

9. Arts Education

9.1 Visual Arts

Mrs. P. Kam

Our Visual Arts curricula are designed in accordance with the four key learning targets set by the EDB, namely developing creativity and imagination, developing art skills and processes, cultivating critical responses to arts and understanding arts in context. The art department adopts the thematic approach to instil in our girls positive values as well as respectful attitudes towards individuals, Hong Kong, cultures of our Motherland, cultures of other regions and the natural environment of the Earth. A wide range of themes have been planned, such as exploring materials, textures in a masterpiece, name card design for an artist, semiotics with Chinese idioms, origami installation art, sculptures of Kusama, nagomi art, symmetrical paper cutting with seal calligraphy, recycling art, surrealism, logo designs in a local trip and art criticism reports.

Based on their own interest and strength, the Visual Arts Club committee members chose the topics, for example, geometric art, architectural drawing with markers and mandala painting, to teach in the club's meetings. They also contributed to the decoration work and the flower arrangement competition of the Speech Day, the opening ceremony of the AI Lab and the tape art of the five Houses outside the swimming pool. Due to the suspension of face-to-face school, a talk on Christian art which was supposed to be conducted by an outsider expert was cancelled. Fortunately, a guided visit for the M+ Museum was made possible for our club members after two cancellations.

This year, the department successfully ran five free-of-charge courses, conducted by outsider experts and Mrs. Pearl Kam. They included the Cheongsam workshops of the "Innovative Heritage Education Programme" organised by the Lingnan University and the Jockey Club, the "Hong Kong Move On NFT x School Mural (wall painting) Art Project" organised by the NetDragon Company, the Chinese calligraphy course, the Chinese painting course and the workshops of "Stop Motion Animation for Social Media".

Our students also actively partook in a number of external competitions, and we are grateful to have been given many prizes in spite of the pandemic. The numbers of the recipients for different prizes are summarised as follows:

International Outstanding: 2	Hong Kong Gold Award: 1
Hong Kong Champion: 3	Hong Kong Bronze Award: 1
Hong Kong 1st Runner-up: 2	Hong Kong Merit Award: 8
Hong Kong 2nd Runner-up: 1	

The satisfaction and success of the Art Department are undoubtedly the results of the efforts and support of all school stakeholders. We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to every one of them.

9.2 Aesthetic Development

Mrs. S. A. Leung, Mrs. P. Kam

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, given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and the need to adhere to social distancing rules, instead of performing a stage play, 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, Character and 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 nine 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 even animation.

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. 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

Into the third year of COVID disruptions, we enjoyed short bursts of seeming normalcy - from full-day schooling in the winter term, to full-fledged rehearsals in the summer months. However, change was constantly round the corner, and frequent adjustments had to be made to adapt to the fluctuating pandemic.

Classroom Learning

Music studies in the Junior forms continued in hybrid form of online listening tasks, classroom singing, concert reports and creative song projects. Initially, we retained concert report writing to hone students' sense of critical listening, in hope that they would be able to attend some live performances between September and February. In terms of music creating, students made good use of their iPads and experimented with Garageband, Soundtrap and music notation apps to complete their original songs. Most of them performed live to a backing track they created from scratch, with a few groups resorting to a recorded performance in lieu of live presentations.

As the fifth wave of pandemic struck, the unexpected and extensive school suspension from February to April 2022 required changes to student assessment. We reverted to online teaching via Zoom and had to adjust the requirements of report writing and listening tasks. For S2 concert reports, we allowed students to write about their chosen online versions of designated pieces, while S3 students were encouraged to compose a blurb on their favourite piece of music, and how that piece spoke to them personally during the lockdown period. The suspension also impacted on HKDSE music classes, which also had to shift their teaching online. Despite the frequent disruptions to teaching, the S6 cohort performed exceedingly well in the public examinations this year.

The resumption of in-person teaching in May came as a relief, and we managed to strike a good balance between live music-making and online teaching. The greatest impact of face-to-face interaction, however, is on music activities beyond the classroom.

Extracurricular Activities

Due to the prolonged pandemic, the annual Pre-competition and spring concerts were suspended for three years in a row, with many other customary events put on hold. Nevertheless, we are proud to have retained all choirs and orchestras, and some of the smaller ensembles.

Group rehearsals resumed from October to January and, with the exception of the Concert Band, tutti sessions were held on campus with social distancing measures in place. We also enjoyed a more regular schedule in December, as we conducted rehearsals for all groups over the Christmas holidays, and organised a day camp for the Symphony Orchestra on the very last day of 2021.

