

# *SCHOOL OF ARTS PRESS*



SUNWAY UNIVERSITY | JULY 2020





## ABOUT US

The School of Arts at Sunway University offers a variety of disciplines, ranging from Advertising and Public Relations to Design, Architecture, Film Production, Theatre and Music.

School of Arts Press (SOAP) is a monthly newsletter in which we provide information on student and staff achievements, past events as well as a notification platform for upcoming events.

## ISSUE HIGHLIGHTS

In this month's issue, SOAP highlights our award winning student films, end of semester showcase and happenings in SOA as we adapt to the "new normal".

**School of Arts Press** —

**Advisor/Editor:** Rachel Ong (SOA Arts Project Manager)

**Writers:** Sophia Alyssa & Annie (Nguyen Phuc Thao Nguyen)

**Design:** Sophia Alyssa

**Cover Photo:** Photo of Sheldon Chong (Left) and Alina Wong (Right) — Winners of the Jury Award for Student's Category at the 16th Mini Film Festival



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# MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

**"Wow!"**

**As I browsed through a draft of the SOAP Newsletter below, that was my reaction. Students and staff in the School of Arts have really accomplished a lot during our semester in MCO-Isolation.**

**It is great to read about all of these activities, from students who won awards to lecturers who presented performances and films of their work.**

**In particular, please click on the links to view the creative online versions of these works of art. I am fortunate to be surrounded by talent here at Sunway University!**

**Please forward this email to anyone who would be interested in receiving a monthly review of upcoming events and past successes in the SOA. Links to subscribe or unsubscribe are included at the bottom of the newsletter.**

**— Professor Donald Bowyer**

# UPCOMING EVENTS!



## **INDEX 2020 ONLINE SEMINAR 11 TO 12TH AUGUST**

INDEX is an annual event by Petra Christian University's Interior Design Department as a platform to showcase Final Projects by Interior Design students as they gain more opportunity to delve into the industry.

Sunway University's Dr. Laila Haidar and Amirul Idlan will be conducting free online seminars for Session 1 of this event.

Click [here](#) to register!





Photo Source: Azmyl Yunor's YouTube Channel

## LORI HANTU: AZMYL YUNOR'S MUSIC VIDEO PREMIERE

Azmyl Yunor is not slowing down in his music endeavours anytime soon. This month, the DFPA senior lecturer has premiered the music video for "Lori Hantu" (Ghost Truck) – the first single of John Bangi Blues, Azmyl's upcoming album.

Similar to his music video for "Let It Come", "Lori Hantu" was a collaboration with one of his film degree students Graeme Tan, as a continuation of his personal initiative to creatively engage with film students, filmmakers, and artistes.

The music video was premiered on TAPAUlockdown, an online music show on the 24th of July 2020 as well as on Azmyl's YouTube channel. Watch Lori Hantu [here](#)!

Read more about it [here](#)!



Azmyl Yunor @ Azmyl Yusof is a senior lecturer in the School of Arts. He is also an independent English and Malay language singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist, and writer. He is a journalist and filmmaker by training.



Photo Source: School of Arts



## CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SHOWCASE ON FACEBOOK WATCH PARTY

At the end of every semester, the Contemporary Music (Audio Technology) Program under the Department of Film and Performing Arts would hold a music showcase to review the final works of students produced throughout the semesters. For this semester, instead of the face-to-face showcase, the event was streamed live online over Facebook Watch Party, adapting to the "new normal". The music showcase took place on 20th June, and was hosted by Ms. Christine Yun-May Yong, Programme Leader of CMAT.

Throughout the 1.5 hours, CMAT students presented eargasmic tunes. Many put up video clips and slides to accompany their musical arrangements and compositions.

The Applied Musicianship students impressed the audience with their excellent skills in band transcription of contemporary works and brought us fabulous performances.

For a successful concert, our CMAT students and teaching staff put in a lot of effort into every performance. The educators could not hide their pride and satisfaction towards their students' work for having to complete the semester fantastically, despite the challenges everyone faced with the abrupt switch to online teaching and learning.

When the usual practice of live musical performance is non-existent, students had to record and film their parts separately at home, and then produce a recording and music videos. Nonetheless, students presented an array of good work.

