



# STAR-POST (MUSIC)

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## MUSIC TEACHERS MAKING MUSIC



FRIENDS IN  
CONCERT

PAGE 3



THINKING DEEPER  
VALUES IN MUSIC  
EDUCATION

PAGE 5



WHAT'S ON AT  
STAR

- AFTERNOON SOIRÉE
- MUSICAL INTERPRETATION  
IN THEORY AND PRACTICE:  
THE ART OF PERFORMANCE  
FOR TEACHERS AND  
STUDENTS

PAGE 6



IN THE  
ARTS SCENE

PAGE 9





# MUSIC TEACHERS MAKING MUSIC

Lennie Chua  
Programme Manager  
(Music)



## Why do music teachers teach music?

For most of us, it is because music is such an inseparable part of our lives.

We have never been the same since we got to know the power of music, and we wish for our students to come to experience and love it just as we have.

In my teens, I remember devoting hours of practice on the piano every day. Music was my outlet to express my emotions and my state of mind. It allowed me to communicate what words could not say. When I was “in the zone” on my instrument, nothing else seemed to matter. It became my life blood, helping me to cope with the stresses of growing up.

*“Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination and life to everything.”*

Plato

When I became a music teacher, my world came to revolve around the students under my care. Time was spent planning for lessons, refining my teaching approach, and trying to meet all the other expectations that come with being a teacher. Because time was at such a premium, my own musical practice started to take a back seat. My soul began to run dry.

*“A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately at peace with himself.”*

Abraham Maslow

Thankfully, I came to realise of how much I missed making music. I knew I had to make a change. These are some of the measures I taken, and I would encourage you to consider them:



1

### **Set aside time to practise**

Start small. Even 5 to 10 minutes of practice a day will make a significant impact! Find pockets of time between classes to practise your instrument in the music room.

2

### **Make music playing an integral part of your teaching practice**

During music lessons, demonstrate music concepts on your instrument, jam with students as they practise, and accompany their performances.

3

### **Be part of a community of musicians that meets regularly to make music**

Find people whom you enjoy making music with! You can join a Community of Practice such as the STAR Teachers' Choir or form your own music groups to practise and to perform with. STAR regularly organises concerts such as **Afternoon Soirée** and **Friends in Concert** where music teachers can have a public performance. Join us!

4

### **Take lessons to learn a new instrument**

STAR organises supporting programmes such as the Ukulele course / Percussion course where music teachers can pick up skills on a new instrument.

I cannot emphasise enough how important it is for us music teachers to remain active in our music practice. It is our life blood, giving us the drive and strength to inspire our students, drawing them into the wonderful world of music.

I've recently formed a band with some other music teachers. As we rehearsed our items for the Afternoon Soirée concert, we felt so refreshed and so alive. During our first practice session, we became so engrossed in our music-making that we did not even realise that it was already 11pm! All of us wanted to carry on jamming.

At STAR, we seek to help you to remain musically active by providing performance platforms and by making musicking an integral part of our pedagogical milestone and upskilling programmes.

In this issue of STAR-Post, you can find out more about **[Friends in Concert](#)** (page 3), which showcases the musical talents of our music teachers on the public stage. **[What's on at STAR – Afternoon Soirée](#)** (page 6) relates how our colleagues on the 6<sup>th</sup> Music Teacher Practitioners Programme (MTPP) have come together to organise a delightful Afternoon Soirée concert after months of preparation and practice. We also bring to you a perspective on **[Values in Music Education](#)** (page 5) which discusses how music education contributes to developing the whole child in the context of "musicking".

If you would like to perform at our concerts or need help in finding a group to make music with, do email me at [Lennie.Chua@moe.gov.sg](mailto:Lennie.Chua@moe.gov.sg). In the meantime, do keep up with your music practice and enjoy a lifetime of music-making!



## FRIENDS IN CONCERT

The Singapore Teachers' Academy for the aRts is proud to present its first ever public concert featuring the musical gifts and talents of our music teachers.

Through this concert, we hope to encourage more music teachers to perform and to remain active in practicing their art form.

