

ASEAN Youth Camp Viet Nam 2010 "DRAGON: Legend in ASEAN Culture"

Camp Reflection Report

By Nurhidayah Binte Moliano (Photojournalist – Singapore)

ASEAN Youth Camp Hanoi 2010 has managed to open up views on cultures and traditions of other fellow ASEAN countries, and China. It was really a great learning experience as I get to mingle and interact with the ASEAN delegates and sharing of thoughts and ideas on our cultures and art practices.

I am a photojournalist representing Singapore. On the first day of arrival to Hanoi, I was most drawn to the greenery and landscapes. It was a beautiful sight as there were busy streets with endless traffic flow that liven up the whole city and all kinds of street vendors selling everything from food to clothes. The Vietnamese people I encountered were humble yet friendly. We stayed at the Thang Loi Hotel and it was awesome as the hotel overlooks a lake. On the first night, we had to set up our country's exhibits at the ASEAN Cultural Space exhibition. I put up my two photos that were a part of my Final Year Project in school. My roommate, a Vietnamese delegate named Dziep was really welcoming. Her hospitality overwhelms me and as the days goes by, we began to open to each other and became buddies! The laughter, jokes and learning each other languages and knowing the translation was really fun as that makes the whole trip enjoyable. I also learnt some Vietnamese song from my roommate and I taught her some in my Malay language!

On the second day, we had our country's presentation which I acted. It was nerve-wrecking as I am not a theatre actor but a photojournalist. It was definitely a totally new experience for me. In the end, our team had fun acting out the skit and working as a team. My photojournalist group had a workshop and our instructor brought us to downtown Hanoi to capture the daily lives of the Vietnamese on camera and to be part of the whole experience by walking, seeing and observing. I observed that the lanes have all the shops organized in such a way that each lane sells a specific item. For example one lane sells clothes, and another sells souvenir items and so on. For me, that

was really interesting and there are just so many lanes that we might get lost as a tourist. Also, communicating with the shopkeepers was difficult but I believe we could still do so through other means such as hand gestures, and most importantly a smile. Surprisingly, the shopkeepers could understand what I was trying to say and I could understand what they wanted to say! Having a Vietnamese roommate really helps too, as she would be there and be my translator.

We went to the Bo De pagoda to visit the orphanage. It was sad to hear of their stories and to see them in such a situation. Seeing them reminded me of my childhood times as most of them in the homes are toddlers and young children. Our team prepared goodie bags for them and they were glowing with happiness and excitement! It was truly an eye opener and it made me appreciate life more, especially the small things in life.

We spent a night on the boat at Halong Bay. I was fascinated by the beautiful natural rocks and seascape of Halong Bay. Honestly, that was my first time I saw such a breathtaking sight! Going through the caves reminded me of the scenes in Indiana Jones! It is almost like a movie setting and so wonderful that I told myself I want to bring my family and friends to Halong Bay again. We had fun interactive activities with singing and dancing among the delegates that night. Everyone had so much fun and didn't want the night to go end.

After the cruise, it was back to the hotel. We prepared for our photo exhibition for the closing ceremony. All the photos that I took were given to my instructor to be selection. The closing ceremony was held at the roof top of the hotel and it was an amazing site! But unfortunately, it rained that evening and the photos that we put up had to be covered up from the rain. All activities had to be taken indoors as well. But yet, the ceremony went on successfully and everyone was happy mingling and taking photos with each other for memories as it was the last day of the camp.

That evening, it was time to say goodbye to all the delegates. I felt emotional as I made some good friends from my photojournalist group, and especially my roommate. But it was not all sad because we had plans to go on a trip together! I made some good international friends, and I learnt how to

view things in a differently in photography. Most importantly, thanks to this trip, it has left me with wonderful memories!

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CAMP REFLECTIONS REPORT

By: Tan Su-Min Clara (Music - Singapore)

Our Singapore team, comprising of students from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and School of the Arts led by Ms. Ingrid Tay (Head of Delegation) left Singapore for Hanoi on 23rd April.

On arrival, we were met by our Vietnam officers and proceed to Thang Loi Hotel, the officially designated place of accommodation, which was also the venue where the ASEAN Youth Camp is held.

The host for the event has done good pre-event planning as participants, upon arrival, were efficiently issued with identification tags, Camp T-Shirts & accessories, allocation of rooms and programme notes for the activities to be conducted throughout the period of stay.

Participants were grouped according to their areas of participation; Craftsman, Traditional Musician, Dancer, Visual Artist and Photojournalist.

Briefing on what was the purpose of the gathering of youth to participate in this Camp was highlighted and the essence was "To foster closer understanding of culture amongst the youth of our ASEAN neighbours and the spirit of co-operation & unity".

My discipline is in Traditional Music and I was assigned to the Music Group. Interaction, intra and inter group and with the assigned instructors was good & relaxed right from the start. It was both a privilege and challenge to collaborate with like-minded fellow musicians playing their traditional instruments. The group experimented, interpreted and improvised on an impromptu basis on a musical theme composed by the music instructors, Mr Ho Hoai Anh and Mr Hong Bui. It was also an opportunity to share with the rest of the musicians the role of each instrument as

accompaniment in traditional music. Having had a formal education in music has greatly enabled me to sight-read & understand the notations and assist some fellow musicians who were not familiar with Western musical notations.

Apart from the workshops conducted, we had the opportunity to experience the various popular foods of the participating countries, view their crafts & artistic talents, their national costumes.

Despite the tight schedule, all delegates were treated to a cruise on Halong Bay and we stopped over at some caves. It was also heartening to visit one of the orphanages, Bo De Pagoda where we interacted with the orphans and showered them with gifts. This made me reflect and appreciated the privilege of having one's parents. The children were very elated upon receiving gifts and instead of feeling withdrawn, they approached us for gifts.

We toured the Literature Temple and enjoyed the Water puppet show in Hanoi. The puppet show was really an eye-opener because we do not come across this in Singapore and it reminded me of the Chinese puppet show where they also have a live ensemble to provide background music to create and emphasize the different effects and mood of the puppet show.

The closing ceremony marking the end of the camp was a memorable finale as through the short one week of getting to know our ASEAN friends, everyone with sincerity went around exchanging gifts and mementos and contacts and this signify the success of the purpose of the camp, as friendship and co-operation has been made.

It indicates that regardless of nationalities, ethnicities, cultures & languages, there is no barrier when people come together to share common interests.
