

Anak anggota BDB raih ijazah kelas pertama muzik

“MIPAN mengenggam gegulung ijazah muzik apa lagi dengan Kejujuran Kelas Pertama tidak pernah dibayangkan guru gitar, Encik Mas Iskandarshah Masron.

Namun setiap kali ayahnya Masron Ali, yang merupakan pemain trompet band legenda Black Dog Bone berkata, “Aku ingin kau jadi juruterbang”, Encik Mas Iskandarshah, 40 tahun, menyimpan tekad ‘terbang tinggi’ sebagai pemuzik hebat setaraf atau lebih baik lagi daripada sang bapa.

Baru-baru ini, segala cita-cita yang awalnya disangka mustahil menjadi kenyataan dengan ijazah idaman daripada Maktab Seni Lasalle memperkasa lagi semangatnya menyumbang pada persada muzik Singapura.

Encik Mas Iskandarshah yang pernah menjadi antara pengasas institusi muzik mapan School of Rock dan Academy of Rock Singapore itu menjelaskan:

“Sejak kecil lagi, saya terdorong dengan kesungguhan ayah bermain muzik. Apabila saya dapat garisan wang dari persembahan, mengurus acara muzik dan membimbing beliau, saya sangka itu sahaja mencukupi.

“Namun wujud hambatan meneroka peluang pekerjaan di institusi muzik antarabangsa kerana saya tiada kelulusan akademik. Mengingatkan harapan ayah, saya ketepikan kebingungan kembali ke bilik darjah dan buat banyak peryesuaian demi membangunkan keluarga. Walau beliau sudah tiada sejak 2015, janji saya untuk menjadi yang terbaik buatnya terlaksana.”

Laporan lanjut di Muka 13.



— Foto BH oleh ZAKHIR HIRUZA

gaya hidup

Kotakan impian ayah terbang tinggi dengan muzik

Anak arwah Masron BDB raih ijazah muzik Kelas Pertama

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ADA pepatah Inggeris menyatakan, *Life begins at 40* atau “Kehidupan itu bermula pada usia 40 tahun”.

Bagi anak seni Singapura, Encik Mas Iskandarshah Masron, begitu lah hakikat kehidupan tatkala beliau mengenggam ijazah Kejujuran Kelas Pertama dalam kursus muzik daripada Maktab Seni Lasalle pada usia matang 40 tahun, baru-baru ini.

Anak pemain trompet band legenda Black Dog Bone (BDB), Allahyarham Masron Ali, itu tidak pernah menyesali malah mensyukuri perjalanan panjang yang direntasi meskipun banyak anak duri perlu ditempuhi. Tugas sebagai guru gitar malahan pemuzik persembahan malam yang menjadi sumber pencarian rezekinya sejak sekian lama, perlu dihentikan sepanjang tempoh pengajian dua tahun demi fokus yang diperlukan. Penyakit campak pun melanda ketika beliau menduduki peperiksaan.

Sungguhpun begitu, semangat Encik Mas Iskandarshah tidak mudah pudar. Baginya, pengalaman 25 tahun dalam persada seni Singapura termasuk mewakili negara sebagai Juara Semata dalam pertandingan Global Battle of the Bands di Berlin, Jerman, sekitar 2015 tidak mencukupi jika beliau ingin menerokan kepakarannya ke peringkat antarabangsa.

Sebagaimana kata bapa dua anak berusia enam tahun dan dua tahun itu ketika ditemui di Lasalle:

“Selama ini, saya hanya berdasarkan pengalaman seni yang dipujuk ayah sejak kecil lagi. Saya banya seronok merah garisan rezeki daripada membuat persembahan dan lambat memikirkan haluan seni saya.

“Apabila bertemu seorang rakan pemuzik yang gigih belajar lagi pada usia matang, saya tersentak dan menyedari sebab mengapa peluang pekerjaan saya terbatasi tatkala memohon bagi tugas mengajar di institusi muzik antarabangsa.