We also seek to build up our identity as a music education fraternity, and there is no better way to do this than to strengthen bonds through music-making!

We would like to thank the teachers who performed as well as those who came down to give their support!





*"There was a sense of joy performing for the public and fellow colleagues. I also marvelled at the quality and the variety of the other performances – our music teachers are indeed talented!"*

She Ai Ling, Serene  
(Boon Lay Garden Primary School)



*"It was a most enjoyable lunch time concert... intimate setting, well-crafted programme showcasing the repertoire of talents in our midst. Most importantly, it was about music teachers coming together and making music together."*

Wong Siew Hoong,  
Deputy Director-General of Education  
(Curriculum)

SCHOOL / BRANCH	NAME
Arts Education Branch	Marvin Leung
Arts Education Branch	Rachel Toh
Boon Lay Garden Primary School	Deenise Yang
Boon Lay Garden Primary School	She Ai Ling
Bowen Secondary School	Ainsley Liew
Canberra Primary School	Ruth Zheng
Catholic High School	Tan Ee Sin
Chongzheng Primary School	Lee Mong Lan
Clementi Town Secondary School	Desiree Chua
Corporation Primary School	Muhammad Dzuhri Bin Juniwan
Fairfield Methodist Primary School	Peh Lay Hoon
Greendale Primary School	Jacelyn Wong
Kheng Cheng School	Abdul Hakim
Maris Stella High (Primary)	Dorothy Chow
Mayflower Primary School	Rebecca Lau
Methodist Girls' School	Malisa Bay
Nanyang Primary School	Rebecca Lim
National Junior College	Seow Aik Keong
National Junior College	Denise Lee
North View Pri Sch	Anisa Anan
Paya Lebar Methodist Girls School	Ng Eng Kee
Punggol View Pri Sch	Ashley Teo
Qihua Pri	Chan Ho Ting
Singapore Teachers' Academy for the aRts	Ho Hui Ping
Singapore Teachers' Academy for the aRts	Lennie Chua
Tampines Primary School	Allen Losey Ang
Teck Ghee Primary School	Priscilla Pan
West View Primary School	Leong Ya Hui
Westwood Primary School	Rachel Tham
Yishun Primary School	Wang Junxian
Yishun Secondary School	Shaun Ho
Yishun Secondary School	Dorothy Seng

## THINKING DEEPER

# VALUES IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Li Yen See,  
Master Teacher (Music)

*"The curricula and its repertoire should exhibit life-sustaining and relevancy-enhancing opportunities for the teacher to develop the child's understanding of the core values."*

## *As an educator with principled values... ..*

It is without doubt that values are important in the understanding of educational practice; values become part of decisions, driving our behavioral actions, challenging our cognitive reflections, and affecting our emotive engagements and experiences. As such, it underpins the way we provide inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation and individualised consideration for our students and teachers.

The ethical educator needs to understand his/her strengths and limitations, so that he/she can lead by example, and to influence both students and teachers to build a values-driven education and a positive ethical culture. It is about having high professional standards of integrity, moral courage and conduct which is aligned to the shared Code of Ethics of the teaching fraternity. Having an understanding of the norms of behavior for the subject discipline(s) and the inquiry process on social and moral issues involving dilemmas will impact the educator's value judgments and decisions in the subject. Ethical norms in scholarly pursuits/research (from the design, implementation, to the reporting of the research) should also be part of the ethical educator's values.

All these attributes is central to the educator's profile. It is what guides him/her in his/her framework of thinking and decision-making; how he/she articulates and defends what he/she stands for; how he/she influences and leads the teaching fraternity; and how he/she provides music education to the students.

In the delivery of our curricula, what values are we reflecting and nurturing in the music classroom? Is our approach to music education 'whole' enough to bring about the understanding of our core values (Respect, Resilience, Responsibility, Integrity, Care and Harmony)? Do how we practice our pedagogy (in listening, performing and creating) and design our music curricula (syllabus and repertoire) for our music classrooms have an impact and influence in providing the 'whole' nature of music learning? Reimer (2012, p.26) posits that "every movement in the direction of diverse musical service will make us much more whole, that much more relevant, that much more central to education". Having this diversity and breadth provides more possibilities of interchange of ideas and conversations; it generates processes that will allow us to see things differently and respect diverse viewpoints/perspectives. It is not only about receiving, but also experiencing refraction i.e. seeing and feeling in different ways; thus becoming interpreters in the building of our understanding of the core values in the context of 'musicking'.

