



School of Arts Press

March 2019 Edition

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. We are preparing a new generation of students and researchers in the domain of creative digital media (CDM), merging core attributes of the arts, sciences, humanities, media and technology.

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!

MESSAGE FROM THE DEAN

One of the most rewarding activities here at Sunway University is the Community Service class that all students complete as part of their studies. We are very proud of the difference that Sunway students make in our surrounding society. To learn more about these projects, check out the story below about what our film and music students did this past semester.

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.

Sincerely,
Don Bowyer, Dean
Sunway University School of Arts

UPCOMING SOA EVENTS

Brightfeather Music in Malaysia
- 4-5 April 2019

For more information on SOA events, contact Sammy Chong at
sammyc@sunway.edu.my

STUDENT AND STAFF ACHIEVEMENTS

Theatre Nominations

Theatre Lecturer Kelvin Wong has received 2 nominations for the 16th BOH Cameronian Arts Awards including:

- Best Direction for The Bee by Hideki Noda & Colin Teevan presented by Theatresauce
- Best Set Design The Bee by Hideki Noda & Colin Teevan presented by Theatresauce

Congratulations!

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Community Service through Film & Music



"Bop to the Top Productions" with children from Yayasan Sunbeams Home.

Students from the BA (Hons) Contemporary Music (Audio Technology) and BA (Hons) Digital Film Production in the January 2019 semester were involved in three comprehensive projects for their community service module. The team "Bop to the Top Productions" worked together with Yayasan Sunbeams Home, a non-governmental, self-supporting multi-racial foundation (Chinese, Indian, & Orang Asli) founded by Ps. Alvin and Ps. Lucy Tan. The team worked with children on both film and music projects including workshops, classes, film study material for children, a recording at the music studio, and a dance music video that will be featured in the organisation's upcoming 25th Anniversary Gala Dinner in 2020.

The second group worked with TENAGANITA, a Malaysian human rights organisation dedicated to assisting, building, advocating and protecting migrants, refugees, women and children from exploitation, abuse, discrimination, slavery and human trafficking. The students produced a five-minute documentary to be used by the organization for fundraising and to promote their activities. The team did a screening of the documentary at Sunway University, a Fundraising Bazaar at Sunway College Boulevard, and the collection of sponsorship funds from anonymous donations. The third group worked in the "I Want to Be Project" together with Promise Home, an organization established to help underprivileged Orang Asli children by providing them opportunities for education. The team helped Orang Asli children by introducing them to the art of film and music making through workshops and showing them the prospects of these career paths.

CRCDM and Google Arts and Cultural Institute



CRCDM exhibition in San Francisco.

As a result of the CRCDM research-creation exhibition and participation at the Digital Heritage Congress 2018 in San Francisco last October, we caught the interest of the GOOGLE Arts and Culture Institute. Our exhibit was right beside theirs. In follow-up CRCDM further shared some of the digital heritage content we have created over the past four years, which lead to the signing of the agreement. With this in place CRCDM will have a presence on the Arts and Culture platform and to access to GOOGLE technology for creating and showcasing Malaysian heritage content, with worldwide recognition. We are currently designing our first exhibition. More news to follow.

The Google Cultural Institute, including Google Arts & Culture is an initiative that partners with museums, archives and other cultural institutions to bring the world's cultural heritage online. With free tools and technologies, partners can showcase their cultural content making it more widely accessible to a global audience. Google's Cultural Institute is a non-profit platform and is intended to showcase Partners' cultural content on a non-commercial basis.

Trinity College London Event

On February 25, one hundred music teachers gathered at Sunway University's Gallery for the launch of the new diploma syllabus for Trinity College London's external music examinations. U-Jin Lim, Regional Academic

Consultant, provided a brief overview of the syllabus and the examinations, before connecting to Hong Kong-based Terence Lam, Trinity's Academic Vice President for Asia via video conferencing.

Following this was a presentation on the art of performing, facilitated by violist Dr Andrew Filmer with the assistance of pianist Samuel Tan, from Sunway University's School of Arts. Using selections of music for viola and piano, they illustrated what it takes to be a performer - not just playing notes, but creating a convincing interpretation, thinking about how a soloist collaborates with a pianist, and the visual aspects of a performance that add energy to a concert stage. Dr Andrew also related this to pedagogy, and how building communities of students and treating masterclasses as guided learning processes can help build up a new generation of performers.