Stay updated on the School of Arts future events by following our Facebook and Instagram pages!





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SOAP | 5

Photo Source: And So Forth



JULY 2020

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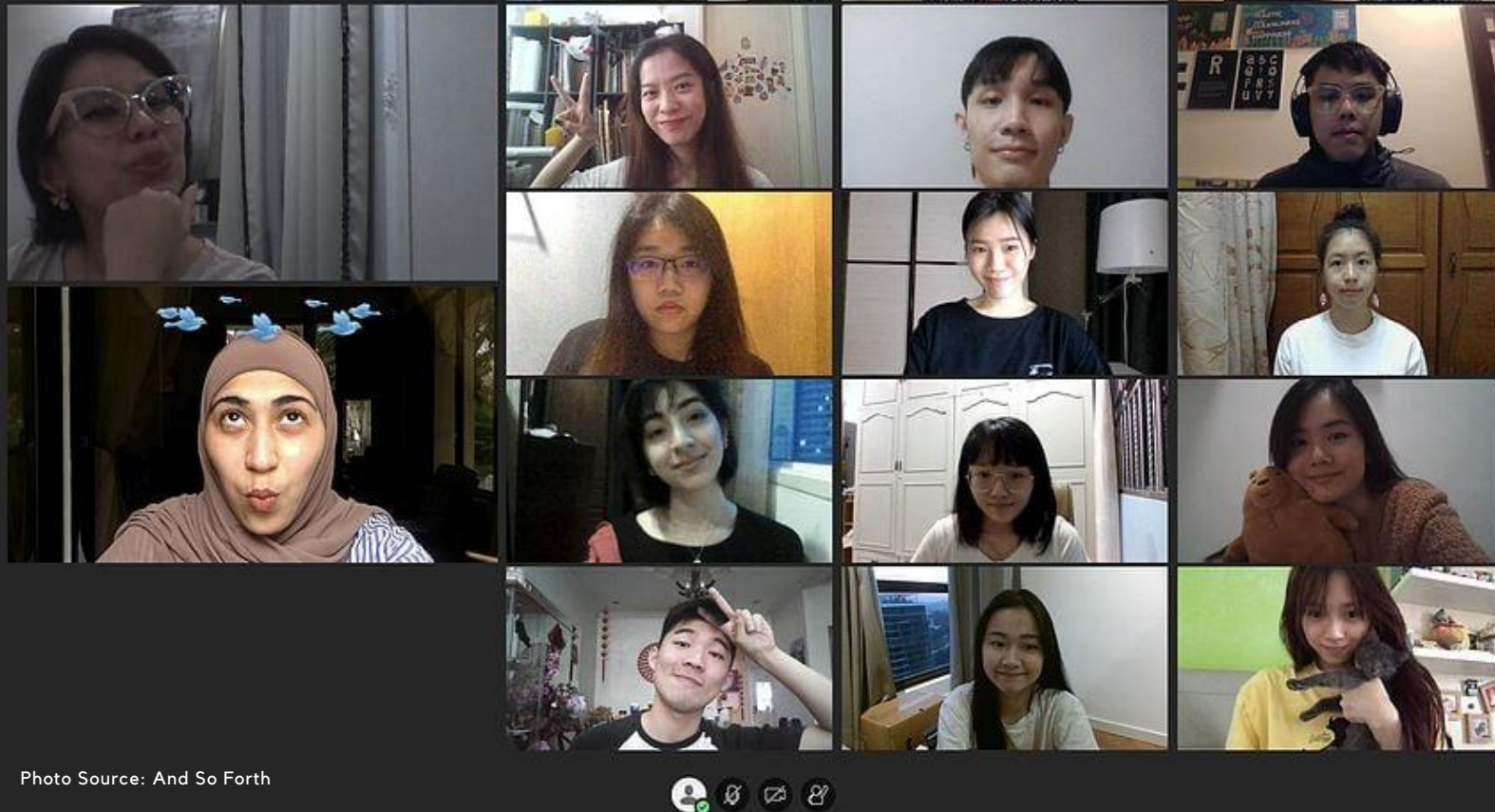
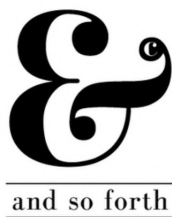


