

9. Arts Education

9.1 Visual Arts

Mrs. P. Kam

Our Visual Arts curricula align with the four learning targets set by the EDB: developing creativity and imagination, practising art skills and processes, making critical responses to arts, and understanding arts in context. The department uses a thematic approach to instill positive values and respectful attitudes towards individuals, cultures of many regions and the natural environment. Themes cover various topics such as exploring hands-on materials, details in masterpieces, graphic design, semiotics with Chinese idioms, origami installation art, Kusama's sculptures, Nagomi art, symmetrical paper cutting, seal calligraphy, recycling art, Peruvian Inca art, Surrealism, signage design for a local tour and art criticism reports.

Some girls further explored their interest in Visual Arts through participation in after-school workshops focused on 3D animation, therapeutic fluid art, Chinese calligraphy and Chinese painting. Additionally, some girls joined guided tours of exhibitions such as "Virtually Versailles," "Pablo Picasso: Painting in Glass," and "Underglaze Blue Porcelain in China."

Within the Visual Arts Club, student committees organised workshops on coaster design and glass painting for general members. They also played a role in selecting the logo for the Mini-bazaar and assisting with decoration for the Speech Day. One notable highlight of the year was the online workshops conducted by Ms. Marsha Roddy, a UK fashion designer and artist renowned for her work in set and costume design, architectural projects, haute couture and performance art.

Despite the challenges posed by the pandemic, we are grateful to have achieved numerous prizes in external competitions.

International 2 nd Runner-up: 1 International Finalist: 1 Greater Bay Area Outstanding: 1 Hong Kong 1 st Runner-up: 1	Hong Kong Gold Award: 1 Hong Kong Outstanding Award: 2 Hong Kong Commendable Award: 4
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The Art Department's satisfaction and success are a direct result of the collaborative efforts and unwavering support from all school stakeholders. We wholeheartedly express our gratitude to each and every individual for their invaluable contributions.

9.2 Aesthetic Development

Mrs. P. Kam, Miss Z. Wang

The focus of Aesthetic Development in the NSS curriculum is to help Secondary Five and Six students develop a heightened awareness of and appreciation for art and beauty through an exploration of the creative processes in Drama, Music and Visual Arts.

In Secondary Five, students could opt to specialise in one of the following six areas: English Radio Play, Cantonese Radio Play, Putonghua Radio Play, English Musical Radio Play, Stage Make-up, and last but not least, Visual Backdrop Design. Through workshops during the first term, students were introduced to practical skills that were essential to producing an effective radio play. To put the theories which they learned into practice, students embarked on a long collaborative process to produce five 15-minute-long plays. Students were able to experience a more technical dimension of creative arts – voice acting, music and sound effects, digital backdrops and animation.

One group of students served as the Organising Committee of this year's joint-school Drama Night. Students, teachers, parents and past students gathered together in the Assembly Hall for a breathtaking evening of drama performances. Through this valuable experience, students were able to learn the

essence of collaboration, leadership and communication in the world of performing arts.

In Secondary Six, students had the opportunity to learn to understand and appreciate stage productions, films and documentaries through a critical lens by participating in class discussions.

A hearty vote of thanks must be extended to the School Council, our Headmistress, Mrs S. Lau, Parents, the AV Team and Technicians. Without their support and guidance, the AD programmes would not have run so successfully in the last academic year.

9.3 Music

Miss G. Chiang

With the COVID pandemic drawing to a close, our students had a taste of the vibrant musical life here at DGS, but not without certain constraints placed on us by the summer timetable, as well as the vaccination and mask mandates.

The limits on class time is dearly felt in the past year, as practical music making among the junior form music lessons is substantially reduced, which, together with the mask mandate, impacted on the quality of hymn singing during morning assemblies. The shortened teaching time is also reflected in the paring down of the curriculum, with fewer extended listening examples across the three forms. However, the core teaching and learning elements remain unchanged: comprising listening tasks, classroom singing, creative song projects and concert reports. Most significantly, students were finally able to attend live performances, and although limited to students in S2 and S3, they continued to hone their critical listening skills by producing some brilliant accounts of the concerts they attended.

