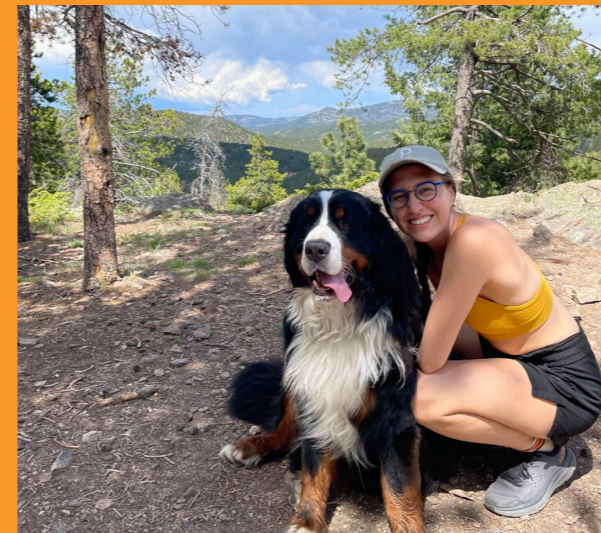
Raising Frisky hasn't been without its challenges. Like many mischievous pets, Frisky occasionally indulges in behaviours that test Thiri's patience. Striking the right balance between scolding and understanding Frisky's actions has been Thiri's focus. One valuable lesson Thiri has learned from Frisky is to embrace life's challenges. Frisky's determination to do things his way, has inspired Thiri to adopt a similar outlook in her own life.



“ I think it is really important to think through whether you are ready to take care of a pet for its entire life. As much as they are cute companions, it is also a huge responsibility. It takes quite a bit of effort, time, energy, and money. Once you adopt a pet, your life changes as well, since you have to consider them when making plans, be it going out for the night or going for a trip. After all, you are their entire life now. ”

Yoon Thiri ('22)

### Hugo, 4 years old



“I grew up with this breed. My family has loved two other Berners before Hugo - but Hugo is the first that really made me fall in love and consider myself a dog person.”

- Julianne Thompson ('18)

### Flash, 15 years old



“He would give 'la bise' (a kiss on each cheek) every time a guest walks through the door!”

- Morgane Darya Vassillisa Ropion ('22)



# MEET LIZZIE, FINJA & LÓMIEL



Lizzie, Finja, and Lómie are all Evangeline Pousson's (Class of 2017) pets. Lizzie is a local cat who is now called Mao. Lizzie is the famous SkullCrusher9000 of the Yale-NUS campus. Finja (pronounced Finya) is a six-year-old German Shepherd, whom Evangeline adopted as an adult dog in 2020. Lómie is an all-black, one-year-old cat, who was rescued in 2022. Photos courtesy of Evangeline ('17).

Lizzie was hidden in Evangeline Pousson's suite, protected against, as Evangeline described it, "Those Who Wanted Her Gone." Initially aloof, Lizzie gradually warmed up to Evangeline over the years, eventually becoming a lap cat in 2020. She remained highly active after Evangeline adopted her, scrupulously hunting down every lizard in the house.

Lizzie used to be an athletic cat, leaping five feet in the air to catch a cat teaser. She accompanied Evangeline to Texas in 2019 and now shares her home with two other adopted pets. While Lizzie isn't actively engaged in dispatching roaches, she quite enjoys napping on something soft and cozy, especially in a nest of pillows

or blankets. As Evangeline puts it, "Naps are a top priority for middle-aged cats!"

Finja found her way into Evangeline's home thanks to Evangeline's overactive imagination fueled by too many murder mysteries. According to Evangeline, murderers are less inclined to enter a home with a scary-sounding dog barking behind the door. Finja excels as a house alarm dog, though at times, Evangeline suspects her alarm function might be set a tad too sensitively. Finja possesses qualities of gentleness, intelligence, love, loyalty, and protectiveness, and training Finja was an absolute joy for Evangeline, as Finja proved remarkably quick and eager to learn.

Adopting Finja also led her to explore dog

psychology and different training methods. One of their favourite pastimes is playing frisbee together because Finja's enthusiasm is high. Although Finja is gentle with cats, she can't resist the urge to chase them, much to Mao's irritation. As Evangeline describes, "they remain far from being friends."

As for Evangeline's other pet, Lómie, Evangeline calls her the "most chill" cat she's ever met. Her name, Lómie, originates from the Quenya (Elvish) language and translates to "night" with a feminine suffix. Lómie was adopted when she was just four months old, a decision made in the hope that having a second cat would stop Finja from pestering Mao and perhaps give Mao another friend.

Lómie is so calm that she tolerates

Finja's antics, including allowing Finja to stick Lómie's entire head in her mouth. Unfortunately, the plan to alleviate tensions between Mao and Finja didn't quite pan out, as Finja continues to trouble Mao. However, after months of initial aversion, Mao has come to accept Lómie and even engages in occasional play sessions with her.

