

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

By Siti Hajar (Brunei Darussalam)

In a world where so many changes are taking place, it is of no surprise that some of the most important things that have made us what we are today become distorted and unless something is done to ensure that youths are reminded of their roots, shown how our ancestors lived and what they used to practice, our respective histories will remain that way – just history.

The ASEAN Youth Camp programme is one of the many ways where us youngsters can further develop ourselves in terms of learning more of our own background considering that a lot of preparations had to be made prior to the start of the programme.

Because of the demands of the programme, we had to equip ourselves with so much historical knowledge that, personally speaking, it opened up so many doors to dig deep and discover what we wouldn't have discovered on our own accord.

It has allowed us to appreciate where we come from, allowed us to appreciate what our ancestors have done for us and, most importantly, it has taught us how important it is to ensure that the efforts our ancestors have made are preserved, remembered and shared with our own future generation as well as with the rest of the world.

Furthermore, aside from just learning about other ASEAN countries from textbooks and classrooms, we were also given the chance to know our counterparts on a more personal level and this has thus given us the chance to share among ourselves what is great about our own countries, listen to how great other countries are and gave us the opportunity to diminish any misunderstanding or misconception that we may have come across over the past years.

For the most part, the programme has given us the opportunity to build bridges with so many people across so many countries and this is perhaps the best aspect of the camp.

So many friendships were made and so many bonds were made even stronger within the one-week period and the great thing about this is that those who were able to make friends know that these friendships are the types one can rely on should a decision is made to visit other ASEAN countries.

Overall, the programme is one of the best experiences an individual should not miss out on if given the chance. (Among other things) not a lot of people can actually say they celebrated on a cruise ship in the middle of Halong Bay.

The camp was the kind of experience where one will say that it was "Once-in-a-lifetime" and, as with all the other participants, it was an honour to be a part of this year's camp and hopefully, in future, another Bruneian brethren will be able to echo the same feeling.

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By Salehin Haji Salleh (Visual Artist - Brunei Darussalam)

The ASEAN youth camp is one of the key projects of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI) with the aim of building a stronger regional identity by raising awareness of South East Asia's history and heritage through the arts. Fifty five young creative talents from ten ASEAN member states and China gathered in Ha Noi (the City of Ascending Dragon) from 23rd – 29th April 2010 to participate in this year's ASEAN Youth Camp under the theme of "Dragon: Legend in ASEAN Culture".

We stayed at Thang Loi 4 stars hotel during the programme. They showed good hospitality. The organizer did not served halal food, however they provided us with alternatives such as seafood and breads. Liaison officers were assigned to each country delegation to manage their affairs and to make sure the programme flows well and smoothly. Unfortunately, it was disappointing that our LO was always absent when we needed him the most. We were given rooms which accommodate two people from different countries but of the same skills. This is to let us bond with the other delegates.

Various workshops were conducted to harness our talents. We were grouped according to our talents – visual art, dance, music, photo journalist and pottery. Each workshop is led by professional instructors. From the visual art group, we were asked to make one individual artwork relating to our background and personal skills. The finished product of this workshop is exhibited during the closing ceremony. All art materials and accessories provided at the workshop are of professional qualities/standards. It was quite difficult for us to get ideas and make a piece of art within a short period of time, but with help of our instructor, Mr. Tiew and fellow members, we managed to pull it off together.

The program involved a tour to the Museum of Fine Art where we learned about the history of art. Vietnamese Lacquer paintings are most popular where they make use of paints, sea-shells, mother of pearl and eggshells which are then coated with hot lacquer to make interesting effects. Others include painting on Vietnamese silk and woodblock printing.

Other activities include a charity programme for orphans at Bo De Pagoda. The Water Puppetry show at Thang Long – Epic story lines were played with many different puppets using traditional scenes of Vietnamese life. The play was accompanied by traditional musicians. This was followed by an outrageous overnight boat trip across Ha Long Bay.