As for extended learning of music outside the classroom, we benefited from a relatively high vaccination rate, so that most music ensembles could continue their rehearsals uninterrupted over the course of the year. When all social distancing measures and mask mandates were finally lifted in March, the wind and brass players particularly noticed the difference in ensembles and blending of sound, as there were no longer partitions erected on stage. During the past year, although a few competitions resumed live sessions, the majority of Music Festival group events were either suspended, or held video competitions. Thus, we looked beyond competing to allow for our student musicians as many live performance opportunities as we could.

We began our performance calendar in October with the “We Love Yau Tsim” Concert, organised by the Yau Tsim District Police Community Relations Office. Our String Orchestra and Chinese Orchestra participated in this rescheduled concert held at the Xiqu Centre Grand Theatre, almost three years since our last invitation to perform at events of a similar nature. In the months of November and December, our musicians shared their talents with guests and parents at the Speech Day reception as well as the Mini Bazaar carolling sessions, while also competing at the 2022 Hong Kong Youth Music Interflows, a most precious opportunity of live music making and exchange with fellow secondary students. The Symphony Orchestra and Concert Band were awarded Silver and Gold respectively, while the joint effort by the Guzheng Ensemble and Chinese Orchestra won Silver.

Over the winter months, three students took part in the GalaMusica composition competition, jointly organised by the EDB and Hong Kong Composers’ Guild. They were invited to attend the award ceremony cum concert on 10 February 2023, and were highly praised for their outstanding music compositions. Their results are as follows:

- 1Y Yuen Fé: Outstanding Composition Award, Performers' Adjudication Award, & Best Creative Ideas Award
- 5Z Angelyne Wong: Outstanding Composition Award, Best Chinese Instrumental Writing Award, & Best Creative Ideas Award
- 4W But Wing Hei: Commendable Composition Award

After the Christmas holidays, we turned our attention to competitions and masterclasses that took place around Lunar New Year. The Junior, Intermediate and Senior choirs took part in the Hong Kong Inter-school Choral Festival and were awarded two Golds and a Silver respectively. Meanwhile, the String Orchestra and the various instrumental and vocal ensembles rehearsed ceaselessly to prepare for their competition recordings in February. Girls took the initiative to form chamber groups, and we saw a flourishing of ensembles ranging from piano and string quartets, to wind and brass ensembles, alongside the existing percussion, guzheng and erhu ensembles, totalling 12 instrumental ensembles this year. It was a conscious decision to bring back the Ensemble Concert at the end of February, providing students with a platform to showcase their efforts, while fostering a sense of camaraderie and moral support among our girls.

Enrolment for the 75th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival increased substantially compared to 2021-22, with a handful of solo items resuming live competitions. Our students obtained 16 First places, 11 Second places and 17 Third places, including the Champion in the open class Scholarship for Stringed Instruments (Chloe Chan), and winner of the open Original Composition category (Yuen Fé). In addition, we obtained the following results in the group entries:

- Gold Awards: String Orchestra (Senior); Girls' Vocal Ensemble (Age 19 or under); Mixed Voice Vocal Ensemble (Age 19 or under); Wind Ensemble (Senior); Erhu Ensemble
- Silver Awards: String Ensemble (Senior); Piano Ensemble; Wind Quintet; Brass Ensemble (Senior); Chinese Ensemble
- Bronze Award: Piano Ensemble

At the beginning of March, as the social distancing measures and mask mandate were lifted, we held live auditions for the 2022/23 Concerto Competition, and awarded four winners this year: Ng Sum Yin (Marimba), Cindy Cheung (Piano), Rena Wong (Violin), Brianna Xiao (Horn). There were also three honourable mentions, namely: Karina Lai (Cello), Ruby Wong (Violin) and Yuen Fé (Cello).