Photo Source: And So Forth



SUNWAY UNIVERSITY  
BA (HONS) DESIGN  
COMMUNICATION  
SHOWCASE  
JPT/BPP(U)  
(N/214/6/0172/PA8091)11/21



On the 27th of July 2020, 15 final year students from the Bachelor of Arts (Hons) Design Communication programme presented works for their Class of 2020 graduation showcase! The body of their work is said to be the legacy of their growth and what they have learned so far in their university lives' journey. This showcase encapsulates all their relentless hard work as they move forward onto life after university. Hence, the title of their showcase, "And So Forth".

And So Forth is part of the cohort's FYP and is the result of a 3-month research where the students conducted cultural probes, interviews and/or surveys to build their thesis and proposals with over 30 designs for their Final Year Project outcome. With the collected data and materials, they put together a visual concept. What was initially intended for a tangible outcome, the project was presented online in digital media form, adapting to the "new normal". The direction of these projects are free for each of the individual students to lead, with requirements that they are uniquely special and with market potential.

Visit And So Forth [here!](#)

Watch the students presentations [here!](#)

**SCHOOL OF ARTS  
AWARD-WORTHY  
FILM DEPARTMENT  
@ UNIMAS FILM FESTIVAL**



# The School of Arts would like to congratulate Sheldon Chong & Alina Wong for winning the Jury Award for Student's Category at the 16th Mini Film Festival





# WITH LOVE, ELAINE.



**“Solid, visual storytelling, using graphic matches and delicate editing of poignant visuals”**

**Prof. Sari Dalena, Jury of #16thMFF from the Philippines**

Photo Source: "With Love, Elaine" via YouTube



School of Arts would like to congratulate our Digital Film Production students - The directors Alina Wong and Sheldon Chong, as well as their team for winning the Jury Award under Student's Category in the 16th Mini Film Festival's MAS See Films. Being the longest running film festivals in Malaysia which is held annually by the Cinematography Programme, Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, the festival is an initiative to encourage Malaysians to watch more local film and also to inspire aspiring young filmmakers to make one.

Sheldon and Alina brought to the competition a beautiful short movie called "With love, Elaine", which tells a story of a devout elderly housewife who is grief-stricken and struggles financially. To make ends meet, she sells local wafers in hopes of nurturing her bedridden husband and disabled son.

Alina shared with us how the idea for this short film was sparked. It happened accidentally when they (she and Sheldon) read a news article titled 'Composer Ooi Eow Jin's wife touched by support'. After getting to know Datin Elaine Khaw, they were inspired to tell her story about her past and her present.

Subsequently, they decided to form a team to make a short movie based on this real, inspirational story. Through this film, they would like to honour her memories, struggles, and her strength as a wife, mother, and with everything. "With love, Elaine" is made as their love letter to her. In addition to that, our filmmakers desire to emphasize the importance of persistence in life and the power of unconditional love.

Watch the film [here!](#)



# TOK AYAH



Photo Source: "Tok Ayah" via YouTube



Photo Source: Aldina Azani

Aldina Lydia Nabilah Binti Azani, 22, a usually bubbly girl, can only stare, dead-eyed, as her family clears out the relics of the past from her estranged grandfather, Dato Seri Panglima Mohamed Daud Bin Abu Bakar, 82's once lively home. Stumbling upon dusted records and photos sprinkled with cobwebs, they uncovered a hidden past. Gathering all the pieces, Aldina is set to uncover more of her grandfather's past as a war hero, father and grandfather.