During the closing ceremony, all ASEAN delegates made their performances. We exhibited the artworks and skills which we had worked on and refined together throughout the workshop / camp. We can see the strong bonds and cooperation between delegates in a well synchronized performance by the music and dance groups. Exhibitions by photojournalists, pottery and visual art group showed many similarities and differences between them. The ceremony was supposed to be held out door but unfortunately the weather was not cooperative. The working committee had to improvise and moved the ceremony inside. This made the ceremony a bit chaotic and disruptive because the hall is small. Sadly, our exhibitions were left outside and unseen.

Throughout the seven-day workshop, we had learned about one another's culture and history through arts. We shared our experiences and through this we build friendship and understanding. After sharing, learning and spending enjoyable moments together, I realized that we are not different after all.

I personally think this youth camp would have been perfect if it was organized and prepared properly. Apart from the absence of our Liaison officers, it would have been great if they provide halal food separately because as they know other Muslim delegates would be attending this camp / workshop i.e. Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore as well.

The activities and visits that I experienced in this ASEAN Youth Camp were exciting and memorable. The instructors were of great help and I had learned a lot from them especially Mr. Tiew in refining our artwork with his suggestions and teachings during the workshops. The theme of the programme "Dragon: Legends of ASEAN culture" make me acknowledge further the culture in our history and others that I have never would have known.

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What I Felt about ASEAN Youth Camp in Viet Nam

By Laras Nintyas (Visual Artist - Indonesia)

ASEAN Youth Camp in Vietnam was totally a new experience for me. It was short break from my hectic daily activities. There, I met new friends from another ASEAN countries plus China. We exchanged words, including some bad words and I found out there are some similarities in our words. Like Indonesia with Thailand, or with Philippine. We were able to blend easily, maybe because the program was designed for us to be blended at the end. The language barrier still exist since many delegates spoke english in falter way and had limited vocab. But, since some countries has similar language, like Indonesia with Malaysia, Brunei and Singapore or Thailand with Laos, then we could help each other in speaking english with other countries delegates.

One thing I didn't comfy with was about dishes. I didn't suit with the taste, the serving order, and the pork contained because I am a moslem so I had to be quite selective for what I consumed. The weirdest was the dish order that the steamed rice always served right before dessert so it was like eating backward and this reminded me when I was in leadership training program with Marine Force. Despite all of that, I love the seafood dishes served during our stay in Ha Long Bay. The Halal food that continuously served for moslem delegates after we got back from Ha Long Bay was really helped me with taste, rich in ingredients and taste. So it was like my problem solved.

The first visual art workshop meeting result already gave us assignment, to make 2 artworks for closing ceremony exhibition. The first artwork was depended on us to decide as long as it cope with the theme, the Asian Dragon. The second's should be our dragon's collaboration, the ASEAN dragon. We decided to divide this artwork into 12 dragon's part, so after you know which part you are in then you could draw your part by your own style. We were excited but unfortunately so limited time to finish them both. Worsen, the first artwork deadline was the day after tomorrow, right after we went back from Ha Long Bay. And the worst, that the drawing materials were not ready yet until tomorrow night after we were back from city tour, so we could not started our work.

The night after we got back from city tour, we supposedly had workshop meeting with the instructor to gave him our first artwork sketch but I was glad it was cancelled. I was too tired and haven't made any sketch, so do most of my visual art friends. But we still held meeting without instructor to got our drawing material and clearing the second artwork concept. Then, started that night I drew my first artwork little by little. Thanks to Tommy who helped me a lot.

Ha Long Bay was wonderful, love the scenery and the ship hotel experience. The night event was the most remarkable regardless the chilly sea-wind (I almost could not stand it!). We were singing, dancing, and did some group game with punishment. Even though I was not so active but I had much talk with some friends. That night made all of us closer to each other.

In the last day, my instructor eventually cancelled the second artwork since we had not finished our first. I pitied it because I thought that should be our priority, to made a collaboration artwork. Since it cancelled, so after we finally finished our first artwork we set up to the exhibition space and declared ourselves as the first group that finished the workshop for the first time. The closing ceremony was designed outdoor, and outdoor was always a good idea if it was not raining. But that disaster was coming and made the arranged event messed up. So, the setting were moving indoor and I thought many of the programmes cancelled, including Indonesia performance that we already prepared to perform in the closing ceremony.