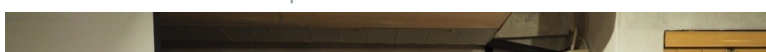
Dr Andrew Filmer with Mr Samuel Tan.



Music teachers who attended the event.

Music Performance Students Field Trip: Time Travel

Sunway music performance students Iris Yap and Philip Law went on a field trip as part of their music history studies to have a first-hand encounter with the grandfather of the modern-day piano. Called the harpsichord, the instrument has plucked rather than hammered strings, producing an effervescent quality to Baroque music. The event was titled Revelations, by period music ensemble Wicked Music People, and included a concert, demonstrations, and the opportunity for members of the public to try out the instrument. While not the first harpsichord in Malaysia, it is the first one constructed in this country, by U-En Ng, Lee Hai Lin, and School of Arts lecturer Andrew Filmer. Also at the event was Samuel Tan, programme leader for the music performance programme, and soprano Chaing Yi Ling, who sang at the concert and teaches part-time at the School of Arts.





Students Iris Yap and Phillip Law with lecturers Andrew Filmer, Samuel Tan and Chaing Yi Ling.



First harpsichord constructed in Malaysia.

Guest Speakers for MA in Visual Communication and Media Studies

Students of the Master of Arts in Visual Communication and Media Studies had the opportunity to interact with three industry practitioners as part of the Professional Practice and Ethics course - Ms Tehmina Kaoosji, a freelance broadcast journalist; Ms Anna Har, head of Freedom Film Network, an organisation that promotes and supports social filmmaking; and Ms Suzy Sulaiman, a trans-disciplinary artist.

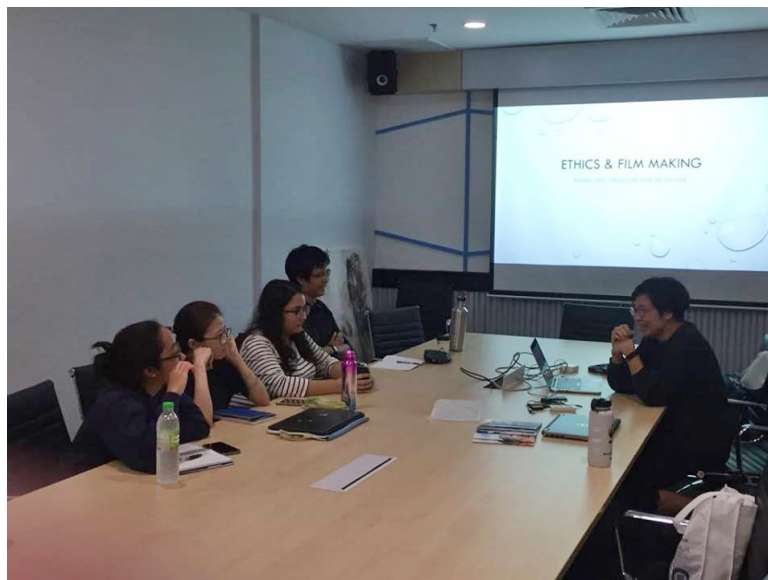
Ms Kaoosji shared her experience as a host and producer of hard talk shows and podcasts for Astro, Bernama News Channel, Maxman Studios and New

Naratif, and the challenges of being a professional journalist in the field. She also discussed the challenges that media practitioners face in “Malaysia Baru” such as media ownership and press freedom, ethics and transparency as well as living wage and workplace sexual harassment.



Ms Kaoosji sharing her experience on hosting and producing talk shows and podcasts, as well as challenges a professional journalist will face.

Meanwhile, Ms Anna Har recounted her journey on the growth of Freedom Film Fest (FFF) in 2003 as a platform for filmmakers and activists to showcase and advocate their films and causes to the Malaysian public. She discussed with the students on the problems that filmmakers and activists encounter on the ground while creating their films and examining human rights issues that may challenge existing social norms.

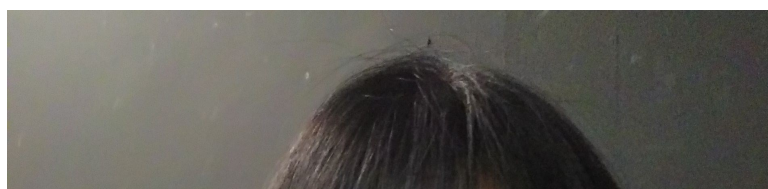


Ms Anna Har sharing her experience and discussing with students on problems that filmmakers and activists encounter.