Lómie is very sweet and loves petting and company, but she is also the kind of cat who knocks glassware off the counters. Her preferred spot is the dining table, where she bides her time, waiting for the perfect moment to sneak a nibble from your plate when you're not looking. If anything, she has taught Evangeline to work on herself, be more patient, and most importantly, "to put glassware away immediately after use."

“ For anyone considering adopting a dog or a cat, ask yourself: Am I willing to clean up barf, diarrhoea, and pee when accidents inevitably happen? Have I sufficiently let go of attachments to material things, including expensive or personally meaningful things? Do I have the time to make sure they are stimulated and content? Dogs and cats are wonderful, but it comes with great responsibility. If the answer to those questions is no, stick to hamsters! Also, if you have never owned a dog before, don't get a puppy. Adopt an adult dog with a stable temperament. Old dogs can learn new tricks, and you can definitely bond with older dogs. ”

Evangeline Pousson ('17)

## Barley, 4 years old



"She was found with her litter of 3 siblings in Jurong, beside a factory."

- David Zhang ('19)

## Popsy, 2 years old



"Popsy grew up in YNC and loved strolling in Cendana Green"

- Maria Paula Leon Mora & Damien Kee Wei Hao ('23)



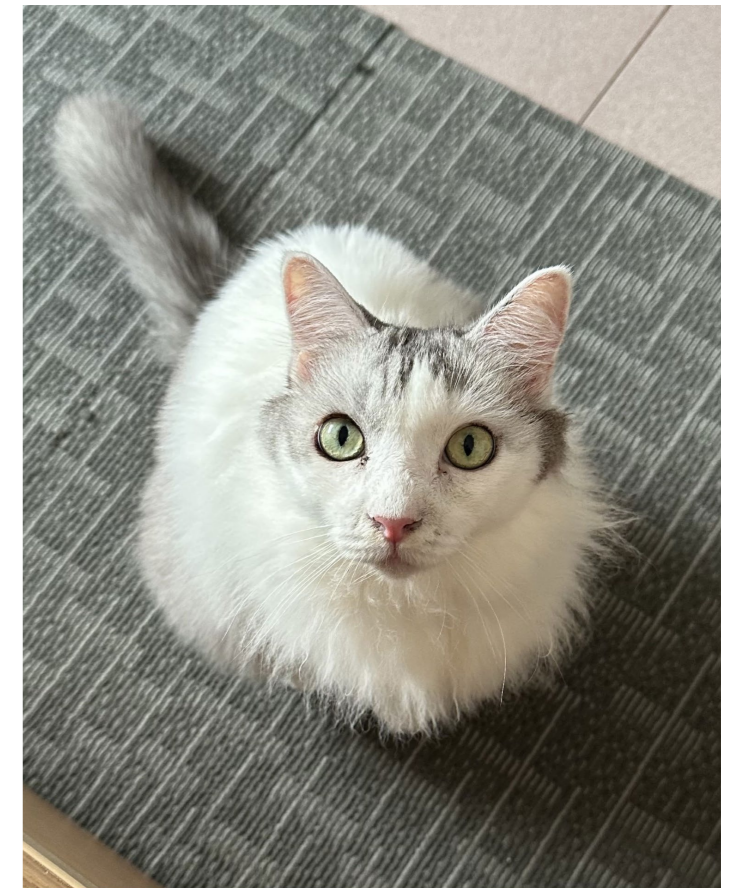


a cat mom. Stormy's nightly cries made her fear that Stormy was unhappy. It has taught Gin a valuable lesson: "I need to take care of myself well so that I can care for her [Stormy] even better."

Gin enjoys taking Stormy for walks, which helps clear her mind, and loves cuddling with her. Stormy's favourite spots are Gin's bed, preferably with a cozy blanket.

“Make sure that you are ready for a pet in your life and can give them your all before adopting (Don't shop! There are many lovely pets waiting for their forever home). They are just a part of your life, but to them, you are their entire life.”

Gin Ong ('18)



## MEET STORMY

Stormy is the adopted cat of Gin (Class of 2018). Stormy's breed and age may be unknown, but she still has Zoomies every night at 3 AM like any other cat. Photos courtesy of Gin Ong ('18).

As Gin notes, "I have always loved cats." She had a family cat, but it passed away when she was 17. Since then, Gin longed to adopt another cat. However, due to her hectic lifestyle, which included stays at boarding schools, dorms, and international travels, she decided to wait until she could provide a stable home.

Two weeks after starting her first job,

Sharlene, a fellow Yale-NUS alumnus, shared a Facebook post about Stormy. Stormy had been found wandering at a void deck by her foster carer, and despite two months of lost notices, no one had claimed her. Gin felt an instant connection and knew that she had to bring Stormy home.

