

THEBAGPAGE / Nora Farhain

DAVE TAN

You wouldn't guess it from his pop-rock preferences these days but Dave Tan, frontman for local band Electrico, grew up surrounded by classical, jazz and blues tunes, thanks to his father, a Rediffusion DJ, and his grandfather, a violin teacher.

But Tan, 33, could never resist the lure of rock music. The Anglo-Chinese School alumnus taught himself how to play the song More Than Words by American rock band Extreme, on the guitar when he was 15. It wasn't all rock 'n' roll in the early days, though. He also honed his singing skills in his school's gospel choir.

After getting a degree in economics from the University of Oregon, he returned to Singapore and spent six years working in the television industry as a producer and presenter before deciding to be a full-time musician.

"I couldn't really do my best when I was juggling my work and my passion for music," he tells Urban.

He has not looked back since. Electrico has become one of the most prominent music acts in Asia, bagging numerous music awards.

He was even invited to pen this year's National Day song and perform it at the National Day Parade last month.

"Compared to other gigs that we have done, being part of the parade touched me a lot more. I could feel the patriotism in the air, knowing that everyone was there for one purpose - for our country."

Despite the song getting flak from some, Tan remains positive about the tune that took him two weeks to create. "I wanted the song to challenge people to think for themselves and to take ownership of the future," he says.

Aside from managing his band and writing music, he has his plate full with side projects like deejaying, freelancing as a producer, writing music for TV programmes and promotional trailers and doing voice-overs for radio commercials.

In his spare time, he plays with his pets (three cats and one dog), and is a recent convert to the adrenaline rush of go-carting.

"I think musicians are rich in many ways. We get to feel things that very few people get to experience, like performing in front of thousands of people. There is never a dull moment in my life. It is full of energy and that is priceless."

7 THINGS IN HIS BAG

1 Rayban aviator shades

I think I look better with sunglasses because I have these doozy eyes from too many late nights. I bought this because someone sat on my last pair.



2 Sandisk 8GB USB drive

I use this for work and it comes in handy when I need to transfer data like graphics or audio components. Just plug and play.



HIS BAG

My bag is from a brand called Gravis. I bought it in Bali to replace one that looked exactly the same, which was stolen at a party a few months ago.

3 iPod

This is something I cannot live without. It gives me music on-the-go. I have all sorts of genres in here, like jazz, blues, rock and electronica. I listen to classical tunes to help me fall asleep.



4 Mac Book

I do my deejaying with this laptop because all my music is in here. I carry it everywhere I go even if I don't need it because I feel naked without it.



5 Blackberry

I got this in May and what I like about it is the chat function. It allows me to chat with anyone for free. I chose this screensaver because I love nature and looking at it just makes me feel good.



6 Serato SL3

This gadget allows the DJ mixer to play music from my laptop so that I don't have to carry any CDs.



7 Lumix LX-3 digital camera

I bought this camera six months ago for \$650. I chose it for its compact size and it takes awesome pictures. I did my research and this was one of the favourites of photography enthusiasts.