We were invited to perform as guests on two occasions in February 2022, namely highlights from *Die Fledermaus*, organised by the Central and Western District Association for Cultural and Arts (Symphony Orchestra), and the “We Love Yau Tsim” Concert, organised by the Yau Tsim District Police Community Relations Office (String Orchestra & Chinese Orchestra). However, with the pandemic in full swing, both our engagements were sadly postponed to the next academic year, which was a setback to budding musicians who would greatly benefit from the exposure. While we had to settle again with conducting Zoom sectionals, and checking on students’ progress through audio recordings, we also had to cancel our scheduled video recording sessions for the annual Music Festival group entries.

Over a hundred students entered solo and duet items of the 74th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival, and due to the fifth wave of the pandemic, not all were able to compete in their respective categories. Nevertheless, our students obtained 17 First places, 12 Second places and 13 Third places, including the Champion in the open scholarship class Hong Kong Strings Scholarship for Stringed Instruments (Charlotte Woo), winner of the open Original Composition class (Angelyne Wong), as well as the 1st runner up in the RTHK Radio 4 Chinese Instruments Scholarship (Ko Hon Yiu). Meanwhile the Piano Quartet, comprising Charlotte Woo, Cindy Cheung, Julita Lo and Bernice Wong, also took part in the Festival and was awarded Gold in the Piano Ensemble class.

In April, over the special vacation, we continued with our 2021/22 Concerto Competition and had the good fortune to conduct video auditions for our talented soloists. Our girls performed to a very high level, and after hours of consideration and deliberation, six winners were chosen: Charlotte Woo (Violin), Julita Lo (Cello), Bernice Wong (Viola), Angelyne Wong (Guzheng), Zita Lau (Soprano), and Wong Si (Oboe). There were also three honourable mentions, namely: Sophie Leung (Violin), Ng Sum Yin (Percussion) and Yoyo Ko (Guzheng).

The pandemic eased as we progressed towards the end of April, and in May we were able to resume face-to-face rehearsals for fully vaccinated students. The girls’ eagerness to make music together can hardly be overlooked - the choristers and instrumentalists continued to rehearse tirelessly through the summer months, in preparation for the performances and masterclasses that took place during the first week of August. Both the Summer Concert and the Concerto Concert were held to a packed audience, as parents, teachers, old girls and friends all returned to 1 Jordan Road, truly in the spirit of “One family unbroken.”

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

- 2021 Speech Day reception - instrumental ensembles
- Christmas carolling at 2021 Mini Bazaar
- 2021 JSMA Competition - Guzheng Ensemble: Gold Award
- 7th International Zheng Contest (Hong Kong Regional Trials & Finals) - Guzheng Ensemble: Gold Award
- 2021 Hong Kong Youth Music Interflows - Chinese Ensemble: Gold Award
- 2021 Hong Kong Youth Music Interflows - Percussion Ensemble: Gold Award
- 74th Hong Kong Schools Music Festival - Piano Ensemble: Gold Award
- Production of Music Video 《我和我的祖國》 by EDB for the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of the HKSAR
- 2022 Chinese Literary Club performance - Guzheng Ensemble & Chinese Orchestra
- 2022 Hong Kong Inter-School Choral Festival - Intermediate & Junior Choirs: Gold Award
- 2022 DBS Homecoming Concerts - Senior & Junior Mixed Choirs
- 第六屆青樂杯國際古箏比賽 - Guzheng Ensemble: Gold Award
- 2022 JSMA Competition - Guzheng Ensemble (results to be announced)

We are indeed very proud of our girls who were able to persist and achieve so much during such difficult times. In particular, I would like to mention the achievement of two students in the 2022 graduating class: Wong Pui-ying, who garnered an Honourable mention at the Musicus Society 2022 Young Artist Audition, will continue professional Violin studies in Austria; and Ng Hoi Yin, who will pursue her

degree in Percussion performance at Royal College of Music on a full-scholarship.

Looking back at yet another year filled with contingencies and frequent cancellations, we remain exceedingly grateful for the times that we could make music together, which would not have been possible without the dedication and unwavering support from students, conductors, parents, colleagues, alumnae, and especially our Performing Arts Director Mr. Leung Kin Fung, and our Headmistress, Mrs. Stella Lau, for their unfailing guidance and for providing the many opportunities to the Music Department.