One of the biggest challenges Gin faced initially was dealing with self-doubt as

### Molina & Yuan Yuan, 1 & 5 years old



“During my first summer in college, which I spent on campus, I felt really homesick and adopted two guinea pigs. I secretly kept them in my room or common area for all 4 years (thanks to all my suitemates, and sorry Infra!).”

- Valeria Gonzalez ('21)

### Baby Don Juan, 2 years old



“He's quite sexist. He opens up to females way quicker than male strangers... He also loves to steal lingerie... hence the name, Don Juan.”

- Tong Xueyin ('18)



# INAUGURAL YALE-NUS CLUB EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Through this feature, we dive into the lives of the inaugural Yale-NUS Club Executive Committee (ExCo) as they share their professional roles and day-to-day responsibilities. Discover the driving forces behind their decisions to take on leadership roles within the alumni club and explore their unique visions for the future.

By Siddharth Mohan Roy ('25)





# KHWA ZHONG XUAN ('20)

## President

### Tell us about yourself!

Hello folks! For those of you I've yet to meet, my name is Xuan, class of 2020. Back at Yale-NUS, I majored in Mathematical, Computational and Statistical Sciences (MCS), and now I'm in Singapore working as a Product Analyst at Grab! I am part of the Consumer Experience team, and my day-to-day work revolves around ensuring that new users have a smooth journey when they first use the app.

### How do you feel about being elected as the alumni club President?

I am incredibly honored to have been elected the President of the Yale-NUS Club, but I am also feeling a little stressed. It's an important role, and I can't help but feel anxious about all that needs to get done. However, I'm super excited to work with the incredible team, and that does help lower the pressure.

Ever since the school's closure was announced in 2021, I've been involved in numerous conversations among alumni. I've witnessed the amount of effort and time that my peers have poured into ensuring that the Yale-NUS College community persists after 2025. I ran for this position because I felt it was the best way I could give back, by building on the strong foundations laid out by the Alumni Task Force, and by taking those first steps into forming our future alumni collective.



### What are the most significant challenges and opportunities for the club in the upcoming year?

In my opinion, the most significant challenge for the club will be to ensure that we can reach out to each and every member of the alumni body and effectively engage every single one of you in meaningful ways. The Yale-NUS community is incredibly diverse, and it will be crucial to hear from as many alums as possible when we are deciding the direction of the Yale-NUS club.

### Please share one favourite memory that you have since you graduated!

Earlier this year, I visited New York for the first time, and I had the pleasure of meeting up with Professor Matthew Stamps. He was not only my capstone advisor but also my first boss and someone who played a significant role in my college life. We spent a whole morning walking around Brooklyn, where he now lives, and he provided an excellent tour of the entire area. We concluded the morning with a great conversation over afternoon craft beers and his favorite New York pizza. It's a memory that will continue to warm my heart for years to come and is a perfect example of why it's so important for us to maintain these connections!



# TINESH INDRARAJAH ('17)

## Vice President



### Tell us about yourself!

I am currently based in windy Chicago, Illinois, United States of America. I have just started my PhD in Higher Education at Loyola University Chicago, and I am enjoying being a student again. I make sure that my day-to-day involves connecting with my social relationships, engaging in activities that bring me joy (usually sports-related), savoring delicious food, and learning something new either through my academic courses, my research work, or on social media. As a doctoral student, I am also striving to incorporate more reading and writing into my schedule to ensure that I capture my thoughts more consistently, but these new additions are a work in progress for now.

### What is your vision for the future of the Yale-NUS alumni club?

Just as we had to fight in our halcyon days to make a name for ourselves and to be taken seriously, we now find ourselves in a position to fight to maintain our connections to our alma mater without the usual apparatuses of a physical campus and a growing alumni body. My vision is for every member of the Yale-NUS community to feel the enduring

community spirit that we have cultivated, to be empowered to share their successes and challenges with a caring community, and to continue investing in our collective learning community. We have enjoyed a unique and privileged experience as Yale-NUS students, and I truly wish to stay on this journey with the people who have made it meaningful, for as long as we can.

### What initiatives or projects do you have in mind to promote alumni engagement and participation in club activities?

I am excited to ensure that we continue to enjoy our yearly alumni reunions on campus, as I believe that the collective gathering of people in a physical location not only brings back old memories but also allows us to renew connections affected by space and time. Additionally, I want to ensure we have a clear policy on how different groups of alumni can feel empowered to organize a Yale-NUS gathering wherever in the world they may be by tapping into the Yale-NUS Club's funding, if applicable. Lastly, I want us to continue learning from each other and about the amazing things everyone is doing. Organizing regular learning sessions where we share expertise and skills will only propel our entire community to improve and grow, and I am determined to create these spaces for lifelong learning and engagement.