A diversity that is wide, meaningful and authentic enough will allow the child to realise that he/she has an 'accent'/voice, and also develop his/her motivation to want to explore new musical learning. It will open more doors for the child to discover his/her role in the musical journey and leading towards commitment in his/her own development of being 'who I am' i.e. human. As music can contribute to developing the child emotionally, intellectually, aesthetically and physically, it becomes a natural platform to nurture him/her to become better prepared to thrive in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous) world. Being 'better prepared' is perhaps only half the story, as to do it ethically is what we would like the child to subscribe to. This is the challenge and responsibility that we take on as an educator with principled values.

Reference: Reimer, B. (2012). Another Perspective: Struggling toward Wholeness in Music Education. *Music Educators Journal*, 99 (2), 25-29.



## WHAT'S ON AT STAR

This is a truly enriching and memorable learning experience for me. I am very thankful to my school leaders for making special arrangement for me this year such that I can really focus on this course and in turn apply what I have learnt with my Music classes in school. I would like to express my heartiest gratitude to all my teachers and mentors who readily impart their wealth of knowledge and teaching pedagogies to us. I am indeed blessed to be part of this programme and I have also learnt so much from my fellow teachers. The support and care of like-minded teachers who are so keen in learning and sharing have certainly made this journey unforgettable. The uninhibited smiles of the children and their freedom in expression through music are my greatest motivation in constantly reflecting upon my practices. I hope to sow the seeds of wonder and passion for music in my students, giving them a sense of empowerment that they are capable of making music for the soul.

PRISCILLA



TEOK GHEE PRIMARY SCHOOL

"Music gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything." - Plato

Music has always been a big part of my life, but I have never felt so passionate about music education until I started my MTPP journey. The course has empowered me in my abilities as a Music educator, and enriched my understanding of what a proper Music education should look like. I am also fortunate to have forged friendships with my fellow coursemates whom I can share my Music experiences with.

This is not the end, but the beginning of an exciting journey for us as we apply what we have learnt in our Music classrooms.

May we all continue to inspire our students to develop a love and passion for Music!

ASHLEY



PUNGGOL VIEW PRIMARY SCHOOL

### Afternoon Soirée

On 30 April, we held our biannual Afternoon Soirée concert at STAR, featuring performances by our Teachers' Choir as well as individual performances by teachers on the Music Teacher Practitioner Programme (MTPP). Our MTPP teachers certainly pulled out all the stops for this concert, not only through their wonderful performances, but also by decorating the walls of the performance venue with an eye-catching display featuring their reflections on their six-month MTPP professional development journey. The next time you visit STAR, do take time to read their reflections on the wall at Blk K Level 1!

If you are an English-medium Primary School Teacher without Music as a CS, and wish to upskill to be a trained Music Teacher, do join us for our MTPP 7<sup>th</sup> intake from July 2014 – February 2015. For more information, please email [Sheryl\\_Sim@moe.gov.sg](mailto:Sheryl_Sim@moe.gov.sg).



# WHAT'S ON AT STAR



## Musical Interpretation in Theory and Practice: The Art of Performance for Teachers and Students

On 25 April, we were privileged to have Prof. Kenneth Hamilton from the Cardiff University School of Music with us to give a lecture on Musical Interpretation in Theory and Practice. He engaged us with musical examples from the piano and from old recordings that gave an insight to the history of musical interpretation, the limits and meaning of musical notation, and the changing aesthetic attitudes to what constitutes an acceptable reading of a musical score.





