

## The Strait Times

### S'pore shows travel the world

by Ong Sor Fern in Cannes

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*Homemade productions are snapped up at Cannes' media market*

Fann Wong is a Korean. That is, according to a caption accompanying a headshot of the Singapore artiste in the free periodical called MipTV Daily News which was circulated at Cannes' MipTV media market on Tuesday.

Fann, on her maiden trip to the posh French seaside town, brushes it off with a laugh, saying: "I think it's funny."

The public relations people from Singapore's Media Development Authority (MDA), however, pounced. They promptly complained to the editor of the magazine published by event organiser Reed Midem.

The very next day, there was a much bigger article on Page 16 of the same publication, this time hailing Fann as "Singapore's bright star" and hyping the release of her telemovie, House of Harmony.

The \$7 million co-production between Singapore production house Oak3 Films and German production company FFP New Media was launched for international sales on Tuesday. It is scheduled to be shown on German TV in September. Wearing a colourful gypsy skirt, the 34-year-old actress provided a touch of Singapore glamour amid the solemn black-suited business crowd at the Majestic Hotel located on the main strip of Rue Croisette.

On the case of mistaken identity, the MDA chairman, Dr Tan Chin Nam, says with a smile: "They made a mistake, and we turned it into an opportunity."

*Carpe diem*

MDA's motto at the five-day annual media industry event, which lasts from Monday to today, could well be "carpe diem", or "seize the day" in Latin.

The statutory board is leading the charge into the market with its biggest delegation ever, comprising 57 participants from 27 Singapore media companies and 10 personnel from MDA itself.

This is a jump from last year's contingent comprising 21 media companies. The companies attending this year include animation specialists Scrawl Studios and production house The Right Angle Media.

MipTV - the name is a French acronym meaning "the world's leading audiovisual and digital content market" - is one of the world's largest media markets, where major sales and deals are closed.

The event, held at the convention centre of the Palais des Festivals, drew nearly 1,500 companies from 61 countries.

The market's ruling mantra is content, content, and more content. This covers various platforms ranging from television and DVDs to the Internet and mobile phones, as well as every development stage from mere concepts to black catalogue titles.

With so many broadcasters looking for programming, Singapore producers are hawking their wares, hoping for a small slice of the international pie.

The global hunger for content was partially satiated by made-in-Singapore fare.

In a major coup, MediaCorp's TV12 Arts Central announced on Tuesday that it had sold 100 hours of locally produced programmes to American cable channel AZN Television (see other story).

These include the arts magazine show Art Nation, made by production house Mega Media, as well as Film Formation's mini-series The Singapore Short Story Project.

TV12's chief executive officer Alice Tan hails the sale as a triumph for Singapore's media industry: "It's a confidence booster to smaller production houses. It shows that Singapore content can travel."