# ADLIN ZAINAL ('17)

## Secretary

### Tell us about yourself!

Hi! I'm Adlin. I'm currently back in Singapore, where I work at Yale-NUS as an Assistant Manager under the Alumni Affairs and Strategic Events team. My day-to-day genuinely varies based on the season, but my main job function is to take care of alumni affairs, find ways to keep alumni connected to the college, and help ensure that our alumni networks continue to stay strong after 2025. I also help organize events for the College, including Graduation and Reunion!

### What is your long-term vision for the club's alumni network?

I want our alumni community to be a place not only for networking but also for support in all its various forms. Not everyone is always going to be tuned in to alumni matters, and that's okay because we're in different phases of our lives, and our priorities are all different. What I do hope is that if you ever need to fall back on your fellow alums, there will always be ways for you to do so, wherever you are in the world. This is not something I can do by myself, but I know that with the collective strengths of my fellow Exco members, we will work towards making that a reality.

### What initiatives or projects do you have in

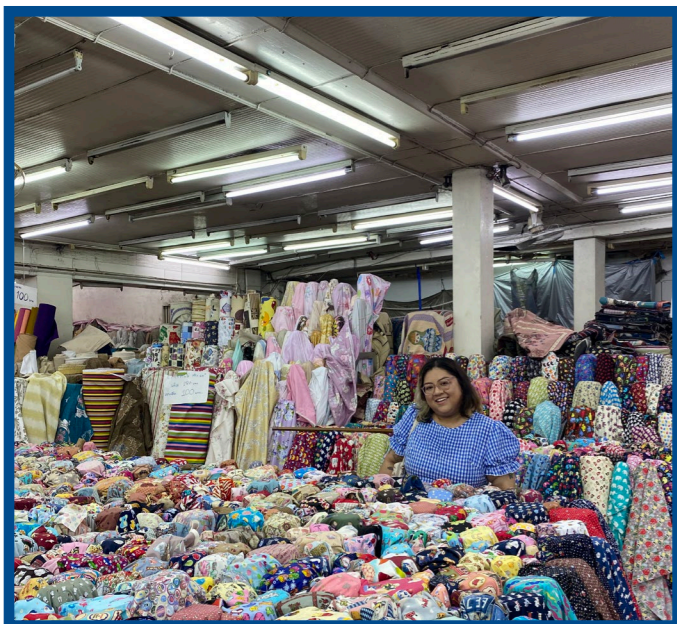


### mind to promote alumni engagement and participation in club activities?

I had the opportunity to meet up with various leaders from the Yale Alumni Association, and I'm inspired to find ways to leverage our alumni's professional and personal interests and get them connected because magical things happen when our alums are excited about a common goal. I want our alums to find ways to learn from one another, whether it's by working on a project together or even organizing an intimate talk where alumni can share their knowledge on different topics. I also think it's important to support and empower our overseas alums to organize on their own so that they continue to feel connected to the community.

### How do you enjoy your free time?

I have a crazy number of hobbies. I play a lot of video games in my free time (I'm currently obsessed with Baldur's Gate 3!!!), and I really enjoy nerding out about the behind-the-scenes of what goes into making a video game. I'm also an avid baker, I do a lot of cross-stitch, and I'm currently learning how to sew. I find baking and cross-stitching to be incredibly meditative, and I enjoy how it forces me to slow down and be more deliberate. Oh, and if you enjoy a good cocktail and want to know where to go (even outside of Singapore), I can probably point you in the right direction.



# ELSON ONG ('17)

## Treasurer

### Tell us about yourself!

I am currently living in Hong Kong and working with Goldman Sachs as an Executive Director in the Corporate Treasury Division. I belong to the team called Resource Allocation and my responsibilities involve managing, measuring, projecting and allocating financial resources (liquidity, capital, balance sheet funding) to the various business lines across the firm. I also lead the business coverage function, providing a single point of contact with each business across financial resources and ensuring that they operate within the liquidity targets.

### What is your long-term vision for the club's alumni network, and how do you plan to achieve this vision in your role as Treasurer?

My long-term vision for the club is to provide a platform for all Yale-NUS alumni to remain connected with each other, to get the support that they need in both their personal and professional lives, and to carry on the Yale-NUS legacy. This vision cannot be achieved without a sound financial model and as the Treasurer, my main responsibility is to ensure that the club has financial sustainability down the road.



### How do you enjoy your free time?

I enjoy travelling, being able to experience different culture, food and people. Being based in Hong Kong, travelling to different parts of the world is convenient and I get to understand different cities' history, architecture and traditions. Most importantly, I also get to reconnect with friends who are living in different parts of the world.

