

Women's Fashion Magazine of the Year 2016

SINGAPORE

ELLE

**NO-EXCUSES
EXERCISES**
WORKOUTS
THAT FIT INTO
YOUR LIFE

APRIL 2017

~~SEX~~
**ARE YOU
ASEXUAL?**

**BRIGHT
SIDE UP!**

THE NEWEST,
FASTEST WAYS
TO GET YOUR
GLOW ON

**TANIS
CHALOPIN**

MILLENNIAL
ROLE MODEL

+

THE
AMAZING
LIPSTICK
FORMULA
YOU'VE
NEVER SEEN
BEFORE

128

**MOST POLISHED
ACCESSORIES
& SPLURGE-
WORTHY
BAGS**

< including this one



\$5.50

GOOD GIRL

In a world of sass and social media sensations, rising star Tanis Chalopin is climbing the ranks the old-fashioned way: With grace and goodwill. By Audrey Phoon

PHOTOGRAPHY AIK CHEN STYLING SHARON TULASIDAS

If there were such a thing as a real-life Disney princess, Tanis Chalopin would be it. Not only did the French-Singaporean singer-songwriter spend part of her childhood living in a castle (a sprawling 14th-century French chateau called Farcheville, complete with moat and hunting grounds), but her mixed parentage and long locks have daubed her with a Pocahontas likeness, while her sanguine interview replies channel the optimism of Snow White.

Perhaps the latter characteristic stems from the fact that hers is a fairy tale without the presence of an evil stepmother. Chalopin's mum is Ethel Fong, Singapore's first supermodel — and loving role model — who worked for names such as Giorgio Armani and *W* magazine in the '80s and '90s. Her father is the French writer and animation producer Jean Chalopin, who owned Farcheville but sold it in 2006; he and Fong are now based in the Bahamas.

Chalopin herself lives in a cosy apartment in New York's West Village, where she's fiercely pursuing a career in music. At 23 and fresh out of university, the NYU Steinhardt graduate has already released two singles plus an EP called *Blackout*, not to mention a theme song for *Trail of the Panda*, a film produced by — you guessed it — Disney.


MUSIC FROM THE HEART

Impressive accomplishments for someone so young and part of the so-called Lost Generation, but Chalopin is certainly not one who appears lost. "I was fortunate enough to discover my passion at a very young age," she says. "I knew what I wanted to be and what I wanted to do.

"Growing up, I was always told that I'm an old soul. I did feel different from my peers and it wasn't easy. Luckily, at home, being different was encouraged. And when I pursued my tertiary education in music, I was surrounded by people who shared the same passion. The feeling of being different and alone was no longer an issue."

In fact, it's that experience of solitariness that Chalopin draws upon when she writes her songs. "Music is my personal safe haven. When I'm down, upset or troubled, music puts me back in the right place and I've always hoped that it can have that impact on someone's life out there. The biggest compliment I've received so far in my career was a message from an ex-schoolmate who told me that he had a really tough week and that my song helped him through it. If my music can continue to have this impact on people, I would consider it a huge success."

FASHION ASSISTANCE DARYL ALEXIUS YEO HAIR DAVID GAN/PASSION HAIR SALON MAKEUP CLARENCE LEE USING CHANEL S/S 2017 MODEL TANIS CHALOPIN



Green and pink
tweed sleeveless top
with blue piping
trim and silver-
tone buttons, by
CHANEL.

Tulle bustier maxi-dress
with printed elastane
shoulder straps, grosgrain
ribbon choker with
J'Adior brass pendant,
and technical fabric pump
with J'Adior embroidered
ribbon, all by **DIOR**.





Cotton oversized top with ruffled lace trims, and denim wide-leg trousers, by **BURBERRY**.
Coco Crush 18K white gold earring with diamonds, and Coco Crush 18K yellow and white gold asymmetrical earring with pavé diamonds, by **CHANEL**.

“
I'M AN ETERNAL OPTIMIST. I LIKE TO GIVE PEOPLE THE BENEFIT OF THE DOUBT. I WOULD GO ABOVE AND BEYOND FOR THE PEOPLE AND THE THINGS I BELIEVE IN.”