Overall, my feeling toward ASEAN Youth Camp was more likely a vacation than a cultural exchange program. But, at the end we blended and still keep contact through Facebook up until now. Still, I was a bit pitied for the late allowance given and very short shopping time. I hope the next ASEAN Youth Camp could be held with better preparation, coordination and management. I look forward to be able to participate in the similar event like this. Because for me, this kind of event very useful to expand network and boarden horizon.

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Hanoi

By Aditia Noviansyah (Photojournalist – Indonesia)

Hanoi is the capital city of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam which covers 927.39 square kilometers and is inhabited by 2.736.400 residents. The city that was built in 1010 during the reign of King Ly Cong Van has now transformed into one of the major cities in the world, a city that never sleeps.

The 2010 ASEAN Youth Camp was held at Hanoi, Vietnam. Young people from ten ASEAN countries and China assembled into one. Introducing every culture they have to be assimilated into one, into a climax performance where every eye creates a photographic result in tune with the current momentum, fascinating dance movements, soft musical melodies, everlasting ceramic creations, and bold lines that are drawn on imaginative canvasses.

Stepping on other people's homeland is, indeed, a new experience and it makes us feel awkward to create something there, to leave a great accomplishment for our beloved country and homeland, Indonesia. In a short period of time we are given the burden to deliver the best result. There are only a few seconds in which we must use our individual experiences to show the quality level of Indonesian people.

Thang Long is the first destination of the photography group's journey. We walked among old buildings made in Chinese and French design. The accompaniment of sound pollution produced by motor vehicles made a harmonious tone, and rows of red trishaws – a traditional vehicle – made an everlasting memory.

Ha Long Bay, which is about 180 kilometers from Hanoi is one of God's masterpiece. The perfect rock cliff setting, the gentle and peaceful waves, the cave with exotic lighting, all of them made a priceless experience for youths involved in ASEAN Youth Camp 2010 in Vietnam.

During those 168 hours, new experiences are made, bringing with it the pride of youth from Vietnam, and I hope we can benefit from that experience and it can be a good story for our friends in Indonesia.

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By Audrie Yeo Sui Luan (Photojournalist – Malaysia)

It has been 3 days since we leaved the Asean Youth Camp 2010 in Hanoi and I am really missing all the great times spent there as well as the new friends I made there. This was my first time joining a youth camp and I really enjoyed it thoroughly.

I enrolled as a photojournalist in the camp but I had never really taken serious photos and done serious photography before going to the camp. The camp and beautiful Hanoi both inspired me to capture and photograph moments of Hanoi and memories of the camp. I learn how to properly use a DSLR in manual mode and not to mention picked up a few extra skills and technique on how to get interesting photography effects from other photojournalist from the other countries like Indonesia, Singapore, Vietnam and Philippine.

I recall when we, team Malaysia touched down and arrived at Hanoi, I was already busy taking pictures but unfortunately not good ones. It was more like a warm up session for me on using the camera and getting used to the manual mode, often testing around to see what a certain twig of the iris and shutter speed can do to the picture. Joining the workshops arrange by the ASEAN Youth Camp was inspiring and beneficial because we got to tour around the Hanoi city taking lots of pictures especially the old quarters. This gave us a lot of subjects and moments to photograph, not to mention a lot of room to improve our understanding on photography.

After the first 2 days of the photojournalist workshop, the photojournalist all had to hand in our memory card to our instructor Mr. Thanh before leaving to Halong Bay. We were told that the photos we took will be compiled and carefully selected for a joined exhibition during the closing ceremony of the ASEAN Youth Camp 2010. I learned from the Vietnam delegates that Mr. Thanh was one of the best photographers in Vietnam and there were a few really good photographers within our group. Being an amateur just beginning to learn about photography, I was really nervous on how my pictures will turn out and what they would think about my photos especially Mr. Thanh's. None the less, I kept finding moments and interesting subjects to photograph especially at the old quarters.