### What initiatives or projects do you have in mind to promote alumni engagement and participation in club activities?

The annual alumni reunion would be the most important project for the club to plan and execute, and we want as many alumni to be able to join and participate. The other priority for me would be to engage overseas alumni who are living outside of Singapore. Being an overseas alumnus myself, I have a vested interest. Some projects that I have in mind would be simple catch-up sessions in different cities, for example, after-work drinks, as a start and that can be expanded to other programming such as a speaker series.



# AMI FIRDAUS ('17)

## Ordinary Committee Member

Tell us about yourself!

I'm based in Singapore, and I work for the Milken Institute in Asia. I design, develop, and execute programs that convene the all-stars among investment managers, allocators/funds, financial institutions, regulators, celebrities, unicorns, and other thought leaders looking to create better outcomes for society through the levers of finance and philanthropy. Our focus is particularly strong on health, which has its own Summit in the American capital marking our annual calendar. The programs I dedicate my time to are mainly large-scale conferences; I am tasked with the Institute's flagship summit program in Asia while helping to build parts of its other global summits such as the Global Conference in Beverly Hills, and the Middle East and Africa Summit in the UAE. And then there are the smaller events too, but I tend to play a smaller role for those, such as roundtables.

**Do you have any particular initiatives or projects you're passionate about, and how do you hope to make an impact?**

Personally, I've co-founded two ventures in the education and youth development space. It's evident that I care a lot about how we raise our youth, especially the less fortunate and disadvantaged. I am also a strong advocate for a more equitable society. So, obviously, I will happily support any programs and ap-



proaches that elevate diversity, inclusion, and support for disadvantaged groups of people in spaces they may not have equitable access to. With that said, I just want to clarify that in the ExCo role, my passion is a personal tool, and I ultimately don't make decisions with my passion from this professional seat (or any professional role). I decide based on objective-aligned impact, scalability, resource efficiency, alumni network sentiments, and relationships.

**How did Yale-NUS influence your path to where you are now?**

A good chunk of the Yale-NUS community has a quality that I don't see often. Back in school I felt like I was part of an eccentric and entrepreneurial bunch of modern-day vagabonds who wanted to create a world they wanted to live in by driving new value beyond the traditional mindset of industry (and also within!) - the best part was that these visions were usually not grand, they were often personal and very simple. This paired very well with the liberal arts ideal of learning for its own sake, and I have to say that for me it enabled me to be the captain of my own ship and sail wherever I wanted to discover who I really am. The part where you serve something bigger than yourself to bring money home for bills and food is important too, I suppose. But Yale-NUS was the beginning of a realisation in me that it doesn't really matter what you do to get by as long as you know with conviction as to why you even try at all.

# VASUDHA KATARUKA ('19)

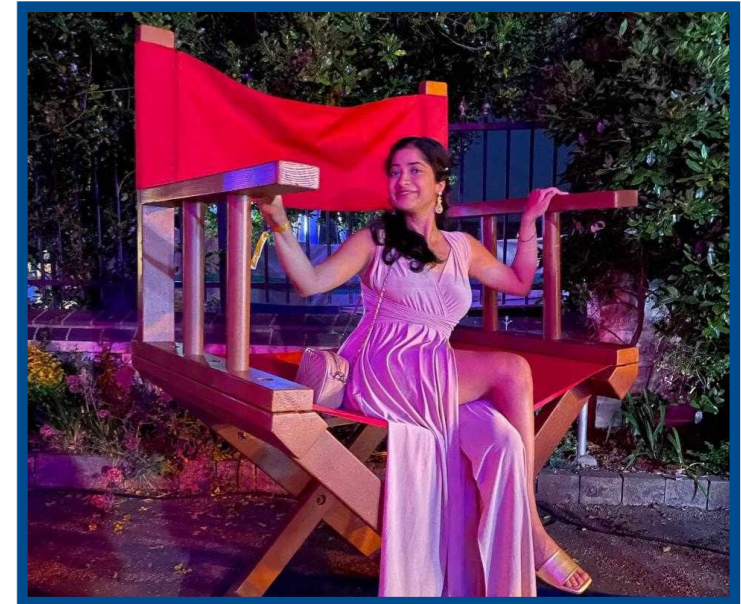
## Ordinary Committee Member

Tell us about yourself!

Greetings from my hometown - Kolkata, India - where I am currently spending quality time with my family. Having recently completed my master's at the University of Cambridge this summer, I am taking a short recuperative sabbatical to recharge before embarking on my next adventure. During this sabbatical, my days are a blend of relaxation and personal development. I am seizing the opportunity to acquire new skills, including finally working towards obtaining my driver's license. Additionally, I've developed a keen interest in refining the art of baking health-conscious desserts, garnering a lukewarm response from my family. As I navigate this transitional phase, I am excited about the prospect of what the future holds and am eager to bring my renewed energy and skills to my next professional endeavour.