# UPCOMING PROGRAMMES

## MILESTONE PROGRAMMES

Key mandatory programmes at key stages of the teaching career to achieve professional renewal, reinvention and positive transformation in teaching beliefs and practices.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Teaching Living Legends <b>*Fully Subscribed*</b>	2, 3, 4, 8, 9 July 2014 (5 full days) 8:30am – 5:00pm STAR Blk K 2 Malan Road S(109433)	Primary and Secondary Music Teachers

## UPSKILLING PROGRAMMES

Programmes to help teachers become qualified music teachers or upgrade teachers in preparation for taking on additional responsibilities.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Music Teachers Practitioner Programme – 7th Intake	July 2014 to February 2015 Deadline for application: 30 May	English-medium Primary Music Teachers with no CS1-3 Music (By school nomination)

## PEDAGOGY IMPLEMENTATION

Programmes to develop music teacher-leaders in their pedagogical understanding and to cascade their learning to other teachers in the fraternity.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Cluster Workshops led by STAR Champions (Primary) Cluster PD Sessions led by STAR Champions (Secondary)	July to August 2014 Various schools Details and application information will be sent out to schools by end June.	For cluster music teachers and allied educators
Engaging with Songs (Pilot)	Workshops from July to November 2014	Music teachers from pilot schools

## SUPPORTING PROGRAMMES

Programmes to provide new areas of learning and broaden perspectives.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Percussion Workshop	18 Aug, 15, 22, 29 Sep, 6 Oct 2014 (5 sessions x 2 hours) 3 – 5 pm Applications to open on TR AISI from 30 June	CS1, 2 & 3 Music Primary & Secondary teachers, and Allied Educators
Ukulele & Guitar Playing	12, 19, 26 Aug, 2, 30 Sep, 7 Oct 2014 (6 sessions x 2 hours) 3 – 5 pm Class performance on 10 Oct 2014 (PM) Applications to open on TR AISI from 30 June	CS1, 2 & 3 Music Primary & Secondary teachers, and Allied Educators

## COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE (COP)

Programmes that are premised on collaboration and sharing to collectively improve music skills and/or teaching practices.

NAME OF COP	DATE
Teachers' Choir	4:00pm – 6:00pm, Tuesdays STAR Blk K Lvl 3 Recital Studio Please email <a href="mailto:Tan_Bee_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg">Tan_Bee_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg</a> if you are interested to sign up!

\*We welcome all teachers and Allied Educators to participate in the CoPs. Please contact our Programme Executive Ms Tan Bee Ngoh ([Tan\\_Bee\\_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg](mailto:Tan_Bee_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg)) and let her know your area of interest.

# IN THE ARTS SCENE

Keep in touch with the arts scene in Singapore!

## The Final Countdown by Budak Pantai

23, 24 MAY 2014  
7:30PM  
ESPLANADE CONCERT HALL

One of Singapore's best loved a cappella groups calls time on its memorable 20-year run of music-making.

Tickets are limited, do act fast! [Click here](#) for more information.

## Encore! In-A-Chord Reunites

23 MAY 2014  
9:30PM  
ESPLANADE RECITAL STUDIO

Singapore's pioneering a cappella ensemble is back with a concert to launch their long-awaited fourth album. [Click here](#) for more information.

## Quinnance presents The Music, Our Works: Stones, Sand and Light

30 MAY 2014  
8:00PM  
ESPLANADE RECITAL STUDIO

Originally formed in 2012 with the intention of developing opportunities for local composers to showcase their compositions and to promote vibrancy and diversity in the local music scene, this third instalment of *The Music, Our Works* features world premieres of compositions by De Silva Alicia Joyce, Bernard Lee Kah Hong, Lu Heng and Terrence Wong Fei Yang! [Click here](#) for more information.

## Our People, Our Music 2014

28 JUNE 2014  
7:30PM  
NATIONAL STADIUM  
SINGAPORE SPORTS HUB

The Singapore Chinese Orchestra organises the first orchestral performance at the newly-built National Stadium, comprising more than 4500 performers, in an attempt to break the record for the largest Chinese drum ensemble, largest Erhu ensemble and largest Chinese Orchestra performance in Singapore. [Click here](#) for more information.