“Pihaik pengurusan institusi itu nampak senarai penglibatan saya yang meluas dalam bidang muzik, cabang persembahan, rundingacara acara dan bimbingan band di dalam dan luar negara tetapi apabila disoal ke layakan akademik, saya hanya memiliki Diploma Rekaan Dalam daripada Lasalle yang tiada kena-mengena dengan bidang muzik.

“Pengiktirafan dalam bentuk ijazah bertauliah juga penting demi pembangunan profesional saya. Impian saya mengajar di institusi muzik antarabangsa banyak tersekat kerana tiada kelulusan muzik yang formal. Alhamdulillah, dengan pencapaian yang saya terima ini, saya bersyukur kerana dapat mengotakan janji saya pada arwah ayah bahawa saya tidak akan sia-siakan perjalanan seni saya.

“Beliau sering menegur, ‘Mengapa kau tak jadi juruterbang dan bawa aku keliling dunia?’ Itulah impiannya buat saya. Saya setakat tersenyum kerana rasa pada usia matang, impian jadi juruterbang tentunya sudah melayang dan tak kesampaian. Namun, yang pasti saya boleh terbang tinggi persis juruterbang dalam bidang muzik yang menjadi kekuatan saya.”

Encik Mas Iskandarshah, anak bongsu dalam tiga beradik lelaki, menyifatkan ayahnya yang meninggal dunia pada 2015 kerana barah paru-paru sebagai pemuzik genius yang banyak mencetus inspirasi buatinya berkarya dan dua abangnya membina kerjaya sebagai jurutera bunyian dan jurubina.

Beliau juga bersyukur mempunyai isteri, Cik Zuliyana Abdul Aziz, 33 tahun, yang banyak mendorongnya agar terus mengejar cita-cita di samping memperbaiki budaya berseni dari hari ke hari.



TAMBAH NILAI SENI: Walaupun memiliki pengalaman 25 tahun dalam bidang muzik malah pernah ke Berlin, Jerman, bagi pertandingan band seangkatan, Encik Mas Iskandarshah Masron (*kiri*) merasakan perjalanan seni itu kosong tanpa ilmu mendalam yang diperolehi menerusi pencapaian Ijazah Sarjana Muda Sastera Dalam Muzik Dengan Kejujuran Kelas Pertama. Bersamanya dalam persembahan di Teater Luar Esplanade adalah rakan pemuzik, Encik Hassan Mohammad. — Foto ESPLANADE



MASRON ALI: Pemain trompet band legenda Black Dog Bone, Allahyarham Masron Ali, (*gambar kiri*) menjadi pencetus semangat buat anaknya, Encik Mas Iskandarshah, mengajar cita-cita. — Foto fail

Cik Zuliyana yang merupakan pendidik prasekolah, turut mengambil Diploma Lanjutan dalam Pendidikan Awal Kanak-Kanak agar seiringan memperingkatkan kemahiran bersama suaminya. Pasangan ini kini mengemukakan bersama syarikat penganjuran acara dan khidmat muzik, Zuska Zayfran Pte Ltd.

“Alhamdulillah, saya mempunyai isteri yang sama-sama ingin majukan kemahiran dan memperingkatkan kerjayanya. Kami saling mendorong satu sama lain. Jadual kuliah harus disepak bersama agar amanah kami pada anak-anak tidak terjejas.

“Saya cuba menjalankan tugas sebagai guru muzik dan bermain muzik pada waktu malam pada awal pengajian tetapi tidak mampu melakukannya apabila tugas sekolah dan projek seni di Lasalle semakin bertimbun. Dalam tempoh saya jadi pelajar sepenuh masa, kewangan kami juga perlu diurus dengan baik. Nak berlatih main gitar bagi tujuan tugasan sekolah pun perlu tunggu sampai lewat malam setelah anak tidur.