**How do you envision enhancing alumni engagement and fostering a sense of community through your role?**

In my role, my primary objective is to provide support to the committee, contributing both administratively and through advocacy efforts. Looking ahead, my focus for the upcoming term involves developing robust processes for internal and external communications. I want to foster an environment where every alumni feels empowered to share valuable suggestions and feedback with the executive committee. My vision is to establish effective channels for communication that enable the committee to address concerns without succumbing to burnout. I see this



alumni club as an opportunity for the Yale-NUS community to heal and grow beyond adversity, becoming a symbol of resilience for our community. Ultimately, my goal is to build a strong sense of community within our alumni organization, where members find comfort, support, and the means to navigate challenges together.

**How did Yale-NUS influence your path to where you are now?**

Yale-NUS has been a transformative force in shaping my journey to where I am today. The community not only fuelled my passion for learning but also facilitated personal growth. Two standout experiences during my time as a student at Yale-NUS hold special significance for me: a LAB expedition in Nepal during the summer of 2016 and a semester abroad in the spring of 2018. Both moments served as pivotal milestones in my academic and personal development. These experiences taught me the importance of both hard work and self-care. The immersive learning in Nepal underscored the value of dedication and resilience, while my semester abroad taught me the importance of intentionality. These lessons prompted me to make a significant decision in alignment with my newfound insights. Following a physically and mentally intense year, I chose to take a sabbatical. This intentional pause allowed me to cherish invaluable time with my family, fostering healing and personal growth.



# MADI LOMMEN ('20)

## Ordinary Committee Member

Tell us about yourself!

Hello! I am Madi, entrepreneur, writer, and humanitarian. I currently split time between Asia (Tokyo/Singapore) and the US (Minneapolis, my hometown.) I most recently founded an idea-to-action consultancy that forges public-private partnerships for social change. Our present mission brings together the EdTech company Village, Minneapolis Youth Coordinating Board, and local program providers to unlock holistic education for 159,000 youth in Minneapolis/St. Paul.

**How do you envision enhancing alumni engagement and fostering a sense of community through your role?**

Yale-NUS alumni connect naturally, in many countries, across cohorts, and have since the first four classes graduated. I hope that the Alumni Club can resource those existing efforts and enable other up-and-coming ones that are driven by alumni, for alumni.

**Do you have any particular initiatives or projects you're passionate about, and how do you hope to make an impact within the club?**

Absolutely. My heart lies in community-driven efforts to create a positive impact. Part of my role in the Club is to orchestrate partnerships that make such efforts possible--be



they financial, institutional, or legal. I hope that in two years, Yale-NUS alumni will feel connected, resourced and accompanied.

**How do you enjoy your free time? What do you do outside work hours? What do you enjoy about it?**

I am a triathlete and avid salsa dancer. Most recently, I competed in the Zell am See Ironman 70.3 in the Austrian Alps. Before that, I performed *Suma y Resta* in the ensemble of Misaki sensei in Tokyo. I love endurance athletics for its endless challenge, how it fosters discipline that permeates into my professional presence, and its proximity to nature (and God). And dance, well, I hope we all find reasons to dance.

**Do you have any message for the Yale-NUS Alumni?**

Engage! Host a dinner, present your research, organize a book review... the Yale-NUS alumni community is as strong as its members are active. For resources, anyone may read the Club constitution [here](#) and/or email us at [ync-exco@gmail.com](mailto:ync-exco@gmail.com). Or, reach out to me and let's go for coffee, a run, or virtually connect.

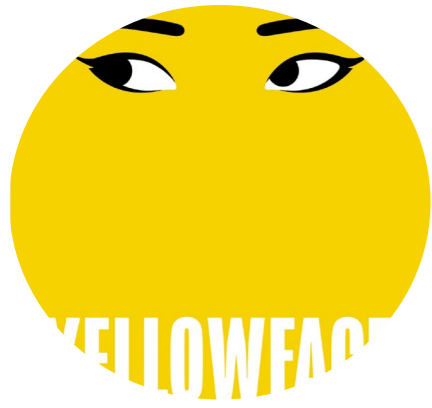
# IT'S TIME TO READ

Wondering what to do this holiday season? Take some time to read one of these beloved novels recommended by our staff and faculty. May these books bring warmth and inspiration to your holiday season!

By Siddharth Mohan Roy ('25)







**Yellowface**  
**R.F Kuang**

*Yellowface* looks into the publishing industry and the basis on which writers are chosen. The exposé of the main character's motivations and her "trials by social media" were reminiscent of the prevailing climate these days and the complexities of the human heart.

**Kristine Chng**  
Executive (Public Affairs)



**The Silence of the Girls**  
**Pat Barker**

Are you looking to reconnect with Homer's *Odyssey*? This book offers a compelling narrative of ancient warfare from the perspective of one of its captive women, Briseis. Homer's *Odyssey* never gets you this close to the sights, sounds,

and smells of warfare, as it cuts through the male-oriented concerns of Greek epic to feature the desperate plight of girls and women, daughters and mothers.

