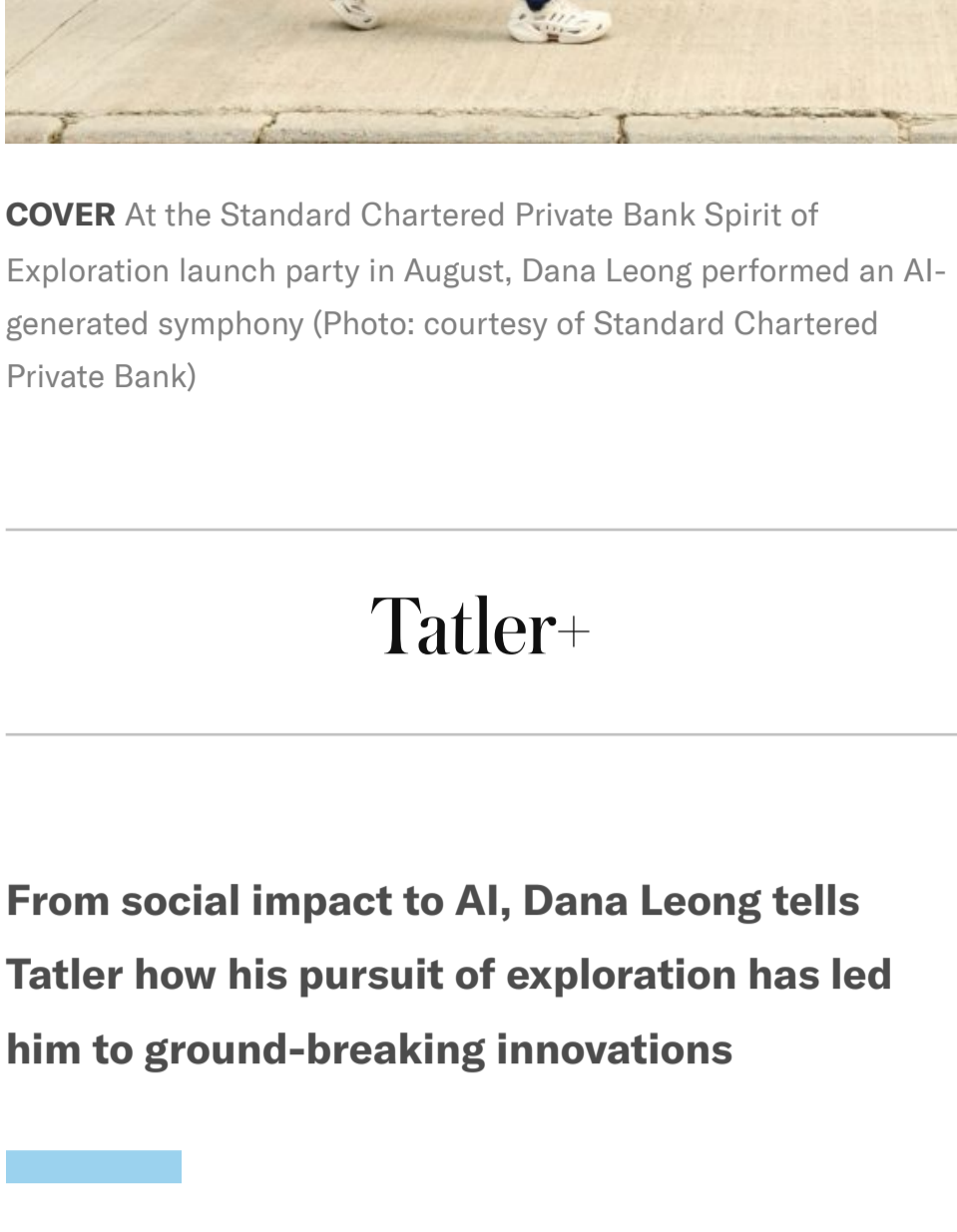


Grammy award-winning musician Dana Leong on pushing creative boundaries

By Tatler Hong Kong

Sep 19, 2023



COVER At the Standard Chartered Private Bank Spirit of Exploration launch party in August, Dana Leong performed an AI-generated symphony (Photo: courtesy of Standard Chartered Private Bank)

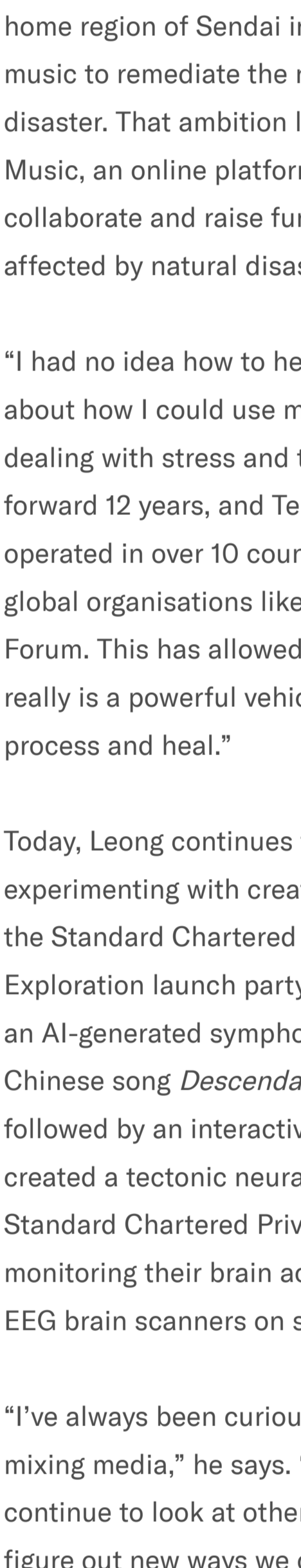
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From social impact to AI, Dana Leong tells Tatler how his pursuit of exploration has led him to ground-breaking innovations