The old quarter was such an inspiring place to photograph. The Vietnamese lifestyle and culture is so vividly rich throughout Hanoi and the old quarters and everywhere you look is something different and interesting to photograph. We were given only 2 hours to complete our task and it was difficult because we not only had to take photos but also learned to judge what is a good moment to capture and was is not. We also learned to observe the people and spot a good picture fast because a good moment sometimes comes and goes in a flash.

The following morning, me and two other photographers, Dzeip and Hidayah got up really early to go photograph the old ladies doing Tai Chi and fan dance by the lake and we managed to photograph some good photos. The visit to the Bo De pagoda and the Water puppet theater was also inspirational and I manage to capture some great photos. Despite the water puppet show being staged in Vietnamese, I still enjoyed the show and find it really funny. It was truly one of a kind.

When we were at Halong Bay, a new side of Vietnam was revealed. Although the weather was bad the day we arrived, Halong Bay was still one of a kind and absolutely breathe taking. The circumstances were different compared to in Hanoi due to the bad weather but this created a new realm for me to play around and try different techniques to get good pictures. The caves were also interesting to photograph. Because there were a lot of us, the organizers had to split us up into 2 different cruise. Some of us sailed and spend a night on board the mini Hanoi Opera while the others sailed a bigger cruise known as the Emotion Hanoi.

After a whole day of sights seeing and cave discovering at Halong Bay, we join boats and had a fantastic barbeque dinner. All the delegates from different countries got to know each other even better and we all had a great time. During the 5 minutes presentation of each country on the first day, everyone all got an inside look into the different art formed, culture and traditions of other countries but when were on board of the cruise ship during the barbeque dinner, we all learned a little bit more about the culture and traditions of the other delegates from other country after getting to know them better and I find that very beneficial. After spending a night at Halong Bay, we headed back to Hanoi and turned in our memory cards to Mr. Thanh for the exhibition.

Some of us photographers talk about the photos we took and talked about how to improve and make them better. I learned a lot from the comments. By day 4, my photography has improved tremendously compared to the photos I took during the first day. During the closing ceremony exhibition, 3 of our best works from every photojournalist are being selected and put up on the wall. It was exciting to see our work being displayed on the wall.

I really had a great time during the Asean Youth Camp and really happy to get to meet people from different countries. Everyone at the camp, the organizers and especially the liaison officers, Pearl(Ngau Ain) and Haa was very helpful to us. It was a wonderful experience that I will treasure for long time. From the camp, I took home new friends, new memories, new experience, knowledge in the diverse Asian culture and photography skills, lots of photos and a new hobby, photography. I will miss Hanoi and the people I met at camp and also the delicious Pha. I wish to return to Hanoi again someday and maybe a gathering of everyone from Asean Youth Camp 2010.

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A Glimpse of ASEAN Culture

by Aki Rainier L. Tsukada (Philippine Delegate-Dance)

"One Culture, One ASEAN!" These are the words that articulated the lips of each and every ASEAN countries' delegates. The words that inspired all of the participants to do whatever they want to do that progressed the recently held ASEAN Youth Camp 2010 last April 23-29 which was held in Ha Noi, Viet Nam. It was a very exciting trip after all to be in Ha Noi to deal with total strangers who became my acquaintances, links and facebook friends as well. We may be separated by land but we connect by heart.

It is still vivid in my mind when Gianne, Audrie, I cried at each other at the airport as we see ourselves leaving. It's not a shame for us to express our feelings in front of many people. And imagine, in that short span of time, we can't even afford to lose each other. But it's not depressing after all. We promised each other to visit one's home country once we get a stable job.

I can clearly remember Wan (Malaysia), Wulan (Indonesia), Neesa (Brunei), Trang (Viet Nam), Laura (Singapore), Xu Rongrong (China) and lots of more friends from the dance group. I can still visibly remember the times of our practices with our mentor, Ms. Tuyet Minh. I can also remember the happy memories in the van when Wan and I were bullying the girls by pronouncing their names hardly which is conveyed by the girls then. Our liaison officer, Ms. Pearl for the undoubted help and understanding for us. And the whole trip in Ha Noi.