**Steven Green**  
Associate Dean (Curriculum)



**If We Burn: The Mass Protest Decade and the Missing Revolution**  
**Vincent Bevins**

Why did the mass protests around the world during the decade of the 2010s end up producing so little change, and in some cases help bring far right-wing governments to power? Spanning across Egypt, Turkey, Brazil, Chile and Hong Kong, and raising questions that are just as relevant to similar protests in the United States and Western Europe, Bevins points to the limitations of contemporary protest politics, and the need for disciplined political parties to move from resistance to power.

**Chris Howell**  
Associate Dean  
(Faculty Development)



**Maybe You Should Talk To Someone**  
**Lori Gottlieb**

A vulnerable and thought-provoking read with the right sprinkling of humour. Gottlieb shows that we can learn and grow at any stage as we grapple with life's biggest (and sometimes small) questions.

**Benjamin Van Son**  
Senior Manager (CIPE)



**Indistractable**  
**Nir Eyal**

"Most people don't want to acknowledge the uncomfortable truth that distraction is always an unhealthy escape from reality." One of the many quotes and relatable stories in this book got me to pause and think about life and stop finding excuses for procrastination. Practical and

realistic approaches to balancing technology, well-being, and relationships are backed by evidence.

**Andy Loe**  
Associate Director,  
Campus Life



**The Secret Life of Groceries**  
**Benjamin Lorr**

A fun — and at times disturbing (that opening scene is particularly memorable!) — look into the whole complex orchestration of how a grocery store connects you to the food you consume every day.

**Ng Hui Khoo**  
Head of Studies (Physical Sciences)



**Chip War**  
**Chris Miller**

This is a fantastic page-turner, quite a feat for a book that tells the story of the

development, adoption, and global centrality of microchips. Besides an appreciation of how crazy complicated chips are to make, why the spectre of war over Taiwan is even worse than you think, and the nature of global supply chains, you'll just feel smarter for having read the book.

**Trisha Craig**  
Vice President  
(Engagement)



**Babel: Or the Necessity of Violence: An Arcane History of The Oxford Translators' Revolution**

**R.F. Kuang**

*Babel* explores an alternative timeline of the 19th century where the translation of language creates magic stored in silver. The author uses this alternative history to explore colonialism, racism, and the power of language, while providing a commentary on higher education.

**David Post**  
Vice-President (Academic Affairs) and Dean of Faculty



**Dear Committee Members**

**Julie Schumacher**

Very funny, but also warm and moving.

**Joanne Roberts**  
President



**Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow**  
**Gabrielle Zevin**

This novel has so many layers intertwined in the journey of these two friends growing together. I loved all the video game references, and exploration of multiracial identity, disabilities, and mental health—all set in a mix of a digital world and reality.

**Cory Owen**  
Acting Dean of Students





**True Biz**  
Sara Nović

Due to the advocacy of d/Deaf and hard-of-hearing students, I have been trying to learn more about sign language and Deaf culture. The story moves between the students and staff of River Valley School of the Deaf, exploring diverse d/Deaf identities and relationships to ASL. I particularly loved that much of the dialogue is signed, and that Nović's writing is constantly moving between the Hearing world and the Deaf world.

**Annette Wu**  
Assistant Manager  
(Intercultural Engagement)



**Bel Canto**  
Ann Patchett

The book follows the story of a hostage situation set in one house over the course

of multiple months. The narrative beautifully captures human nature and unexpected human bonds that transcend language, political alliances (terrorists vs hostages), and backgrounds. Despite never moving beyond the walls of the hostage compound, the story pulls you in and is surprisingly fast-paced.

**Freya Lalani**  
Executive (Alumni Affairs & Strategic Events)



**The House of Doors**  
Tan Twan Eng

I was mesmerised by his weaving of historical vignettes about Sun Yat Sen and Somerset Maugham into a beautiful multi-layered tale of memory and loss, social hypocrisy, racism, loyalty, homophobia, misogyny, colonial politics and more. The doors did lead to many hidden truths.

**Khoo Hoon Eng**  
Rector



**No Wonder, Women**  
Nozomi Naoi

This collection of short stories by our very own faculty author, Carissa Foo, tells stories of women in love. It is a great blend of universal themes of love with local Singaporean aspects. I especially enjoyed the stories "Two Peas in a Pod" and "Golden Touch." Read through the stories to find out which one is your favourite!