“Isteri juga cepat mengenal pasti apa kekurangan saya. Pernah suatu ketika saya kecewa apabila menda-

pat gred yang rendah dalam modul persembahan yang saya sangka tidak akan menimbulkan masalah. Saya bertitah isteri saya, mengapa kerja keras saya tak berbaloi? Saya sangka saya sudah berikan yang terbaik tetapi penyarah merasakan sebaliknya.

“Beliau menjelaskan, kegigihan sahaja tidak akan membawa kejayaan. Saya perlu pertingkatkan fokus saya dan tahu apa keutamaan saya. Apabila saya ubah suai cara persembahan saya, barulah ia menampilkan hasil.

“Saya juga tidak pernah abaikan peluang bertemu penyarah dan kaunselor di Lasalle bagi mendapatkan nasihat bagaimana saya dapat memperbaiki mutu penulisan tesis saya atau budaya belajar saya.

“Maklumlah... apabila sudah lama tak masuk bilik darjah, banyak perkara yang didapati sudah ‘berkarat’. Saya perlu rombak penulisan tesis saya berkali-kali kerana fakta sahaja tidak mencukupi. Tesis yang baik perlu banyak isi dan bukti bagi memperkuat mauduk yang saya bincangkan,” dedahnya.

Tesis tahun kejujuruannya adalah menilai teknik petikan gitar menggunakan jari-jemari tangan kanan yang seiringan dengan teknik pukulan dram. Ini berdasarkan pengamatannya pada cara santai pemuzik kumpulan rok Boston, Extreme, Nuno Bettencourt, memetik gitarnya. Kebetulan, Bettencourt asalnya adalah pemain dram.

“Nuno adalah gitaris kegemaran saya. Kebetulan, beliau ada di Singapura bagi satu konsert Extreme. Isteri hadiahkan saya tiket konsert bagi bertemu dan bersembang dengan Nuno. Saya merakam beberapa klip video persembahannya. Cuma apabila klip tersebut tidak mampu digunakan sebagai rujukan tesis saya mengikut peraturan akademik, saya perlu mencari cara lain bagi mengukuhkan tesis tersebut,” ujarnya.

Pesannya kepada anak muda yang ingin terus bersemita: “Dunia hiburan bukan setakat untuk kita kecap glamor. Tidak salah mendambakan perasaan ingin dikirifir dan diberi perhatian gemuruh di pentas. Namun, kalau serius bersemita, carilah ilmu agar menjadi pemuzik atau pengubah lagu bernilai tambah yang ada misi menyumbang pada masyarakat.”

Son of BDB member obtains first-class honours in music

To hold a graduation scroll in his hands, and to have achieved a first-class honours degree, was something guitar instructor Mr Mas Iskandarshah Masron did not envision.

What he had set out to do though was to become a musician who is as good, if not better, than his father Masron Ali, who was a trumpet player in the legendary, local band Black Dog Bone. Iskandarshah understood his father's wish for him to be a pilot and aimed high. His dreams of making a difference to Singapore's music scene has now become a reality, following his recent academic achievements at LASALLE College of the Arts.

The founding member of music institutions School of Rock, and Academy of Rock Singapore, shared: "My father's earnestness at performing inspired me so when I began earning my own keep by managing music gigs and teaching youths, I thought that was enough.

However, I soon realised I could not fully explore new employment opportunities, particularly at international music institutions, because I did not have the necessary academic qualifications. I therefore decided to set aside my fears of going back to school and continue my education. Even though my father has passed on and is no longer around, my promise to him to be the best has now been fulfilled."

The story continues on page 13.

Fulfilling his father's dreams by flying high with music

As the English adage goes 'life begins at 40', and for Singaporean musician Mas Iskandarshah Masron, this rings true. He was the mature age of 40 years old when he received his BA(Hons) Music degree at LASALLE's recent convocation ceremony.

From having to halt his job as a guitar instructor and night performer in order to devote attention to his studies, to sitting through exams even though afflicted with the measles, the son of legendary trumpet player, Masron Ali, was grateful for this long and winding journey.

