

Jika dahulu mereka masih bergelut dengan rasa tidak yakin kejayaan mampu dikecapi dalam bidang seni, kini dua bekas pelajar Institut Pendidikan Teknikal (ITE) mampu membuktikan sebaliknya. Seorang daripada mereka sudah pun bergelar pengarah muzik bagi konsert nasional mahupun kejiranan. Seorang lagi adalah pelakon dalam pementasan teater Inggeris yang gah dan dinanti-nanti. Wartawan HARIYAN ISMAIL (haryan@sph.com.sg) melaporkan kisah kejayaan mereka yang baru-baru ini tamat pengajian dengan ijazah kejuruan dari Maktab Seni Lasalle.

Berlagu dengan kejayaan yang dikecap

USAH mudah berputus asa walau dianda bernamun ujian dan hambatan dalam kembara menimba ilmu seni.

Utah pesanan ayahnya suatu ketika dahulu yang terpacat di ingatan lulusan pengurusan acara dari Institut Pendidikan Teknikal (ITE), Encik Daniel Ariffin Azman.

Tatkala itu, ayah yang ditugaskan sebagai eksekutif operasi di Doha, Qatar, terpaksa pulang ke Singapura setelah diserang angin ahmar dan terjejas kesihatannya selama dua tahun.

Di sebalik segala gojolak emosi mencari keyakinan diri, Encik Daniel, kini 28 tahun, melihat ITE sebagai pembuka jalan dan batu loncatan menegapi kejayaan dalam dunia seni.

Pemuda positif dan ceria itu memiliki Diploma Seni Bunyi dari Politeknik Republik sebelum melanjutkan pengajian ijazah kejuruan dalam ciptaan dan susunan muzik di Maktab Seni Lasalle.

Baru-baru ini tanpa diduga, ijazah kejuruan Kelas Pertama digenggamnya seiring dengan pintu rezeki terbuka luas baginya mengalahkannya sebagai penyusun lagu dan pengaruh muzik di peringkat nasional dan kejiranan.

Jadualnya memang padat bermula dengan peranan sebagai pengarah

muzik dan penyusun lagu bagi *Konsert Sukma Irama Layar Perak* di Sekolah Seni Singapura (Sota), Sabtu ini.

Konsert kendalian Wadah Seni Entertainment itu adalah sebahagian sajian pesta seni warga emas, *Silver Arts 2019*, anjuran Majlis Seni Kebangsaan (NAC).

Sebagai anak muda berjiwa 'orang lama', anak tunggal itu juga teruja menyusun lagu bagi persembahan sanjungan buat biduanita Saloma, *Kebudayaan*, di Taman Warisan Melayu, tidak lama lagi.

Orkestra Cina Marsiling yang mengentengkan rampaian lagu Bee Gees dan filem dansa ikonik 1978, *Ocean*, di Kebun Bunga, hujung tahun ini, juga memerlukan khidmatnya.

Ketika ditemui di Lasalle baru-baru ini, Encik Daniel, berkata: "Seblang pelajar ITE bergelut dengan emosi mereka tidak cukup hebat bagi mengalahkannya dalam pasaran kerja nanti."

"Mereka harus kekal minda positif dan cari kekuatan dalam bidang yang dicintai. Jadikan ITE ruang memperkasa diri."

"Apabila saya ke Lasalle, saya perlu tangkas mengaji dan menganalisis isu. Saya akan selalu ingat jerih payah ayah bekerja di luar negara, penderitaannya menghidap

angin ahmar dan artritis serta galkan ibu yang bertungkus-lumus sebagai atendan kesihatan."

Encik Daniel, seorang aktivis Orkestra Melayu Singapura (OMS), bersyukur diberi peluang menjadi pengarah muzik bagi *Konsert Sukma Irama Layar Perak*.

Beliau berterima kasih diberi kepercayaan mengarah muzik bagi band komba kecil seramai 10 orang.

"Saya perlu hayati lagu filem Melayu klasik dari era 1950-an hingga 1960-an. Terus terang, saya tidak pernah dengan sebahagian lagu lama ini seperti *Ranilah Kamaruzzaman*."

"Namun, apabila saya menyusunnya semula, saya rasakan lagu-lagu ini mampu menjadi kerja seni malar segar yang akan dikenang sampai bila-bila. Liriknyanya indah dan penyanyi latarnya juga memberi sentuhan emas mereka," tambahnya.

Beliau menyusun semula irama lagu Inggeris agar disesuaikan dengan iringan alat muzik tradisional Cina.

