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**Five musings...**

1. Milan certainly enthralled the editorial team while doing this issue: We are fortunate to have been able to cover the Saloni 2010 (Milan Furniture Fair), one of the biggest and most prestigious design trade shows and exhibitions in the world. Contributing writer and researcher Cara Garcia summed up the trends and we hope to see you try one for your home. Also, I am proud to present our cover story on the newly opened and dashing Maison Moschino, which added illusory touches to our Fashion Architecture Issue.

2. Three guest artists are featured this issue: Fashion designer cum stylist Estien Quijano interpreted and recreated the styles of fashion icons' Alexander McQueen, Evita Peron, Audrey Hepburn and Marie Antoinette into home furnishings; Secondly, photographer cum industrial designer Paolo Buendia turned the homes featured in My Space into images that speak of drama and flights of fancy. Lastly, fashion designer cum illustrator Christine Go-Tan paints us a picture of the four girls of Sex and the City and their apartments. Now, you can also remake their style in your own space by following our accessory guide in It List.

3. En Route makes its debut with our travel and lifestyle editor Tess Villareal's insider's guide to Copenhagen: what it's famous for, things to see and do, where to stay, eat, drink and shop. Find out why this is one of the best destinations to enjoy both fashion and design.

4. I was reading The Times' list of "25 Movies that Shook the World of Fashion." Some of my favorites are: Coco Avant Chanel (ranked #8), Funny Face (#13), The Thomas Crown Affair (#18) and Avatar (#24). (For the complete list, log on to [fashionfoiegras.com](http://fashionfoiegras.com).) Not included is Marie Antoinette starring Kirsten Dunst, which I highly commend for the costumes designed by Milena Canonero and shoes made by Manolo Blabnik and Pompei. The movie was shot in the Palace of Versailles as well, which could make this film top both a "fashion and set (interior) design movie list." It makes me wonder, what other movies would make it to the Best Set Design list? Please do email me your thoughts at [editorial.SBL@gmail.com](mailto:editorial.SBL@gmail.com).

5. At the Frozen II exhibit of Tom Epperson sponsored by Chloe, I met Noli Viñas, president of the Rotary Club. He told me about their new project Makabayan books -- a three-volume tactile picture book on Sibika at Kultura and HEKASI (geography, history and civics book) for blind children. They aim to print 409 copies for SPED centers in the Philippines; one copy costs P18,688 (about \$375). Together, let us help underwrite their production expense. For donations, please contact Annette Esparaz at +632 718 1888.

As this issue goes to print, I am thankful that the weather is slowly becoming kinder to us. As Jane Austen would say, "What dreadful hot weather we have! It keeps one in a continual state of inelegance." As we all fashion ourselves to live **elegantly**, allow us to be your new design and travel companion. This issue, let's start with how we dress, and how we live.

**Sheryl Songsong**



*Most inspiring stories come from places that are dear to a person. This issue, I'm sharing two.*

*At the tender age of three months, I was brought to Muscat, Oman and lived there for the next 12 years of my life. My parents and older sister have been living there for quite some time and so when I was born, it was only natural to spend my childhood in this city I still call home. There are a lot of things I will never forget about Muscat: Waking up to the sound of waves in our Azaiba beach house and smelling the salty air; being told to keep quiet every 12nn and 6pm as you hear chanting and praying from mosques; the perfectly asphalted roads in the city (not a bump or rock along the way); and blaring horns and 'rejoicing' (as the Omanis would say) each time the Oman team wins a football game in the Gulf Cup (causing so much traffic – something very uncommon in Muscat). Then, there's also the smell of a basket-full of dried fish balanced on the heads of Bedouins crossing towns; and the very sweet (almost harsh) floral scent of Arabic men and women. Until now, whenever I visit Muscat, I still stare at the sea of women in black abayas walking in shopping centers (when they're probably the ones looking at me since I'm dressed very differently in casual jeans and a shirt); and lastly (before I fill up a dozen more pages of my fond memories), how can I ever forget the "unique" (and often times, funny) store names and signs such as 'Automatic Bakery' (there is also one named 'Manual Bakery').*

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*Story # 2 fast forwards to my last year in college when I was fortunate to be chosen as our country's representative in an interior design competition and student exchange program in Japan. I convinced my good friend Kring Zulaybar to come to Osaka with me, and boy did we have quite an adventure (this was my first time to travel without family). From the time we landed in Kansai Airport at 8pm, finding our way to the hotel and school, having 'lost in translation' moments, realizing we can't use our GSM phones, and to me breaking down and wanting to come home on my first night there (I seriously wanted to leave and didn't care about anything anymore). I was probably such a pain in the butt (and I'm deeply sorry for that); but with Kring's calming force, and my sister and parents' frequent calls and support, I managed to stay and actually enjoy the experience. To this day, I don't regret it and cherish the weeks I experienced a culture totally different from Manila's. For starters, I barely understood the people; I absolutely loved how convenient and organized their railway system was; train rides and long walks (it took me almost three hours to get to school from my host family's house: 20 minute walk uphill, two long train rides, and another 20 minute walk...whew!); cool vending machines and convenience store meals; the quirky shopping boutiques; just to mention a few. The feeling of independence taught me so much about self-discipline – you have to respect and take care of yourself, and learn to adapt.*

*These two experiences never fail to bring a familiar feeling of nostalgia – something that helps me take a step back, observe the things around me, discover my strengths and weaknesses, and most importantly, breathe and take in life slowly. There are still so many places to visit and I eagerly await the opportunity to travel some place far and learn.*

*This issue, we hope to enlighten and excite with what we have in store for you: a lot of cultural happenings and leisurely destinations. To name a few – Paris' Maison et Objet; a Grecian walk-through of their history, architecture and art; and the famed Kasbah Tamadot by Richard Branson. Locally, we visited Bella Rocca in Marinduque, which I highly recommend for those looking for some real peace and quiet. We also did a number of features in Boracay with the hope of rediscovering the island away from its famed night scene, plus an environmental watch report on the island's rapidly growing community.*

*Let me leave you with two eye-opening and humorous quotations that inspired me while making this issue: "Always keep your eyes open. Never sleep in the car. Keep watching because whatever you see out the window, or wherever...it can inspire you," by Vogue creative director Grace Coddington. Whilst Elizabeth Berry says, "Shipping is a terrible thing to do to vegetables. They probably get jet-lagged, just like people."*

*Sheryl Songsong*

*(There are numerous people to acknowledge in making this issue. Our heartfelt thanks to all of you who helped make our trips comfortable and memorable.)*