



The Donna Karan dresses worn by Trina Liang-Lin and Ming Tan, styled by May Kong of Club 21 Style Services, have been donated by Club 21 for auction at Buy To Save, with proceeds going to UNIFEM. All accessories, their own

Fashion With A CONSCIENCE

Club 21 and UNIFEM collaborate on a designer fashion charity initiative that champions every woman's right to style. By Kim Reyes

It has a reputation for being glamorous, aspirational, and oftentimes superficial—but can fashion have a heart? Two women in Singapore believe it can and have created a two-part community project bringing together fashion and philanthropy to prove it.

Ming Tan, director of the COM Foundation, and Trina Liang-Lin, a full-time investment banker and executive committee member of UNIFEM Singapore, are the ladies behind Give To Save and Buy To Save 2009—a charity initiative involving a clothing drive and sale as a result of collaboration between UNIFEM and COM Group's fashion retail arm Club 21.

"Fashion has a great role to play in shaping how people think," says Tan. "Designers, models and celebrities are today's tastemakers, and their influence extends beyond the choice of clothes one might buy. Because of their aspirations and standing with customers, they garner attention when they champion causes. They reach audiences that traditional non-governmental organizations and charities cannot."

For the past seven years, Tan has run the philanthropy interests of the COM Group, which also comprises Club 21, COMO Hotels and Resorts and COMO Shambhala. She is spearheading Give To Save in mid-November, a charity collection drive of gently-used designer clothing and accessories donated from the closet of Club 21's extensive VIP membership database, Club 21 customers, as well as donors looking to clear closet space for their next-season wardrobes. "Club 21 customers understand what fashion can do for you," Tan says. "It can transform you, it can act as armor, it can be your secret tools when you go to work. By donating their clothes, people can actually share that capability. And that's very powerful."

The pre-loved clothing and accessories collected during Give To Save will then be sold at the Buy to Save event in December, a two-day designer fashion

PHOTOGRAPHY: THOMAS MANGIERI; ART DIRECTION: WINDY AULIA; STYLING: MAY KONG; CLUB 21 STYLE SERVICES; HAIR/MAKE-UP: JOHN LEE