"Kalau dahulu saya rasa cita-cita saya nak jadi seperti pemimpin orkestra Ahmad Jaafar terlalu tinggi atau saya masuk Lasalle hanya untuk tamatkan pengajian muzik saya secepatnya, kini dengan ijazah kejuruan Kelas Pertama, saya sudah beryangon impian mendapat ijazah Sarjana Muzik pula," katanya dengan nada positif.



PERKASA DIRI DENGAN MUZIK: Encik Daniel Ariffin Azman yang menerima ijazah muzik dengan kejuruan Kelas Pertama dari Maktab Seni Lasalle kini teruja diberi cabaran sebagai pengarah muzik dan penyusun lagu bagi beberapa konsert nostalgia lagu malar sipaga — foto: Bih oleh ZAKHIR HIRUZA



HARGAI NILAI SENI: Encik Muhammad Shafiq Haziq Suderman keluar daripada kepompong memencilkan diri setelah dibuli lantas meraih kelulusan daripada penglibatan dalam seni muzikal.

Keluar dari kepompong dengan seni

LEBIH banyak memencilkan diri daripada bergelut dengan rakannya kerana sering dibuli dek suaranya yang bernada tinggi.

Keluarganya pada ketika itu juga payah menahami mengapa beliau begitu cenderung menyanyi dan menari malah ingin menjadikan kemahiran itu sebagai sumber rezeki.

Begitulah keadaan Encik Muhammad Shafiq Haziq Suderman ketika di Institut Pendidikan Teknikal (ITE) beberapa tahun lalu.

Namun, pengalaman yang membuatnya serba resah dan tidak bebas bersemi itu sudah lama ditinggalkan sebagai sejarah hidup yang mendevasikan.

Encik Muhammad Shafiq, 26 tahun, lulusan kursus pengurusan logistik bersepadu di ITE, kini pemilik ijazah kejuruan Kelas Dua (Atasan) dalam Teater Muzikal dari Maktab Seni Lasalle.

Awal sebelum itu, beliau menimba ilmu muzikal di peringkat diploma di Lasalle, malah pernah membuat persembahan bagansawan buat tontonan awam.

Lebih mengembirakannya, bakat '3-dalam-1' yang dimiliki iaitu berakon, menyanyi dan menari itu juga menjadi daya tarikan apabila beliau dilamar sebagai salah seorang pelakon muzikal gah setempat, *Ummoton*, yang disjikan kumpulan teater tidak menguap untung, Panglemomom.

Panglemomom adalah kumpulan teater setempat dengan misi menyampaikan naskah pentas mencah, pencetus inspirasi dan relevan dengan tuntutan masyarakat tanpa mengabaikan nilai artistik tertinggi bertahap antarabangsa.

Ketika ditemui di Lasalle baru-baru ini, Encik Muhammad Shafiq, anak sulung dalam tiga beradik, berkata:

"Titik tolak saya mencintai seni adalah ketika bersama kumpulan koir *ITE Show Choir*."

"Di sana, saya temui ramai anak Melayu berbakat yang mencari ruang mengentengkan kemahiran mereka tanpa dicera atau distereotip hanya kerana mereka budak ITE."

"Di dalam hati, saya mencari sesuatu yang dapat memberi saya keyakinan dan kekuatan diri. Maksudlah apabila sering dibuli rakan lain, saya jadi takut nak bergaul dengan orang ramai."

"Saya temui bidang seni muzikal walaupun awalnya payah mendapat restu dan pemahaman keluarga."

"Mereka tidak begitu memahaminya bagaimana perjalanan seni sehingga mereka melihat persembahan saya. Sejak itu, mereka lah penyokong setia saya."

Encik Muhammad Shafiq banyak belajar tentang memperbaiki diri, menolok tepi ego, bertindak profesional dan menerima keadaan apabila dirinya tidak diterima bagi sesuatu sesi uji bakat.

"Apabila terlibat dalam *Ummoton* pula, saya temui penggiat teater bukan calang-calang seperti Adrian Pang dan isteri Tracie Pang serta anak seni Malaysia, Sean Ghazi, yang berhemah dan luas pengalamannya."

"Maka, saya tahu seni dapat mencorak pemikiran masyarakat menerusi kaedah santali tetapi tetap membuka minda," katanya.

Both struggled with confidence as to whether they will be able to achieve success in the arts. Now though, these two former Institute of Technical Education (ITE) students have proven the opposite. One of them is a music director for a national concert, while the other is an actor in a highly anticipated English theatre production. More on the success story of this duo who have just graduated with honours degrees from LASALLE College of the Arts.

Playing to the tune of his own success

Never give up on your journey in the arts, no matter the trials and tribulations encountered.