Also, I can recall Audrie (Malaysia), Kenry (Malaysia), Diep (Viet Nam), the liaison officers and many more from the camp who in one way or another helped me to express myself and share what I wanted and needed to share about Philippines as regards to Films, Dances, Traditions, Customs and lots of more. Of course, the Philippine delegation! Sir Rosswil, Anna, Alee, Gianne and Jophel. There are no dull moments spent together with you guys! I'm very happy to be with you...And last but not least, the persons behind this event. From Philippines to Viet Nam. It was a very perfect event and camp because of you.

To all the persons stated in this simple article, my warmest gratitude and sincerest congratulations to us all! See you all again in the near future and let us live and love the ASEAN way!

Note:

- This article is not after the experience in Ha Noi since a lot of delegates will write about it as presumed.
- This article is more of the camaraderie among the ASEAN delegates. Thank you for lending some time reading this.

Learnings in the camp-gianne:

We started out as unfamiliar people coming from unfamiliar places and people who spoke different languages. But these differences has been a stepping stone for all of us to get to know each other. I have seen that through our art, we were able to communicate clearly, we learned how to be sensitive with each other in lots of ways.

The Activities involved the participation of everyone, and mostly the interaction between the delegations. During our first day, we had a glimpse of every country through their country presentation and exhibition. The following days, we toured around hanoi and learned a lot about vietnam and it's rich culture, we saw some of their preparations for their one thousand years. My groupmates and I went to the pottery village were we saw their rich and authentic glazed ceramics and pottery. We cruised in Halong Bay with mixed emotions in the ship called halong emotion where we saw the beauty of the one thousand islands. We had so much fun during the dinner party on the ship where we shared local food, saw performances from every country and danced all night long. The last day had been the sharing of every group and what we all have done, wherein we had the performances, the exhibit, gift giving, goodbyes.. All of these experiences gave me the realization that we were not so different from each other after all. The last night was filled with smiling faces; familiar faces.

Yes, we were in a place that was very different from where we all came from, but we managed to call it home during the past few days. The most difficult part was saying goodbye to this place, saying goodbye to the people who began as foreign to all of us but we now call, family.

ASEAN Youth Camp 2010 has been about the cultivation of a new masterpiece, a masterpiece that was made up of every one of us and our experiences as persons and as artists. This masterpiece: The bond that we made with each other, will forever stay in our hearts. This bond stands strong and we all hold on to the hope of seeing each other in the near future.The camp was great, awesome to be exact!

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Learning in the Camp

By Gianneluisa Gonzales (Pottery – Philippines)

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Artistry + Cultural Diversity + Solidarity = ASEAN Youth Camp

By Jophel Botero Ybioso (Philippines)

I got excited after seeing the announcement about 2010 ASEAN Youth Camp through the website of National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA). All aspiring applicants have undergone rigorous panel interview after submitting the requirements and pertinent documents. We faced the challenge of the board composed of our country's high profile art practitioners.

After a few weeks, I received a call from Ms. Ruleth Salvador of International Affairs Office – NCCA informing me that I'm chosen as one of the six – member Philippine delegation. Then I said to myself, "Thank God for this blessing!" It's a blessing because it's my 3rd time to travel abroad as well as an honor for me to represent our beloved country and school, Polytechnic University of the Philippines. I'm also thankful to have a recommendation from Dr. Liceria D. Lorenzo, our College Dean, Prof. Reyhan Viray, Visual Arts Committee Head of University Center for Culture and the Arts (UCCA) and Prof. Segundo Dizon, UCCA Director. Their endorsement contributed to my application. On the first day of our meeting, I was eager to know personally my co – delegates and Head of Delegation.

We came up with a big idea after series of brainstorming and conceptualization. We were confident enough that our concept for the country presentation will be appreciated. As a collaborative work, our Head of Delegation, Mr. Rosswill Hilario did the relevant input and video editing. He was also the one responsible for capturing scenes of me doing my photo shoot as well as Rina Lee Garibay and Gianneluisa Gonzales making their pottery and painting in the Philippine High School for the Arts situated at the mystic Mount Makiling. Marianna Carminia Achacoso provided a musical background using a traditional kulintang while Aki Rainier Tsukada made the choreography of Malong Dance. Mr. Hilario also included my photographic works while Ana and I did the voice – over for the video presentation.