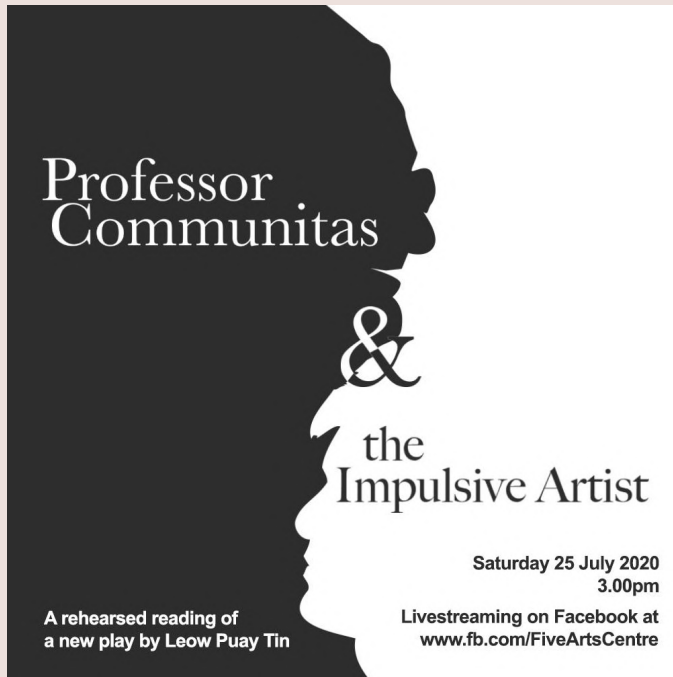
Dealing with youths, shackled at the ankles to the demands of the ever-changing world, the neglect of the elderly in our ecosystem and the dissipating memory for those who fought to bring freedom, it is the filmmaker's race to exhume the stories of unsung heroes before time washes over them.

Set in modern-day Kuala Lumpur, *BULLETS ON THE SHELF* is a hybrid between participatory, narrative and reflexive short documentary to prove that it's never too late to appreciate those around you.

Inspired by the exquisite cinematography from *Notes Of Blindness* (2016) and interwoven with multiple points of view told through interviews inspired in *Thrilla in Manila* (2008), it is a story about the hardships experienced by those that lived through tragic pasts like in *Absent Without Leave* (2016). This short film was also submitted to the 16th Mini Film Festival

Click here to [watch!](#)





## “PROFESSOR COMMUNITAS & THE IMPULSIVE ARTIST”

A REHEARSED READING OF A NEW PLAY BY ASSOC. PROF. LEOW PUAY TIN

As one of Malaysia's most performed and acclaimed playwrights, Leow Puay Tin is in the process of writing several new plays between 2019 and 2021. These plays include "Three Children", "A Modern Woman Called Ang Tau Mui", and "Family". Between 2019 and 2021, the readings of her work-in-progress plays have been (and will be) held at KOTAK, Five Arts Centre, and streamed live online.

Last Saturday (25th of July), Five Arts Centre presented Leow Puay Tin's new play, "Professor Communitas & the Impulsive Artist", streamed live over their Facebook page. It was supported by the Cultural Economy Development Agency (CENDANA) and Yayasan Sime Darby. This work-in-progress rehearsed reading was performed by Faiq Syazwan Kuhiri & Imri Nasution.

Professor Communitas & the Impulsive Artist is set as a weekend workshop for arts practitioners and focuses on the encounter of two main characters: the participant and the trainer. Below is the synopsis of the play by Five Arts Centre:

*"The participant is a happy-go-lucky young man who is feeling stuck as a freelance actor and whose girlfriend is having second thoughts about marrying him. The trainer, who breaks all the rules about being nice to people at workshops, is an aging professor who wants to teach people like him a disciplined approach to making great works of art. He is also a compulsive story-teller who helps his students to "makan teori" (eat theory) by bundling it into the real-life stories he tells in class. Suspicious of anything that could make him lose his freedom as an artist and an individual, the actor resists the older man's teachings. But along the way, he also begins to wonder if he isn't missing out on something."*



After the performance, an open discussion about the play and the aspects of performance with the playwright and performers was hosted by Mark Teh, a director/curator/researcher and also a part-time tutor in SOA. Leow Puay Tin shared that this play was inspired by a workshop that she attended 10 years ago, where she met a Professor there who shared inspiring insights about the aspects of performance through theories. She explains that this play is part of her strategy to spend time on performance making with younger actors and directors; to cultivate a less hierarchical and more collaborative approach to performance making; and to find a more sustainable alternative in developing new performance texts. The actors also shared their experience about how they navigated from performing on stage to in front of a computer over Zoom.

Click [here](#) for the gallery of Dr Leow's past works.