Lastly, Ms Suzy Sulaiman, introduced the students into the world of art, architecture and media technology. As an artist and curator, she is often commissioned for festivals and events as her artworks engage the public sphere and physical context. She explained the dilemmas she faced as a curator for various exhibitions as well as her practice as an artist in Malaysia. The students had an interesting time learning from the speakers about their professional life experience.

INTRODUCING SOA STAFF AND STUDENT

Leow Puay Tin





Associate Professor Leow Puay Tin is a senior lecturer with the Department of Performance & Media (DPM), co-heading with a colleague for about two years, and then heading it on her own until she stepped down mid-2016 to become an academic. During that period, from only having a single diploma programme (Diploma in Performing Arts, DPA) with an initial graduating cohort of just four students, DPM has grown a lot, especially with the development of three new degree programmes in Contemporary Music, Music Performance and Digital Film Production.

Aside from being an academic, Ms Leow is a playwright, performance text curator and performer. Some of her acclaimed works include *The Three Children* (1984), *Ang Tau Mui* (1993), and *Family* (1995). Last year was a significant year for Ms Leow as she had the opportunity to take part in the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the 1998 landmark production of *Three Children* in Singapore. In December 2016, An organisation of theatre practitioners in Japan, called Ajokai (Asian Women in Performing Arts Collective) expressed their interest in performing their rendition of Ms Leow's play *Family*. The background of the story was about a Chinese immigrant family. Some Ajokai members visited Malaysia and Singapore to do the field research for the play, and they invited Ms Leow to Japan to give a talk on Malaysian theatre as well as to talk about her play with the director and actors. In 2017, Ms Leow received a grant from the Japan Foundation which allowed her to stay in Japan for six months to carry out research on site-specific performances.

Coming back to the School of Arts, Ms Leow mentioned that she will be teaching Theatre Practices in the March Semester to the new intake of DPA students. She hopes to make the class more performance-based, so that students will be able to experience theatre for themselves. She said she enjoys being a fulltime academic as she is given space to create and think. Aside from the range of facilities provided, School of Arts is fully supportive with experimenting new ideas as well. Ms Leow also mentioned that the university focuses on providing quality education, encouraging staff development, and acquisition of new skills. Ms Leow hopes that in the future, the School of Arts will continue to grow and develop in areas such as literature, dance, creative writing. With that, the school will soon become more integrated and take on an interdisciplinary approach in teaching.

Chester Toh





Though born and raised in Kuala Lumpur, Chester is a Sarawakian student pursuing the degree of BA(Hons) in Communication from the Department of Communication (formally named as Department of Communication and Liberal Arts). Chester is known to be the optimist around his family and friends. With his cheerful character, Chester has always been passionate about photography, wanting to capture every happy moment around him, and making memories that can be visualised.

As Chester said, “School of Arts is the place where fun and academic meets”. He also claims that the lecturers and staffs in School of Arts had always been helpful, providing the best education and services for students, and thus creating a comfortable learning environment for students like him.

Throughout the two years Chester spent in School of Arts, he had the chance to be the Camp Leader for Malaysia’s largest and highest fund Famine 30 camp. “We had 1000 participants and raised about RM99,000 of funds for the need of poor families in South Africa”, said Chester. Being the Camp Leader was a voluntary job, but Chester dedicated his full effort and time for it regardless. With that, not only was the camp a huge success, he was also able to score flying colours in his academics, proving that he is able to balance both academics and extra curricular activities well.

In addition to being the Camp Leader for Malaysia largest and highest fund Famine 30 camp, Chester is also the current President of Sunway Communication & Networking club (SCN). This club is a 3-year-old club dedicated to the Department of Communication. Though it is currently a departmental club, they strive to be registered under Sunway University/College Club & Society. Being the president of SCN, Chester aims to develop a strong foundation for SCN, and to continue organising various events, honouring the club’s achievements. Representing the Sunway Communication & Networking club, Chester “invites you to be a part of us as we witness the growth of the club and join the fun in experiencing the impossible becoming possible”.

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