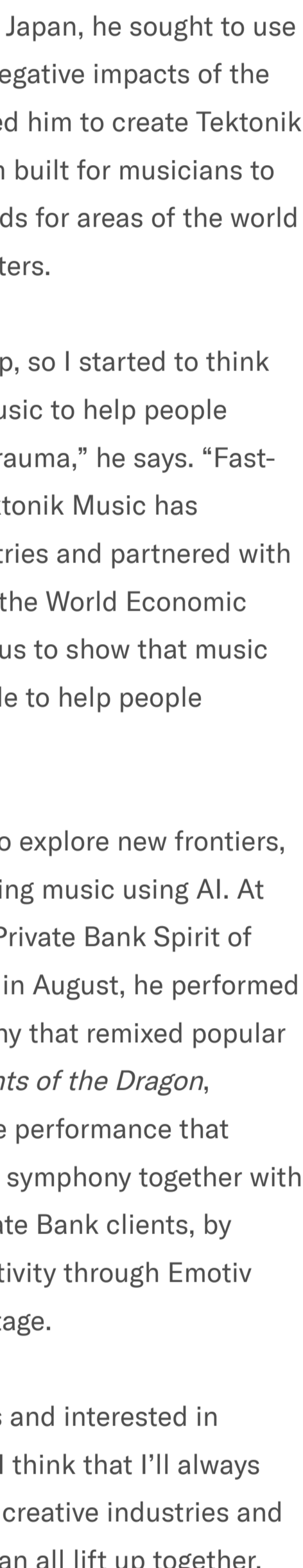
A two-time Grammy award-winning musician, composer and producer, Dana Leong is not only one of the world's best in his field, but also at the forefront of cross-disciplinary innovation.

For as long as he can remember, Leong has nurtured a deep curiosity for the things that surround him. From age one, he started playing the piano, developing a deeply inquisitive relationship with music. Later, he took on the cello and started experimenting with technology, using tape recorders, guitar pedals and speakers to push the boundaries of what he could create.

"I've always been very curious about how things worked in the world and how I could push them to the maximum," he says. "This curiosity about pushing boundaries has stayed with me throughout my lifetime, and continues to drive me, even to this day."



ABOVE Leong wearing the Emotiv EEG brain scanners (Photo: courtesy of Standard Chartered Private Bank)



ABOVE Leong and his infamous cello (Photo: courtesy of Standard Chartered Private Bank)

It's this eagerness to experiment that, later in life, has pushed Leong to lead ground-breaking musical initiatives. In 2011, when a major earthquake and tsunami struck his mother's home region of Sendai in Japan, he sought to use music to remediate the negative impacts of the disaster. That ambition led him to create Tektonik Music, an online platform built for musicians to collaborate and raise funds for areas of the world affected by natural disasters.

"I had no idea how to help, so I started to think about how I could use music to help people dealing with stress and trauma," he says. "Fast-forward 12 years, and Tektonik Music has operated in over 10 countries and partnered with global organisations like the World Economic Forum. This has allowed us to show that music really is a powerful vehicle to help people process and heal."

Today, Leong continues to explore new frontiers, experimenting with creating music using AI. At the Standard Chartered Private Bank Spirit of Exploration launch party in August, he performed an AI-generated symphony that remixed popular Chinese song *Descendants of the Dragon*, followed by an interactive performance that created a tectonic neural symphony together with Standard Chartered Private Bank clients, by monitoring their brain activity through Emotiv EEG brain scanners on stage.

"I've always been curious and interested in mixing media," he says. "I think that I'll always continue to look at other creative industries and figure out new ways we can all lift up together, create commonality and be creative across borders."

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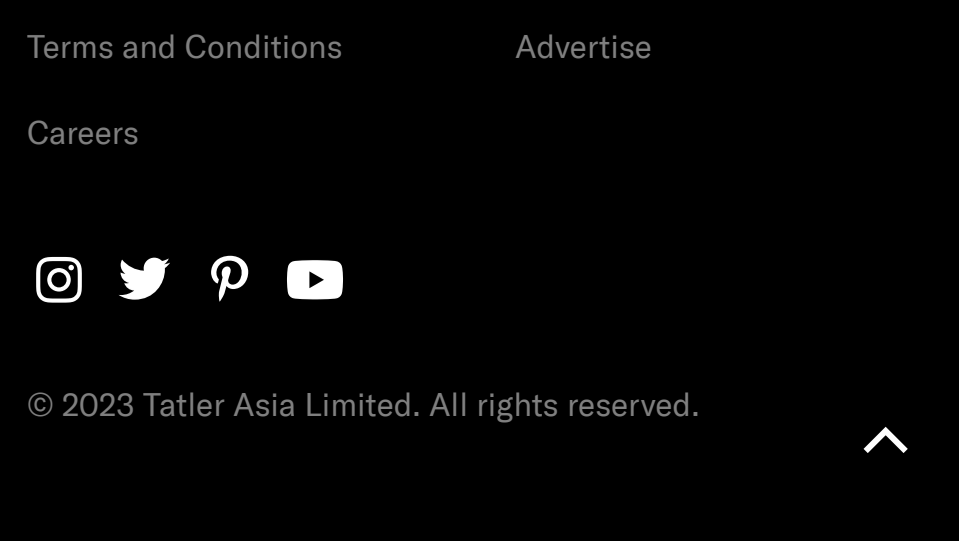
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