

The recent achievements at the Singapore Youth Festival (SYF) have clearly shown that with perseverance and hard work success is always within reach. While our students are in raptures that their efforts have paid off, the main takeaways for them are the values learnt and the bonds forged amongst members. Here's what our teachers and student participants say about their SYF experience.

Chinese Orchestra Certificate of Accomplishment (JC Category)

The Performances

The NUS High Chinese Orchestra (CO) performed two pieces - Journey II, the set piece, as well as a choice piece, Liu Li. Journey II, with familiar tunes from 'Singapura', 'Di Tanjong Katong' and 'Orchids', was composed as a celebratory piece to showcase Singapore's progress. Liu Li is a complex yet beautiful light-spirited piece consisting of many weaved harmonics.



"Our School was given special permission three months before the competition to include students from Years 1 to 4 in our SYF JC Category team due to our small cohort size. Despite the limited time the students had to practise, I'm proud of their remarkable achievement in the SYF this year."

Ms Liu Li Hui (Teacher-in-charge)

"We trained hard, practised diligently every Friday from 7pm to 9pm amidst our hectic schedules. It was heart-warming to see a group of 33 students put aside their other commitments to come for the numerous night practices. The journey was tough, but we all held on. I am really proud of our team because it is really remarkable to have obtained this result having had only three months to train. Working towards a common goal helped CO to grow, and the many Friday dinners have cemented our bonds. SYF 2017 has been an amazing experience and we are all looking forward to working hard and achieving even better results in 2019!"

Chan Yee Qi (President)

Dance Club
Certificate of Accomplishment (Secondary School Category)

The Performance

“Embracing the Sun” is a beautiful Chinese contemporary dance piece that expresses the students’ conflicting feelings of joy and sadness as they confront graduation.



“As the teacher in-charge, I am very proud of my 2017 SYF dancers. Some of them joined Dance Club with no formal training. Within such a short period of time, they mastered the techniques of dance. I saw my students grow not only as individuals but also as a team. The Certificate of Accomplishment is testament of their hard work.”

Ms Dong Yanqin (Teacher-in-charge)

“I thoroughly relished this year’s SYF experience. We encountered setbacks but we were not discouraged; we held on, pushed ourselves and persevered together. I really cherish this opportunity that brought our members closer together as a team.”

Hu Yinghe (Vice-president)

Drama Club

Certificate of Distinction (Secondary School Category)

The performance: Avocado Macaroni Al Fresco

Five teenagers go on an expedition to explore an abandoned old building, but luck turns on them and they get locked in. Amidst the chaos that ensues as they try to find a way out, they learn that one of them harbours a painful secret. But through sharing their stories, and the power of dramatic roleplay, they rediscover the abandoned parts of themselves -- the parts they had suppressed out of guilt and shame -- and realise that even the people who seem to have it all, often don't. They unite to find a way out of the building, and also out of the vicious cycles that have kept themselves locked in their unhappy lives.



“The students and our instructor, Ms Adelynn Tan, worked very hard. The script was written from scratch by two of our members, Pei Xian and Hubert, who based it on the contributions of ideas of Drama Club members. Rehearsals were intense and the actors worked hard to perfect their lines and actions. The crew rehearsed tirelessly to set up the intricate set within the shortest time possible. The members learned to overcome the many challenges they faced and worked together to overcome them; they never gave up and always stayed positive. It was a whole group effort and I’m thrilled that it paid off!”

Mdm Asrina Saini (Teacher-in-charge)

“As this was my first time being involved in SYF, I learnt a lot about stagecraft. Initially, we found it challenging to effectively portray our characters and tell the story in 15 minutes. However, the most memorable part of this entire experience was when we first completed a full run; it totally spurred us to keep going. Through much hard work and practice, we managed to clinch a distinction! To be honest, I was shocked but am very encouraged by this recognition of our collective efforts!”

Pierre Teo (Actor)

Gamelan Ensemble Certificate of Accomplishment (JC Category)

The Performances

The first piece entitled, *Gendhing Parisuka*, is composed by Martapangrawit. The traditional number was arranged by Ms Chan Mei-Yin, the Gamelan coach, to suit the style and mood of the SYF Arts Presentation 2017. The second piece entitled, 'Meong-Meong Kebyar', is a medley of two folk songs. Also arranged by Ms Chan, this medley combines 'Meong-Meong', a Balinese traditional children's song, and 'Tari Kebyar', a Javanese dance piece.



"It was a very enriching experience for us - from the extra hours spent preparing the pieces to the choosing of the head dress (the boys decided to wear the *blangkon*, a traditional Javanese head dress worn by men that is made of batik fabric). Camaraderie was also at an all-time high with the students polishing and cleaning the instruments together, and practising the posture and stage movements. I am truly proud of the Gamelan students who gave their best and went against all odds. We will continue to strive for the best!"

Mdm Rohaida (Teacher in-charge)

"This year's SYF Arts Presentation was particularly exciting as we participated in the JC category. This allowed us the rare opportunity to have the entire CCA participate rather than just the Secondary or Junior College section. Since our team comprised only 12 members, each person's role was instrumental in ensuring the success of the performance. The outstanding quality of teamwork and dedication contributed to our win. Fun and unforgettable – that sums up SYF 2017 for us."

Isaac Tay (Gamelan President)

High School Choir

Certificate of Distinction (Secondary School Category)

The Performances

The Choir performed three pieces. The first, 'Bunga Sayang', is a set piece composed by Dick Lee and arranged by Zechariah Goh for this year's SYF. The Choir chose 'O Magnum Mysterium' as its second performance piece, a responsorial chant from the Matins of Christmas. The third, 'Balleilakka' – a song from the Tamil film, *Sivaji* - was composed by A R Rahman and arranged in 2017 especially for the NUS High School Choir by Mr Lennie Chua.



"I think the masterstroke which led to our accomplishment was that the students really enjoyed the process – learning the new pieces together and collectively working to improve one another's singing. The seniors, who were not participating in the SYF, also supported their juniors and practised alongside them during training sessions. It was heartening to see my students cultivating friendships, and developing resilience and humility during these practice sessions."

Mrs Mariko Gomez (Teacher-in-charge)

"Throughout this memorable journey, I was very pleased to see everyone work very hard. I'm sure that everyone has gained a valuable experience like I did. We would like to thank the school, our conductor, Ms Lim Huimin, and our teacher-in-charge, Mrs Mariko Gomez for their tireless support and guidance throughout this journey!"

Wang Ruijie (President)

String Ensemble

Certificate of Accomplishment

All instrumental ensembles perform two contrasting pieces of their own choice (e.g. traditional/folk pieces vs. contemporary compositions, or pieces from different musical genres) for the SYF. This year, the NUS High String Ensemble performed two contrasting pieces in musical genres and tempo: *Palladio* by Karl Jenkins and *Bethena*, a Concert Waltz, by Scott Joplin.



"A school should be a place where children are allowed to experiment, explore and excel. I'm particularly proud that I have prepared our Year 6 Music Major, Darren Wayne Lim, to take on the role as conductor for the String Ensemble. Darren is also the Section Leader of brass and plays the trombone".

Dr Emilia Wong (Teacher-in-charge)

"This year's SYF marks the last time I will be able to participate in one; I leave the experience feeling proud of my fellow players who showed great improvement as an ensemble."

Ang Yu Hui (String Ensemble {Double Bass} & President of School Orchestra)