On April 22, we temporarily bid goodbye to our family and friends to attend the much – awaited ASEAN Youth Camp. During our departure until we arrived at Vietnam we wore a Philippine Flag – inspired jacket. Our group flew from Manila to Bangkok, Thailand for almost 3 hours. At the Bangkok International Suvarnabhumi Airport we waited about 8 hours for our connecting flight to Hanoi. While we were on trip inside the airplane, I didn't miss the chance to capture the splendor of the clouds and sky and breathtaking sceneries. We arrived at the Noi Bai International Airport in Hanoi around 8:35 in the morning of April 23. Although we were tired already, the feelings of excitement were still on our faces. Two friendly liaison officers met our group. Since we were excited to have them as our new friends, we gladly introduced ourselves and talked to them eagerly on our way to the hotel. Big smiles from the ASEAN Youth camp organizers warmly welcomed all the delegations.

The time when I set foot to Thang Loi Hotel, I immediately felt the relaxing atmosphere. Thang Loi Hotel is a place with splendid view, touched with the spirit of fresh air, located on the bank of picturesque West Lake. After receiving my room key, I went upstairs to look for Room 310. From there, I met my roommate Mr. Aditia Noviansyah, a very good Indonesian photojournalist. On the first night, all the delegation got busy in preparing for the exhibition. I put on view my award – winning photographs depicting Philippine culture while Rina Lee and Gianneluisa displayed their finest contemporary artworks. I also helped Ana and Aki in setting – up a mannequin representing the traditional Filipina.

On April 24, the much–anticipated event happened. The Opening Ceremony of ASEAN Youth Camp was filled with rich cultural traditional performances. Traditional costumes with sophisticated designs from 10-member ASEAN countries. China made the momentous event more colorful. Our delegation presented a Malong Dance backed–up with a collaborative video presentation about Philippine Arts and Culture. The Camp Director, Dr. Nguyen Van Tinh gave his inspirational message to everyone. Assisted with the Guests of Honor, they graciously opened the exhibition showcasing each country's tradition, arts, culture and identity. I and other delegates had the chance to be interviewed by the media. After having a sumptuous lunch, workshops and orientation

started. Mr. Nguyen Viet Thanh, an excellent photographer was introduced as our Photojournalism instructor. Upon knowing other delegates, we began the so-called "photohunting" at downtown. Hanoi offered a lot of fascinating subjects ranging from human-interest, street scenes, landmarks, cityscape, etc. Hanoi is considerably a unique place with rich history. Most of the people we've seen in the market area were wearing traditional hat. I captured a lot of unguarded moments along the busy streets. We also walked around Hoan Kiem Lake and did some picture-taking. Hoan Kiem Lake which literally means "Lake of the Returned Sword" or "Lake of the Restored Sword", is a lake in the historical center of Hanoi, the capital city of Vietnam. The lake is one of the major scenic spots in the city and serves as a focal point for its public life. After having a great time there, we went back to hotel for a welcome dinner.

On April 25, we moved to Bo De Pagoda, located in Gia Lam District, 500m northern to Hanoi. Aside from its historic architecture and spiritual value, Bo De Pagoda is also a shelter to orphans and homeless people. I can't explain the feeling the time when we arrived at Bo De Pagoda. I think it was mixed emotion between happiness and sympathy; happiness for sharing the gift of joy and sympathy for the abandoned children. For me, the moment was made more meaningful because of the rare opportunity of having a charity work involving diversified people in a foreign country. I also observed that the children's faces were transformed into a cheerful one after receiving some love and care in simple way from the organizers and delegates. The charity of work has ended but the feeling of appreciation and realization had just begun. I realized that we are still fortunate enough to have family living together in place called "home". Afterwards, we went to a certain restaurant. Pho, a special and typical identity of Vietnamese food was served to us. Then we went to Literature Temple and I did some photo documentation there.

