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Award nominees embody the right spirit

Overwhelming response from the public in casting their votes

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PROFESSIONAL violinist Joanne Yeoh won the hearts of the judges and votes of the public to clinch the *Martell VSOP Rising Personality of the Year 2008* title recently.

The 31-year-old lecturer at Universiti Putra Malaysia won not only the trophy but also RM30,000 and a trip to Martell's vineyard in France.

Each of the 10 nominees had to go through stringent interviews by the judges, who comprised Carat Club founder Chan Boon Yong, renowned fashion designer Datuk Bernard Chandran and Valiram Group director Ashvin Valiram.

They also had to capture the hearts of Malaysians whose SMS and online votes made up 40% of the final score.

"The voting response from the public was overwhelming, indicating their passion in supporting the brand and voting for the personality whom they thought deserved the award," said Pernod Ricard Malaysia marketing director Deric Tan.

Tan added that the 10 promising Malaysians were recognised for their exceptional achievements in their own forte, which was why they each deserved to be honoured for embodying the Martell VSOP brand spirit and values.

The second and third places went to recording artiste Jaelyn Victor and TV host, producer and broadcast journalist Jonathan Putra respectively.

They each took home a trophy and a three-litre bottle of Martell VSOP.

Each of the nominees also received a Martell VSOP Ritz Exclusive Edition bottle of its famous VSOP Medaillon Cognac, each bottle of which features the majestic gold engraving of the Ritz Paris hotel.

Besides Yeoh, Victor and Jonathan, the nominees this year included publisher Adrian Yap, film director Bernard Chauly, music producer and entrepreneur DJ Blink Lau, fashion stylist Cris Yong, actor and music producer Justin Chan, photographer Sharon Lam and artiste and song composer Vince Chong.

"The personalities whom we pay tribute to with the *Martell VSOP Rising Personalities Award 2008* have the vision, success and passion needed to seize opportunities to take themselves to even greater heights in life," said Tan, who gave an assurance that Martell



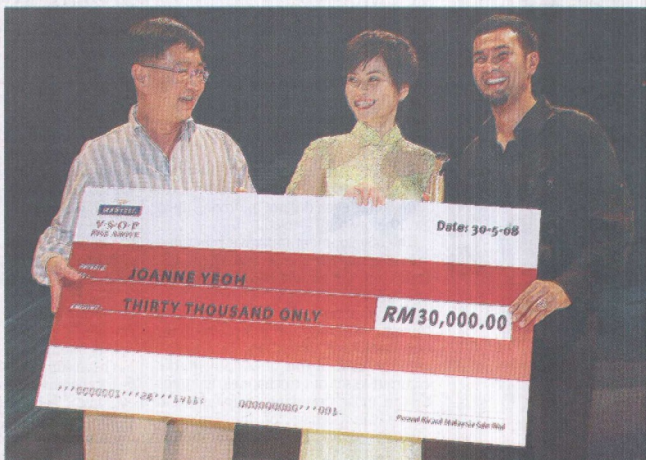
Celebrity model: Daly (second from left) parading a dress by Daniel Chong which was put up for auction while (from left) Ng, Melissa Ann Tan and Lo look on.

>>The personalities ... have the vision, success and passion needed to seize opportunities to take themselves to even greater heights in life<<

DERIC TAN



Talented lass: Victor entertaining the guests with a rendition of Celine Dion's 'Taking Chances'.



Congratulations: Tan (left) and Chandran presenting the mock cheque to Yeoh after she was announced the winner.

would continue to be committed to supporting the growth of aspiring young individuals as reflected by its founder Jean Martell.

During the event, some of the nominees went on stage to showcase their talents. Among those who performed were Victor, Lau, Yeoh and Yong.

Besides the glitz and glamour, the organisers also collaborated with one of Martell's 2007 Rising Personalities, fashion designer Daniel Chong, who auctioned off four of his couture dresses - modelled by Elaine Daly, Miss Malaysia/World 2005 Emmeline Ng, Miss Malaysia Universe 2006 Melissa Ann Tan and Hannah Lo.

The auction fetched a total of RM7,700 that was donated to the Malaysian Official Designer's Association to support its efforts in developing creative individuals.

Three lucky public voters were also rewarded during the ceremony, with each winning themselves a party worth RM10,000.