The remaining spring months were spent on intensive rehearsals leading towards the Joint School Music Association Competitions and the joint choral concert Duo Coro. The Percussion Ensemble, Chinese Orchestra and Guzheng Ensemble participated in the live competitions and were awarded Gold, Silver and Gold Awards respectively. Meanwhile, the Senior Choir and Senior Mixed Choir joined forces with singers from Diocesan Boys' School, Heep Yunn School and Wah Yan College Kowloon to perform to a full house at the DBS auditorium on the last day of March. Ever keen on sharing their music with family and friends, our choirs and ensembles came together on the first day after the Easter holidays to perform at the Spring Concert, held once again after a hiatus of four years.

Rehearsals were only briefly halted over the final exam period, and girls practised tirelessly in preparation for the back-to-back performances in July. We were honoured to be invited again to perform in Shenzhen on 9 July, at the opening concert of the 《同心耀中華》 Festival. The following weekend, we performed to a hall packed with parents, teachers, alumni and friends at our own Concerto Concert Winners' Concert, as well as the DBS Homecoming Concerts.

Over the summer holidays, two groups of musicians continued their pursuits in music. Our choir and orchestra representatives took part in the joint performance under the baton of maestro Timothy Brown

at the HKSKH Silver Jubilee Concert, while the Guzheng Ensemble competed in the 8th International Zheng Contests, winning Gold Awards in both the Hong Kong Regionals and the Finals.

Here is a summary of events that took place in the past academic year:

- 2022 JSMA Competition (Guzheng Ensemble: Gold Award)
- “We Love Yau Tsim” Concert (String Orchestra, Chinese Orchestra)
- Speech Day reception
- 2022 Hong Kong Youth Music Interflows
- Christmas carolling at the Mini Bazaar
- Christmas Service (Senior Choir)
- Chinese Literary Club performance
- 2023 Hong Kong Inter-School Choral Festival
- 2023 GalaMusica
- Ensemble Concert
- 75th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival
- 2023 JSMA Competition
- Duo Coro 2023
- Spring Concert
- Performance at Shenzhen Grand Theatre 《同心耀中華》樂動深港交響音樂會 (Symphony Orchestra, String Orchestra, Concert Band)
- 2023 Hong Kong Schools Music Festival Winners’ Concert (Chloe Chan, Violin)
- Concerto Concert
- DBS Homecoming Concerts (Senior & Junior Mixed Choirs)
- Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Silver Jubilee Concert
- 8th International Zheng Contest - Hong Kong Regionals and Finals (Guzheng Ensemble: Gold Awards)

At this juncture, I would like to highlight the individual achievements of several students: 5Y Lau Sin Ka took part in the EDB’s “Sayings of Wisdom” Creative Singing Contest and won the Best Lyrics Award, which allowed her to take part in a Lyrics Writing and Singing Programme in 2023, which culminated in a recording of an original song to particularly cheer for the 2023 HKDSE candidates. 5Z Angelyne Wong (Guzheng) was invited to perform at the Hong Kong Museum of Art’s “The Sound of Art - Musical Stars of Tomorrow” concert alongside pianist Cheung Yim Ting of 6U. 6X Chloe Chan was admitted to several leading UK music conservatories, and will commence her undergraduate studies at HKAPA on a scholarship. Two of our violinists, 6U Cheung Yim Ting and 6Z Bernice Shiu, were invited to participate in the first Tsinghua University Orchestra Music Camp held in Beijing, which included workshops and masterclasses by renowned violinist Lü Siqing, as well as Carlos Tome, the director of Tarisio.

Looking back at the past year, we remain immensely grateful for the many opportunities that brought our musicians together. It would not have been possible without the passion and dedication of our students, conductors, parents, colleagues, alumnae, and we would like to extend our thanks to the teachers, our Performing Arts Director Mr. Leung Kin Fung, and to our Headmistress, Mrs. Stella Lau, for their unwavering support to the Music Department.

With the departure of Ms Dorothy Hui, we sadly bid farewell to a most treasured colleague who is an integral part of the Department. However, we believe wherever our paths may lead us, DGS musicians will continue to give and serve our community. May our gifts continue to be a blessing to all those around us.