— *Tanis on Tanis*

SIMPLY STYLISH

Charmingly, none of Chalopin's answers bear a hint of her comfortable background. Ask her about her childhood in Farcheville and instead of crowing about its vast expanse (1,000 acres!) or number of rooms (200, which the family later turned into 15 suites!), she talks about making *jam*. "My favourite memory is actually all the hours I spent with my brother in the kitchen, standing on stools, cooking jam from the fresh berries we picked from our garden in these old-fashioned copper pots and pans," she says. "The castle was undeniably amazing, but for me, it was all the little moments of life that made the place a home."

According to fashion stylist, publicist and family friend Lionnel Lim, that's typical of the way she is. "Tanis had an interview some time ago with a local newspaper for their My Bag column," he recalls. "She didn't bring a designer bag. She could have. Instead, she brought a simple nylon carryall that doubles as a bag for her music sheets and whatnot. That showed me she isn't too concerned with appearances. In fact, if she needs a statement gown for a party, she'll just borrow it from Ethel's wardrobe...she says her mum is a no-nonsense person, hence her personality reflects this."

Of course, that isn't to say Chalopin doesn't care for how she looks. It's evident from what she wears in her music videos — mostly simple yet chic, tasteful dresses — that this quietly confident young woman is just as sure about her style as she is her calling. Which is something you might expect from someone with a supermodel for a mother, though Chalopin reveals that wasn't always the case.

"I've ventured through many styles and phases. When I was a little girl, my mum had full control of my wardrobe and had me wearing pink seven days a week despite the fact that I couldn't stand the colour! After the pink phase, I wanted to avoid everything 'girly' and dress like my friends, who were mostly boys. So there I was, in rock band T-shirts and jeans, much to my mum's distress!"

"I only recently came to my senses and started seeking her advice regarding fashion, and I could not be more grateful. I've always found that my mum has the incredible talent of making everything she wears classy. She taught me to love fashion and her constant reminder that no matter what I wear, I should always be wearing the clothes and the clothes should never be wearing me, is deeply instilled in me."

Case in point: At a birthday party for Dick Lee last year, Chalopin turned up in a striking black dress with a fluid, full-length skirt. Remembers Lim: "When I suggested she should flash more skin since she's in the music industry, she just laughed politely."

ONE FOR ALL

Perhaps the most impressive thing about this talented lass is the fact that she's not all about herself. Chalopin is a very vocal champion for eco sustainability and underprivileged kids, and it isn't mere lip service. Over the past few years, she's released a single about saving the environment, given a TED talk in Boston on kindness, as well as used her photography skills (another passion of hers that took off when Fong gave her a Canon 450D camera for her 12th birthday) to publish two photo books. The tomes — available via her website www.tanis.world — spotlight orphaned and abandoned children living in China and Indonesia, with the proceeds going towards helping them and paying for their medical treatment.

The kids' plight came to her attention when, on a study stint in China, Chalopin met a baby named Micky at a Beijing foster home. The eight-month-old had been abandoned at birth in freezing weather and had heart disease; he passed away a year later despite efforts to save him.

"Micky set me on a path towards helping unwanted children, abandoned not only by their parents, but also by a society in search of minimum responsibility and involvement," she says. "Photography is my tool to help and shed light on subjects I care for."


NEW SENSATION

If there's anything that appears to be lacking in her spotless life, it's a bit of dirt. And Chalopin knows it. "In the world of show business, stories sell but I have no personal story to tell," she acknowledges. "Coming from a good, healthy family doesn't create a media sensation! Having a father in showbiz, even though he's in animation, gives people the illusion that I have all the strings to pull, which is not true at all."

"[*Music and animation*] are two very different industries... I have to work from the bottom up, like any unknown artist. It's a long and difficult journey, but it is the dream that I will endlessly strive to make a reality."

So that's exactly what she'll be doing in the year to come, in her own respectable, Disney princess-worthy way. "I hope to find a stronger voice so that the next action I take will have more impact," shares Chalopin. As such, she's been busy recording new material, including for her first full-length album, *Love Stories*.

Thus the next chapter unfolds for this rising star; one where hopefully good will reign supreme over gossip. IIII



Black lambskin shirt
with drop gathered puff
shoulders, black wool-blend
miniskirt, YSL Monogram
gold-and-silver-tone
earrings with glass stone
embellishments, and calfskin
belt with snakeskin effect,
all by SAINT LAURENT
BY ANTHONY
VACCARELLO.