**Nozomi Naoi**  
Associate Professor of Humanities (Art History)

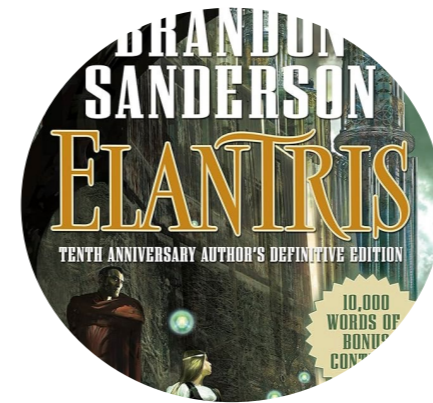


**Timeshelter**  
Georgi Gospodinov

"The past differs from the present in one major way — it never runs in one direction," says Gaustin. But, by initially setting up clinics for the elderly, he soon opens time shelters

that blur the line between the two. Now, anyone can start reliving their glory days, as long as they figure out when those were.

**Stanislav Presolski**  
Assistant Professor of Science (Chemistry)

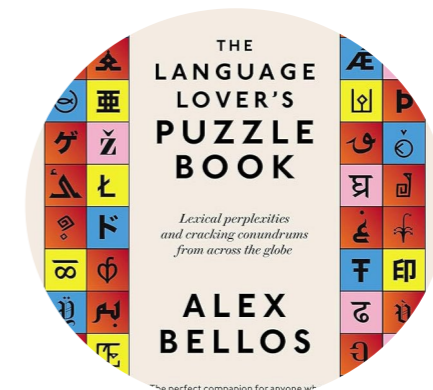


**Elantris**  
Brandon Sanderson

Generally, I don't read science fiction or fantasy; therefore, I wasn't expecting to finish this book when I took it off my husband's bookshelves. However, once I started reading the book, I couldn't put it down. I was completely engrossed in it. The narrative accelerated, and the plot was manageable for an inexperienced fantasy reader. While this may be Sanderson's first novel, it is also my first fantasy read, and

I'm excited to explore this author and similar genres further in the future.

**Kelly Yeo**  
Associate Director  
(Registry)



**The Language Lover's Puzzle Book**  
Alex Bellos

I love learning languages (even though I'm not particularly talented at doing so), and I also love puzzles and games! This book is full of fun facts and challenging riddles about a variety of ancient and modern languages – I usually take it along with me for long flights or layovers.

**Engie P Wong**  
Executive (Campus Life)



**Air-Conditioned Nation Revisited**  
Cherian George

*Air-Conditioned Nation Revisited* has been a thought-provoking, enlightening read that provides a foundation for anyone keen to learn more about Singapore's political landscape. With topics such as the Reserved Presidential Election of 2017 and People's Action Party's history of "calibrated coercion," this book offers critical and nuanced reflections on the unique politics in Singapore. I found the writing easy to read and straight to the point, and I also love that I can borrow this from public libraries for free.

**Sun Jie Min**  
Residential Life Officer



**Calling all Kingfishers!**

We hope you have had a chance to visit the newly launched Legacy website! We invite you to share your content, and collaborate with us to make these initiatives truly special.

[Submit Your Stories](#)



# A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME...



## COMIC GOLD

'Comic Sans', a podcast hosted by Nathaniel Mah ('20) and Myle Yan Tay ('19), won the Best Buddy Podcast (Gold) and Listener's Voice Award at this year's Signal Awards! The podcast, which focuses on a different comic in each episode, is also produced by fellow Kingfishers Roshan Singh ('18) and Scott Lee Chua ('20).

▶ [LISTEN TO COMIC SANS HERE](#)

*Image from Andas Productions.*



## EMPATHY WINS

Meryl Yu ('22) won the Thomas Clarkson Gold Medal for Psychology at the Global Undergraduate Awards (UA) 2023! She presented her winning entry titled "A Values-Alignment Empathy Training Intervention to Decrease Relational Aggression Among Singaporean Adolescents" at the UA Global Summit held in Dublin last month.

▶ [SEE THE FULL LIST OF WINNERS HERE](#)

*Photo by Global Undergraduate Awards.*



## LONG-TERM FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

Jolene Lum ('19) continues to make waves in foodtech! She was recently interviewed by Tatler Asia about what long-term food sustainability could look like and how it is important to consider how to provide nutrition not only for people who have options, but those who don't.

▶ [READ THE ARTICLE HERE](#)

*Photo from Jolene Lum.*

# WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

## BE FEATURED

Want to be featured in upcoming issues of *Wingspan*? We're always on the lookout for interesting things that alumni are doing. If you are doing something cool or exciting that you want other alumni to know about, let us know! If you know a friend who is doing cool stuff but is too shy to blow their own trumpet, let us know as well!

## PITCH IDEAS

This newsletter is for alumni, and we also want to feature things that you are interested in. If you have an idea for a feature or an article, please feel free to write in as well, and we'll see if it's a good fit!

## SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK

We want your feedback! Do you like the newsletter? Do you hate it? What do you want to see more of? And what do you want to see less of? Let us know!

You can contact us at [alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg](mailto:alumni@yale-nus.edu.sg).

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