

## REDEFINING THE DANCE FLOOR

This 50-year-old American, who's made his mark on great party and music venues from the Limelight, Palladium, Club USA and mega-club Tunnel, will tell you in all sincerity that he came out of nowhere when the first entered the nightlife scene, "faking it" while helping a friend start a club in New York City.

The club turned out to be The Roxy, one of the most legendary places to party in the Big Apple in the 1980s.

Adelman later founded another world-famous club, Avalon Hollywood in Los Angeles, known for its legendary music acts, Tinseltown glamour, heaving parties, celebrity guests and pre-Oscar and post-Grammys revelries. Taking Avalon to Singapore, Adelman says, has been a way to extend and elevate the concept even further.

Located at Marina Bay Sands and rising out of the water, the club shares the South Crystal Pavilion with Pangaea, bringing an element of otherworldliness and glamour to the waterfront. "Avalon has always been three or four things happening at the same time. It's a concert venue, special events centre and a nightclub ... Since Avalon has always been in very unique spaces, the crystal pavilion was perfect for us."

Spanning 17,000 sq ft, Avalon's high-fashion interiors, glittering crystal decor and psychedelic light displays see crowds pushing 1,800 on big nights and top DJs and acts like Steve Aoki, Hard Rock Sofa and Audrey Gallagher gracing the turntables and stage.

Complementing the experience is the members-only lounge, Spider Room, where mixologist Ethan Leslie Leong has designed a range of exclusive premium classic cocktails. "We're upping the ante by doing elaborate, highly labour-intensive cocktails in a nightclub environment,



something you don't usually see," says Adelman, "Cocktailing is an art that has made its way out of clubs, so we try to bring it back at a place like Spider Room," he adds.

Despite having found success in LA, Adelman was still surprised by the reception to Avalon in Singapore. "We thought we'd have more out-of-town guests because of the hotels, but the local audience has been great."

Clubbers are also demanding, notes Adelman, who has noticed the rising expectations today. "People now compare anything they see here to anything else everywhere in the world. So it makes the job a lot harder," observed the tall Michigan-born club guru, who speaks with cheeky self-deprecating humour.

He chuckles when he recalls some of the feedback from Avalon clubbers. "I tell my friends back in LA that the best compliment I've gotten so far from Singapore is: 'Oh my gosh, it's not terrible'. I said: 'Thank you very much, we aim to please. We aim to be not horrendous'" he says, breaking into a crooked, playful grin.

He is looking to innovate further, to bring in different music, DJs and bands to keep things fresh and give clubbers the types of big music, big dance floor experiences that its sister club in Hollywood is renowned for. People want much more today, Adelman says, "(And) it's good. It forces clubs like Avalon to be creative and push the boundaries. So in the end, everyone wins."