That message by his father will forever be etched in the mind of ITE graduate, Mr Danial Ariffin Azman. At that time, his father was working as an operations executive in Doha, Qatar, and had to return to Singapore after a stroke.

Danial, 28 years old, saw ITE's events management programme as a doorway for him into the world of the arts. The positive and cheery young man has since obtained a Diploma in Sonic Arts from Republic Polytechnic, and a BA(Hons) Music degree, with a specialism in Composition, from LASALLE College of the Arts.

His first opportunity came swiftly following graduation, when he was entrusted to arrange and direct music for national concert *Soulful Silver Screen Melodies* at the School of the Arts Singapore this Saturday. It was commissioned by the National Arts Council as part of Silver Arts 2019 – a festival dedicated to celebrating seniors and creative ageing in the arts.

A young man with an 'old' soul, Danial is also thrilled to be arranging the song *Keluhan* for a tribute dedicated to singer-actress Saloma at the Malay Heritage Centre.

"Some ITE graduates struggle with a sense of inferiority that they will never be good enough to be given positions of trust when on the hunt for a job," he shared.

"My advice to them is to maintain a positive mindset and to leverage on their strengths in the fields that they love. Your time at ITE can be an opportunity for self-empowerment."

Danial, who is a member of the Orkestra Melayu Singapura (OMS), is grateful for the opportunity to direct the music at *Soulful Silver Screen Melodies*. He is especially thankful for the faith placed in him by the concert's band of 10 musicians.

“I had to internalise classic Malay film songs from the 50s and 60s and quite frankly, I have never heard most of them before, like *Rintihan Kamaruzzaman*.”

“However, when I did the rearrangement, I realised that these songs were evergreen and their melodies can be remembered even after a long time. The lyrics are lovely and the singers have also given the songs a golden touch,” he added.

Other work lined-up for Danial include arranging music for The Marsiling Chinese Orchestra, who is set to present a medley of songs from the Bee Gees and the iconic dance movie *Grease* (1978), at the Botanic Gardens this weekend. He looks forward to the challenge of rearranging English melodies to suit the accompaniment of traditional Chinese instruments.

“In the past, I felt that my dream of becoming an orchestra leader like Ahmad Ja’afar was beyond me, and that my music studies was just something to finish as quickly as possible. Now though, after having obtained a first-class honours, I think I quite enjoy learning more about music, and can imagine myself getting a Master’s Degree next,” he said, ending on a positive note.

One with the music: Danial Ariffin, who received a BA(Hons) Music degree with first-class honours from LASALLE College of the Arts, is excited to be challenged as a music director and arranger for some nostalgic pieces.

Emerging out of his cocoon with the arts

His high-pitched voice led to him to be ostracised and he consequently kept to himself. His family also could not quite grasp why he was so adamant at making a livelihood out of singing and dancing.

Such was the situation Mr Muhammad Shafiq Haziq Suderman was in, just several years ago, when he was still studying logistics at an ITE. Taking it as part and parcel of his growth, he has since moved on from these experiences.

At LASALLE’s 33rd Convocation, Shafiq graduated with honours from the Musical Theatre programme. This is his second time attending a convocation ceremony, with the first being at the Diploma level when he majored in Performance.

The adept triple threat, who can act, sing and dance his way on stage, was talent-spotted even before graduation by Pangdemonium – a local theatre group with the mission to present productions which are challenging, inspiring and relevant to society without compromising on artistic value. He is set to star in their upcoming production, *Urinetown*.

When he was interviewed recently at LASALLE, Shafiq said: “I can still remember that moment when I fell in love with the arts. It was when I joined

the musical *ITE Show Choir* and met many other talented youths who were equally in search of opportunities to showcase their talent without being disparaged or stereotyped.

“In my heart, I was looking for something that could give me confidence and strength after my experience with being bullied.

“Initially rehearsals were tough without my family’s blessing. They could not understand what a journey in the arts was like. But once they saw my performance and felt my passion, they have been my strongest supporters since.”

Shafiq has learnt a lot about self-improvement, to set aside his ego, act professionally and to accept rejection when auditions fall through.

“Preparing for *Urinetown* has been amazing. I’ve met with seasoned theater practitioners such as Adrian Pang, his wife Tracie Pang, and renowned Malaysian artist Sean Ghazi, who was very well-mannered and willing to share about his experiences. This made me realised that the arts can affect us even in a casual setting when one is just chatting,” he shared.

Appreciation for the arts: Shafiq Haziq Suderman has emerged from his protective shell, thanks to the arts, and has gained the strength to take to the stage in musicals.