Leow Puay Tin is an Associate Professor in the Department of Film and Performing Arts of School of Arts. She also creates texts for many performance that have been staged by prominent directors and theatre companies in Malaysia and Singapore.



Photo Source: Music Society of Myanmar

## MUSIC COLLABORATION WITH MUSIC SOCIETY OF MYANMAR PROJECT

School of Arts' Senior Lecturer Dr. Andrew Filmer was invited to participate in one of Myanmar Music Society projects, where he performed "Conversations", a piece composed by Sulwyn Lok along with 35 other Festival artists from 8 different countries in a virtual concert! Besides that, he was also invited to give online viola masterclasses and also asynchronous learning to a student from Mandalay.

The Music Society of Myanmar is a non-profit association that presents concerts, masterclasses, workshops, seminars and a yearly festival and competition.

Click [here](#) to rewatch the concert.

Click [here](#) to rewatch the masterclass.



# THE PASSION OF AN INDIE ROCK SINGER-SONGWRITER /STUDENT.

By Amelia Ong, Third Year Student in the Department  
of Communication



### **“It’s the passion that never dies out”**

says Adam Ariff, a student from the School of Arts and a singer-songwriter of a local Indie Rock band known as LXCID (pronounced as Lucid). He is a man of great passion and his will to narrate his story through the Indie Rock genre is truly inspiring and note-worthy. I’ve seen him performed live several times and I have to say it was mesmerizing yet relaxing. The experience is akin to floating in an unknown universe, where one is able to freely imagine the impossible.



Adam engaging with the crowd during his performance at Bad Boys Bar, Sunway Geo on the 22nd November 2019 . Photo Source: @adamarff on Instagram.

“It felt natural”, he says as he explains the birth of his passion for singing and songwriting. All it took was a strum on his guitar and that’s when he knew music is his passion. Adam embarrassingly admits that he experienced a typical singer-songwriter phase during high school where he just wrote and sang whatever he can. This drives him to take to the stage to perform and he has been performing since 2014. He has always felt musically inclined. To him, music is a safe space for him to tell his story as he could express whatever he wants.

As a teen, his time was mostly restricted to studies non-related to music. He decided to pursue his passion in music and enrolled in BA (Hons) Contemporary Music (Audio Technology) at Sunway University. There had been doubts regarding his decision, of course. But with a strong drive and passion for music, he felt nothing but satisfaction with his choice of programme. Although there have been many challenges while pursuing music, at the end of the day, “when something good happens, it’s really good; and when something bad happens, it’s not that bad” he added.

So why Indie Rock? The passionate singer-songwriter loves crafting his music with meaningful lyrics that arouse emotional feelings and is also enthusiastic about telling his life experiences. The Indie Rock genre allows him to do so by layering the pieces together to ‘form a bigger picture’, that is, his story. Since the Indie Rock genre is interpreted differently by each individual, this encourages him to create music freely within that genre. Adam’s mainly inspired by Alex Turner, the lead singer of a renowned Indie Rock band, Arctic Monkeys. “The way he writes the song and uses the words, it’s beautiful.”, he said. A Taiwanese disco grunge band, No Party Cao Dong recently became an influence to his music too.

Although Malaysians are starting to appreciate all forms of art and music, Indie Rock is still not widely received. Nevertheless, Adam sees this as an opportunity rather than a challenge. With bigger than life ambitions in store for him, he aspires to reach out to those who strive to discover new music every day. In fact, this determined artist would like to share with Malaysians that local Indie Rock music can be just as good as the international ones or even better.





LXCID Band performing at Atas By Bijan FX, 23rd February 2020. Photo Source: @lxcidband on Instagram.

Through his course at Sunway University, he has learned how to keep up with that effort. The course offers everything there is to know in the music industry: from the fundamentals of music to the technical aspects of producing and performing live. He is thankful for his supportive and sporty lecturers as they're the reason Adam enjoys his classes. His experience in Contemporary Music has also led him to understand the importance of listening. Being in a class filled with students of different personalities and backgrounds, it's no surprise they each have an individual musical style. Hence, it's only crucial to understand their favourite genres and learn from each other.

