



Takeaways

A newsletter by RICE



If you're reading this, our idea has worked. For now.

Running an editorial publication requires us to think about how we engage with you, dear reader. A newsletter is not a new concept, but we can't deny that writing straight to your inbox feels fresh and exciting.

What we're doing with Takeaways isn't a simple aggregation of our editorial slate for the week. No, we want to talk to you because we know so many of you are far away from being dispassionate. Our comments section—Facebook, Instagram, Telegram—never lacks reactions: rants, rebuttals, raves. We love it all.

We figured drafting this weekly newsletter lends a lighter touch to heavier topics. Here, you'll find opinions, breakdowns, explanations, and surveys of this place we call home, and the issues that lie within it. Think of this as a backdoor to RICE: A way for us to lend further context to the things we do, and why we do it.

Let's get into the week.

Halimah's Last Hurrah



This week, we learned that President Halimah Yacob has decided to step down from her post after the end of her term. In a few months, we will vote for a new president of Singapore, a role that, unlike in most countries, is ceremonial.

Nonetheless, we wrote about her public efforts—to unite communities and condemn hateful speech. She's also advocated for fair treatment of workers, which still remains a work in progress. With an election coming up, one question is on our minds: can, or *should*, we expect change?

**Halimah Yacob, the President That
Outshined a 'Political Minus'**

F1 Phenom



Like our dear president, Gautham Ramesh feels most comfortable in an HDB flat even if his job is, well, very important.

Gautham is Singapore's first F1 engineer: a local caretaker of the world's fastest cars. He also does the job remotely from his house. There's a fair bit of technical verbiage in our feature—we broke it down to make it understandable—but importantly, it's a spotlight on a Singaporean who pursued his dream job, no matter how unlikely it seemed.

**The Singaporean Man
Engineering F1 Racing Cars from
His HDB Flat**

Singapore Can *Love*a-not?



Asking the regular Singaporean if this city is loveable can result in verbal lashing. There are many things about this country that frustrates its people. But, as cliché as it sounds, we end up frustrated because there is plenty to love about Singapore.

In our branded piece with DesignSingapore Council, we profiled two designers. Their work deals with the topic of a "loveable Singapore"—they address how we perceive each other and the buildings around us. The result features a card game and, amazingly, the Metaverse.

**What it Takes to Design a
Loveable Singapore**

A Local Slice of Japan



We swear this piece is more than just "Remember Oishi Pizza?". Junji—real name JJ Lim—has a personality worth rendering an entire story for. He's a former country club developer who became a J-pop stan in the 80s, an obsession that paved the way for his beloved F&B franchise.

It's no secret that the F&B industry in Singapore is large and—with countless stories attesting to this—volatile. The blood, sweat, and tears (and more sweat) in the kitchen have given way to businesses that have opened and closed in quick succession. Junji's story is one of resolve, especially at an age when most would resort to retirement. This won't be the last story like this that you'll get from us, that we can definitely say.

**After Oishi Pizza's Demise, this
62-Year-Old Founder Now Has
His Fingers in Japanese Pies**

Gender Identity in Flux



In America, a supposed ‘culture war’, inflamed by reactionary politicians, has made gender issues searing hot topics. In Singapore, it all bubbles underneath.

This piece wasn't easy for our intern Shiva, an individual reckoning with gender dysphoria, to publish. The topic itself can cause many to shuffle in discomfort—not least, the people who fail to grasp it. If it's something that you remain confused about, Shiva's own story might offer a wholly unique lens.

**This Body is Not Mine: Living
with Gender Dysphoria**

Short Grains, or *piping-hot topics by the spoonful.*

- The acting president of the Football Association of Singapore is *pissed* about the current state of local footie.
- Pink Dot is set to organize its first event post-377A repeal. What lies ahead for them now?
- How many of you have had friendships severed by, of all things, holidays? Read further.
- Singaporean men may not be skincare addicts. Still, our writer argues sunscreen should be their business.

- Speaking of which: Men, are you also washing your hands after you pee?
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In case you didn't know, our new video series 'Against the Grain' brings back our vox-pop videos with a new twist.

We dragged our video editor, Alistair Quak, out from his video-editing dungeon to stand in front of the camera. Most recently, amidst a shaky economic climate, he ventured out to the CBD to ask Singaporeans: "Are you scared of getting laid off?"

Are Singaporeans Worried About Layoffs?

We like to go out! We also hate our weather.

But as much as our team is full of contradictions, we simply can't go by our weekend without checking out some things. If you're still deciding on where to go, let us highlight some unmissable events for you:

1. iLight is returning, and so is Gastrobeats. A wholesome time with plenty of food and blinding lights.

2. Asian Film Archive is screening a [new 4K restoration of 'Battle Royale'](#).
The ultra-violent (and ultra-fun) Japanese cult classic from 2000 has only two screenings this month.
3. Pangdemonium's new play '[Doubt: A Parable](#)' debuts this weekend. Read our [feature interview](#) with its prodigious director, Timothy Koh, and actor Neo Swee Lin.
4. The OG sadboi [Damien Rice](#) comes back for his latest concert to remind you of the worst relationships you've never had.
5. After a successful soft launch, new F&B joint [Wildcard](#) opens its doors to reservations.

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