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SUNWAY
UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF ARTS PRESS NEWSLETTER

we're back!

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April was an exciting month indeed!

We welcomed all incoming School of Arts students as the SOA family continues to expand. We've had a number of different guests visiting us including Dr. Mario Santoso from Universitas Pelita Harapan who gave a piano masterclass on interpretation and artistic decisions; Prof. Asit Roy and Prof. Podminee from Rajshahi University, Bangladesh, who offered a lecture demonstration on Hindustani Classical Music; and the duo "les éclats du son" with Sebastian Voltz (pianist and composer) and Max Riefer (percussionist, conductor) from Universität zu Lübeck.

Students and staff were also actively involved in the Planetary Health Annual Meeting (PHAM 2024) and the Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Universities Summit 2024, offering exhibitions, performances, and managing the audio, video, and other managerial logistics for both events. We start the semester on a high note and look forward to more possibilities for creativity, collaborations, and friendships.

Have a great semester, everyone, and *remember to make it count!*

Emerging as the Victor: Liew Bak Fai winning the Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Berhad (PUNB) UniChallenge 2023

On December 18, 2023, Advertising and Branding student Liew Bak Fai won the Perbadanan Usahawan Nasional Berhad (PUNB) UniChallenge 2023. This collaborative program between PUNB, 4As Malaysia, and Sunway University's School of Arts provided students with real-world branding and consultancy experiences, fostering innovation across industries.

PUNB UniChallenge assesses students' business management and presentation skills before a panel of judges, including PUNB representatives. By simulating real-world challenges, this program equips students for success in entrepreneurial and marketing ventures.

Drawing on five years of barista expertise, Liew Bak Fai introduced "Brew You," a customisable coffee venture spotlighting Malaysia's Liberica coffee heritage. The award ceremony took place on February 15, 2024, at The Everly Hotel, Putrajaya.



Assoc. Prof. Dr Zuhaili represented Bak Fai at the award ceremony.

Photo credits: Assoc. Prof. Dr Zuhaili Akmal Ismail

Engagements in Singapore: Assoc. Prof. Dr Andrew Filmer's Contributions from the Department of Film & Performing Arts



Recording session at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music of the National University of Singapore.



"Introduction to Baroque Music" workshop to string orchestra students at Nanyang Girls' High School.

Photo credits: Assoc. Prof. Dr Andrew Filmer

On February 27th, Assoc. Prof. Dr Andrew Filmer led an engaging "Introduction to Baroque Music" workshop for 57 string orchestra students at Nanyang Girls' High School. Together with orchestra director Mr. Lim Soon Lee, he conducted a masterclass for our Music Performance students in late 2023, exploring baroque bows, performance settings, and the impact of sound colours and phrasing on Bach's compositions, particularly through Bach's 'Brandenburg' Concerto No. 3.

Subsequently, Dr Andrew collaborated with composer and zhongruan player Sulwyn Lok to record 'Breaking Free' at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, National University of Singapore, on February 28th. This marked the culmination of a year-long project, which has already produced two conference papers, two journal publications, and a live premier for guitar and viola at the International Viola Congress at Mahidol University in mid-2023.

Additionally, Dr Andrew rehearsed with the Concordia Quartet during his trip, enriching cultural exchange and collaboration in the performing arts.

Dr Fiona Wong and Her Students' Engaging Participations and Contributions to SUCO's 2024 Concert

Dr Fiona Wong, alongside seven students from the Department of Art, Design, and Media, orchestrated a captivating wayang (shadow play) performance as part of Sunway University Chinese Orchestra's (SUCO) "Sunrise Swells: A Musical Odyssey" concert. The concert was hosted at the Temple of Fine Arts in Kuala Lumpur on January 21, 2024. Supported by Student Life, the event drew an enthusiastic crowd, including Sunway

University's Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Chai Lay Ching, and the Dean of the School of Arts, Professor Mayco Santaella.



Dr. Fiona Wong and design students together with Prof Mayco Santaella and Prof Chai Lay Ching.



Dr. Fiona and design students holding puppets they designed and performed with after the concert.



Behind the scenes of the wayang performance played by the design students during the concert.



The orchestra performers, conductors and designers of the concert, as advised by Dr. Fiona.

Photo credits: Dr Fiona Wong

Dr Fiona's vision for a traditional wayang show as a visual backdrop showcased the richness of Chinese cultural traditions. Led by Lizin Cheng, her students creatively designed Chinese-styled puppets infused with local elements, enriching the concert's cultural tapestry. Dr Fiona's innovative approach not only enriches student experiences but also fosters a deeper appreciation for local heritage. This collaborative endeavour exemplifies the School of Arts' commitment to creative expression and cultural preservation.

School of Arts Hosts 3-Day Workshop Immersing Visiting Students in Malaysian Culture

Students from Otemon High School, Japan, participated in a "Malaysian Culture and Heritage Preservation" workshop as part of the "Wayang Pacak research creation internal grant" program. Organised in

collaboration with Assoc. Prof. Dr Padma Pillai's One Week Vacation Short Course, the workshop aimed to deepen understanding of Malaysian culture.