Soon to graduate, Adam is optimistic about opportunities that lie ahead. Because in life, it's not about following just a planned path, it's about opening the different doors that will guide us to our vision. Adam emphasizes;

**"It could be as simple as, in 2 years, I wanna play at a bigger stage, and I do believe in manifesting stuff. If you think about it a lot, you'll eventually wanna do something about it."**

With an ambitious mind, Adam envisions reaching a greater height than he already has and to perfect his craft and songwriting skills while staying true to himself as a Rock Star.

As a result of his fiery passion, he's proud of how far he has come. Despite the struggles, he has it in his shoes to prove to everyone that he's got it too. We can all agree that being in the arts field, there'll be times of frustration about our work, be it about our paintings, films or even assignments. But Adam reminds us to;

**"be kinder to yourself and breathe. Don't beat yourself up over things you can't change. If it doesn't work for you now, then why not work on it tomorrow?"**



*This feature writing was a collaborative effort between the School of Arts Press and Dr. Catherine Lee to publish the works of Public Relations students from the Department of Communication. This piece by Amelia Ong was submitted as an assignment for the PR Writing class under Dr. Catherine Lee.*



# **LIFE AFTER SOA SERIES: PURSUING DESIGN AS A FREELANCER**

**Featuring Eleanor Lim**







Photo Source: Eleanor Lim

Eleanor Lim Hooi Ling, otherwise known as elliholi on Instagram is a 2019 BA (Hons) Design Communication graduate who is now an established freelance graphic designer and calligraphy artist that has worked with names like Clarins, Jo Malone London, and Kami Design.

Eleanor shared that as a student in the School of Arts, it had taught her to be independent in searching for resources and learning how to make the impossible possible. Having been with Sunway since the completion of her Diploma in Graphic and Multimedia Design, she is very well acquainted with the campus and has since made many wonderful memories while she was there. The challenges she faced as she worked on various projects has also grown the skills of her craft, acknowledging the supportive DAD lecturers who have uplifted her to learn and try something new.

Eleanor fondly recalls about her 2018 Bangkok school trip that she and her coursemates went with their lecturers, Ms Bibi and Ms Maslisa. "It was my first time travelling outside of Malaysia, so it was very inspiring [getting to go] around the city, visit art markets and galleries". It was a trip that enabled her to come home with a "head full of ideas". An overseas school trip isn't the only thing that Eleanor gets to fondly look back to. She added that the weekly consultations she had with Ms Bibi and Ms Maslisa were a lot of fun for her. "Sitting at a cafe right outside the university... and discussing ideas even beyond class hours motivated me to push myself further". Eleanor is grateful for the dedication the two lecturers put into encouraging their students to come up with their most creative ideas and simultaneously pushing them to be as self-sufficient as possible.

Now as a freelancer, Eleanor often involves herself in design projects with various clients. "Three days a week, I work at Mossery.co" she adds, a homegrown startup company dedicated to designing thoughtful stationery and tools that help organise thoughts and projects. Eleanor isn't particularly new to Mossery.co. She has previously worked for them during her internship period. As she enjoyed her time there, she decided to go back and work with them more frequently "they thankfully welcomed me back!".



Photo Source: Eleanor Lim  
Eleanor's work for Mossery.co





Photo Source: Eleanor Lim



Photo Source: Eleanor Lim

Eleanor's decision to freelance wasn't an easy choice. She admitted that "it was difficult and scary... but I chose to pursue it as I think design is not limited to doing graphic design for a single company, and freelancing allows me to learn a lot from different clients and their field of expertise". Eleanor expressed her thanks to the community at the School of Arts as "a lot of what I do today would not have been possible without the skills I have learned during my time in SOA". Through the willingness of continued learning and resourcefulness, she had gained many technical skills from her tutorial lessons, and most importantly, "I learned the value of pushing myself to go to the extra mile and learn something new every day".

Eleanor looks forward to working more closely with her clients and to one day set up her own design studio. "For now, I'm working hard to learn as much as I can, while adapting to how the pandemic is changing our lifestyles".

More on Eleanor

Follow her on [Instagram](#)

Visit her on [weebly!](#)

**"Life After SOA" is a series of the newsletter that features School of Arts alumni and their stories about being a student in SOA and life after SOA.**