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PEOPLE

Mood shot (right) Nov 1992

Their first "hip" publicity shots, published in The Straits Times, saw them dressed in black and half-bathed in shadow.

Violinist Ng Yu Ying (far right) says: "We were always being asked if we were really classical musicians."

"But what are they supposed to look like anyway? We want to show that classical musicians are not stuffy."

"We're just normal, everyday people."



Gimmicks (left) Oct 2000

The four played "air-violin" outside Orchard Point to promote an upcoming concert.

Ng Yu Ying (in blue) says: "There were always detractors who said we were full of gimmicks – but that's how we marketed our music."

The quartet sold out the 883-seat Victoria Concert Hall several times and even attracted wildly-cheering teenage girls.

Toilet humour (right), Nov 2000

This promotional photo of the four in various states of undress was used for their single, Heavenly.

Cello player Leslie Tan (far left), posed with his underpants down and nether regions strategically covered by a cello.

He says: "I was wearing my underwear at first. But then who wears that while sitting on the toilet?"

Violinist Ang Chek Meng (second from right) says: "Three of us wore underwear under our towels."

"Leslie was the most adventurous."



Scrubs (left) July 2008

Tan Tock Seng Hospital released a CD featuring the quartet's string-laden sounds, which could be heard in the hospital's corridors and in operating theatres.

For this photo, they posed with Associate Professor Chia Sing Joo (second from right), a senior consultant urologist and the divisional chairman of surgery at the hospital.

Casual classics (left) Dec 2012

The Tang Quartet has worn everything from designer labels like Ermenegildo Zegna and Paul Smith, to polka dots and leopard prints.

At their Christmas concert last year, they wore Calvin Klein jeans and shirts with military designs.

Leslie Tan (seated) says: "At one point, I was dressed as a Christmas tree and Chek Meng was a squirrel."

PICTURES: ALOYSIUS LIM, NAC, TAN TOCK SENG HOSPITAL, ACTION THEATRE, SPH FILE

T'angs for the memories

The Tang Quartet turn 21 this year and celebrated with a concert at the School of the Arts last night. The four members – Ng Yu Ying, 45; Ang Chek Meng, 44; Lionel Tan, 47; and Leslie Tan, 49 – have made a name not just through their music but also for their looks and outrageous outfits – or lack of clothes. BENSON ANG reports