During the session, students immersed themselves in various aspects of Malaysian heritage, including food tasting, learning the Malaysian slang, and exploring montage techniques. They also received instruction in sound and composition. Leveraging these newfound skills, participants crafted 90-second documentary logs expressing their admiration for Malaysian culture.

The workshop culminated with the presentation of certificates of accomplishment, acknowledging the students' engagement and dedication to cultural exploration. This cross-cultural initiative underscores the importance of international exchange and appreciation of diverse heritage.



Photo credits: Prof. Adrian Lee

Edmond Law's Testimonial: Embracing Excellence as a Communication Graduate

Edmond Law's journey at Sunway University was profoundly enriching, with comprehensive and engaging courses led by dedicated lecturers like Dr Zuhaili and Dr Catherine Lee. Throughout his academic journey, support from the Sunway Education Group, both financially and mentally, was invaluable. The state-of-the-art facilities further promoted collaborative learning. Despite financial constraints, graduation was a moment of camaraderie between him and his coursemates. Earning dual degrees from Sunway and Lancaster University broadened his horizons. Notably, the Jeffrey Cheah Ace Scholarship further fueled his dedication to academic excellence, reinforcing his commitment.



Photo credits: Edmond Law

Engaging in extracurricular activities like leading a brand awareness campaign and participating in sports enriched his experience. Particularly rewarding was his involvement in "Health and Wellness" activities. Sunway's emphasis on teamwork and social responsibility inspired his involvement in community service initiatives. Ultimately, Sunway University equipped Edmond with the skills, knowledge, and values essential for navigating the modern world within a supportive environment focused on student success and growth.

Live on Air on the *34 jer Kita Suka!* Segment with Alisya and Rachel



Photo credits: NASIONALfm on Facebook

On March 16th, Alisya Amran and Rachel Tan, students from the Department of Arts, Design, and Media, were spotlighted on the "34 jer Kita Suka!" segment on NASIONALfm. They shared an inspiring story of their artistic journey, describing how their initial fascination with art blossomed into a passionate pursuit, weaving through the evolution of their artistic endeavours.

Moreover, as part of an assignment for their Design Enterprise class, they were tasked with transforming their illustrations into merchandise like stickers, keychains, and bookmarks, as a business venture. Remarkably, they achieved over RM2,000 in sales within just a few days!

Besides sharing their stories, they offered some words of encouragement and advice for the listeners of the segment in hopes to

inspire those who aspire to pursue art. Concluding the segment, they showcased their digital illustration skills and demonstrated the step-by-step process of creating their illustrations live.

Watch the segment here!

PHAM 2024 and the Times Higher Education Asia Universities Summit 2024

April has been one of the most active months for the School of Arts. The University hosted the 2024 Planetary Health Annual Meeting (**PHAM 2024**) from 16 to 19 April. Our students and staff contributed to an exhibition led by Dr Yi Sheng Goh, Dr Fiona Wong, Helen Guek, Amirul Mukhtar, and Dr Nicole Fu. We also had a Global Village VR Immersive Interaction Lab on Nature and Climate, a collaboration with the World Economic Forum. This was led by Delas Santano, Muhamad Ayman Jamaludin, Hilman Nordin, Giselle Su, and Lisa Zainuddin.



Photo credits: Assoc. Prof. Mayco Santaella

Two weeks after that came the **Times Higher Education (THE) Asia Universities Summit 2024**. We were involved in numerous activities, including the opening ceremony graced by YB Dato' Seri Diraja Dr Zambry Abdul Kadir (Minister of Higher Education) and Tan Sri Sir Dr Jeffrey Cheah, and the presentation of a *Batik* that was painted for the first time on stage by the guests of honor. The piece was carefully crafted by Dr. Fiona Wong and Ahmad Nasarudin alongside our Art, Design & Media student.

That evening, we hosted a Gala Dinner at Sunway Resort Hotel graced by Her Majesty Raja Zarith Sofiah, Queen of Malaysia. We offered a string quartet performance as well as a very well-received *wayang kulit* production performed by our students and academic staff, in collaboration with Sunway University Chinese Orchestra students led by Fiona Wong.

For the networking reception, our Music Performance students performed with a string quartet, a violin (Alyssa Chong) and piano (Eason Lai) duet, followed by "Tunggu Sekejap" and "Art is Calling Me" magnificently sung by Lai Jia Yun under the tutelage of Dr Poom Prommachart.



Photo credits: Assoc. Prof. Mayco Santaella

Throughout the summit, an exhibition at the School of Arts Gallery showcased works by our lecturers and students. Lastly, the closing ceremony consisted of a presentation of the finalised *Batik* that will be placed at the main gallery of Sunway University.

Overall, it was a memorable experience celebrating Sunway University and Sunway's 50th anniversary.



**THANK YOU
FOR READING!**



ABOUT US:

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



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