



On The Stage Of Asia's Premier Music Education Institution

Singapore, 20 July 2017 - Singapore's premier open platform for aspiring musicians and performers, Asia Arts Festival (AAF) marks its 5th anniversary this year with a move to one of Asia's most coveted music institutions, the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music.

Previously held at performance and event venues such as the Singapore Conference Hall and Resorts World Sentosa, this year's choice of venue which has nurtured top local musicians such as award-winning Singaporean pianist Abigail Sin and violinist Loh Jun Hong, is symbolic of the Festival's commitment towards serving as the leading performance platform of new and young talents.

Says Mr Francis Liew, founder of AAF and well-known school choral conductor,

"For the first time, Asia Arts Festival will be held in the beautiful and inspiring concert hall at Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music, where many top performers, local and international have graced the stage. As a nurturing and inclusive platform for aspiring artists to perform and share their passion for the arts with everyone, I hope that through Asia Arts Festival, the performing experience at Yong Siew Toh conservatory of Music will enrich and strengthen the learning journey of our participants.

Founded in 2012, AAF stands unique in Singapore for being the only such platform where aspiring artists of any age and performing arts genre can participate in a supportive and non-competitive environment.

Says Allafta Hirzi Sodik, 9, who is visually impaired, "This is my first time performing in an international festival and I am glad that I have this opportunity to challenge my capabilities as a performer at the Asia Arts Festival. The song that I have chose to perform represents hope and trust and I hope that the audience will be moved by my performance."

Allafta will be performing the 'When You Wish Upon A Star' from the popular Disney animation, Pinocchio. This year, AAF will also feature piano and band performances by young talents with special needs. This is the first time that the festival has received interest from individuals with special needs.

Adds Mr Liew, "Asia Arts Festival serves as an all-inclusive platform for performing artists who are keen to showcase their talent. We are heartened by our participants' determination and passion to perform, in spite of the difficulties which they have to overcome. At this

festival, performers are free to express themselves in an environment that is supportive and nurturing."

Performers will showcase their talents in front of a panel of accomplished judges who will adjudicate the performances. These judges possess a wealth of experience in the performing arts industry around the region, such as, Dr Wong Su San, former Artistic Director of Singapore Lyric Opera and pianist-educator Benjamin Loh who was conferred the title of Steinway artist last year.

This year's festival will also introduce a new segment featuring the stars of AAF 2017 in a gala concert on the final day of the event. The 90 minute gala concert will feature talented artists and also performers from past editions of AAF such as flautist Ong Yi Ting.

AAF is an initiative by Asian Arts Academy and co-organised with The RICE Company Limited. The festival runs from 28th July – 30th July and is open to the public. Tickets are priced from \$20 for a one-day pass, \$35 for a two-day pass, \$45 for a three-day pass with separate admission charges for the gala concert. Tickets are available for purchase at the door.

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