In fact, not once has Iskandarshah's drive faded. Many would call him a veteran but to him, the 25 years of experience he had amassed from the music scene, which included representing Singapore as regional champion at the Global Battle of the Bands 2015 in Berlin, was not enough for him to adequately share his expertise at the international level.

As explained by the father of two, young children: "I've never thought hard about the direction of my art and was simply satisfied with getting paychecks for my performances. When I met a fellow musician who was avidly pursuing

his studies even at a mature age, I was taken aback and realised then as to why my employment opportunities were so limited.

“The management of international music schools would acknowledge my vast industry involvement but when they look at my academic qualifications, they’d take pause because all I had was a Diploma in Interior Design from LASALLE, and it had nothing to do with music.

“It has always been my dream to teach at an international music institution but time and again, it’ll be thwarted due to my lack of a recognised, music degree. Praise be to God for what I’ve achieved at LASALLE as I’m now able to fulfill my promise to my late father.

“He would often remind me of his dream for me to be a pilot, but I would only smile as that career is long beyond me, given my age. Nevertheless, what I was certain of was my ability to fly high like a pilot, within the field of music, as there was where my strength layed.”

Iskandarshah, the youngest of three brothers, described his father as a musical genius who had inspired both him and his brothers to pursue creative careers – one as a music engineer, and the other as an architect. Masron Ali passed away in 2015 after a battle with lung cancer.

Iskandarshah was also grateful for his wife, Ms Zulyana Abdul Aziz, 33 years old, who had given him much support to pursue his dreams. As a pre-school teacher, she is currently studying for an Advanced Diploma in Early Childhood Education to match her husband’s recent skills upgrade. Outside of music and teaching, the couple also run an events management company, Zuska Zayfran Pte Ltd.

“We encourage each other, and take the time to synchronise our study schedules so that we do not neglect our responsibilities to our children,” he shared.

“I tried to continue working as a music teacher and performing music gigs at night, but eventually found that I was unable to cope when assignments at LASALLE started piling up. During this period when I was a full-time student, we had to better manage our finances, and she was very understanding.

“She also has a knack for identifying my weaknesses. There was once I was disappointed when I received a low grade for a performance module because I thought I had it in me to deliver, given my experience. Seeing me disheartened, she tried to encourage me and patiently explained that perhaps I should re-focus my priorities and take the lecturer’s feedback into my stride. On her advice, I modified my performance and it eventually paid off.

“Understandably, I have not been in a classroom for many years and have become ‘rusty’ in many aspects. To better the quality of my writing and study

habits, I would thus regularly meet up with my lecturers for help. I remember vividly the number of revisions I'd to make to my thesis because I wasn't able to gather sufficient evidence to back up the premise I was discussing."

Iskandarshah's thesis evaluated the finger-picking technique of guitar playing as it accompanied the beat of a drum. It was inspired by countless hours of observation into Nuno Bettencourt's casual strumming.

"Nuno of Boston rock band, Extreme, is my favourite guitarist. When they were on tour in Singapore, my wife gifted me with tickets to meet and greet with Nuno himself. I recorded several clips of his performances during then but sadly, these could not be used as reference material for my thesis due to academic rigour," he shared.

His message to young musicians: "It is not wrong to long for recognition and a standing ovation while on stage, but music isn't just about glamour. If we are to be serious about our artistic pursuits, we should seek knowledge in order to become artists who can value-add and contribute back to society."

Adding value to art: Even though he has 25 years of experience in music and has even gone to Berlin for a global competition, Iskandarshah Masron (left) felt that his musical journey lacked depth. Obtaining a Bachelor of Arts in Music, with First-Class Honours, was his way of deepening his knowledge for music. He is seen performing with Mr Mohammad Hassan (right) at the Esplanade's Outdoor Theatre.

Masron Ali: Pictured is the late Masron Ali, trumpet player of the legendary, local band Black Dog Bone. He was and continues to be a source of inspiration for his son, Mas Iskandarshah, to pursue his ambitions.