The day would not be complete without watching one of the most well-known traditional folk art found only in Vietnam – the Water Puppetry. It's a form of entertainment inspired by the annual flooding of the lowlands and has its origins in the Red River Delta of Vietnam developed around tenth century A.D. Water Puppetry has evolved over the centuries from folk art to a more established form of art. From simple theater stages made of bamboo, wood and cloth, it eventually

transformed into permanent structures. Its high cultural, historical and aesthetic value made Water Puppetry a must-see entertainment. After enjoying the exclusive show, we moved to Hoan Kiem and from there we had some photo opportunity. Then, we roamed around the Ancient Quarter for a shopping experience. I bought various souvenir items like scarf, t-shirt and key chains. On the evening, at the Wild Lotus restaurant, Cha' ca was served to us. It was also the time when bonding with new friends took place.

Delectable breakfast commenced the day of April 26. All of us got excited for the Halong Bay Tour. Along the way, we stopped for while in a certain place where ceramics with intricate designs and Vietnamese products were on display for sale. After about 3 hours of land trip, we reached the port of Halong Bay at noontime. Then the much-anticipated moment of boarding the cruise ship, luxurious and magnificent Halong Emotion came. The time when we got on board priceless smiles were on our faces. After taking a delicious meal, I made my stay more memorable by capturing the scenic Ha Long Bay. Around 4 p.m. when we went to Amazing Caves. The impressive rock formations, stalactites and stalagmites with fine indoor lighting attracted us to savor the moment while we were inside the Amazing Caves. On the night aboard Halong Emotion Cruise, delegates from Opera Cruise joined us together for a dinner filled with happiness and camaraderie. The dinner was followed by a show time featuring music and dance performances from each country. Parlor Games and high energy dance grooves made the night livelier. It was such a never dull moment in the cruise.

When I woke up early in the next morning, I realized that the end of our stay in Halong Emotion Cruise was fast approaching. We savored more beautiful sights and scenes and myriad scenes as we moved to Fishing Village. A floating school added to the distinctiveness of the place. We immersed ourselves in the dazzle of the paradise view of Halong Bay. Ha Long Bay literally means "Descending Dragon Bay" is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and a popular travel destination. The bay features thousands of limestone karsts and isles in various sizes and shapes. The evolution of the karst in this bay has taken 20 million years under the impact of the tropical wet climate. The geo-diversity of the environment in the area has created biodiversity, including a

tropical evergreen biosystem, oceanic and sea shore biosystem. Ha Long Bay is home to 14 endemic floral species and 60 endemic faunal species. What is also interesting about Halong Bay is that in 2009, the New 7 Wonders Foundation, which runs the New Seven Wonders of the World program, included Halong Bay on its list of nominations as one the World's 7 Natural Wonders. Having a distinct charm, Halong Bay boasts of numerous islands and majestic rock formations ideal for travelers and tourists who are in need of momentary escape from their busy and dynamic lifestyle.

After our tiring yet wonderful experience in Halong Bay, I promised to myself to come back someday and marvel again its world-class beauty. After the Halong Bay tour, we took our lunch and went on to document rehearsal of dance delegates. But before that I submitted first to our instructor all the images I've taken during the photo workshops and activities of ASEAN Youth Camp. Then, I joined with the Head of Delegation on their time around the market area.

April 28 was started with usual delicious breakfast followed by a meeting of all the Head of Delegations and workshops among other groups. I was surprised when our instructor showed us all the photos that he selected for the exhibition. Most of my personal preferences were also his choice. I was then delighted to hear the positive comments from our instructor. Coordinators and Heads of Delegations also liked my photographic works. Then I moved around the hotel to capture some scenes. Afterwards, we took our lunch and accompanied Mr. Hilario in the market area of Hanoi.

In the evening, another much – anticipated event happened. The Closing Ceremony was packed with colorful memories. Music and dance presentation and photo opportunity with one another highlighted the night. Sentimental gifts and souvenir items were given to one another. Though the ceremony has ended, some delegates invited us for a simple gathering in a certain room to cherish our last night of stay in Hanoi. It was around 3 a.m. when I decided to go back to my room and had a little rest. The next morning, I didn't miss the chance to give my award-winning and most valuable photographs to the organizers and delegates as a sign of appreciation and warm regard.

It's almost 7:00 in the morning when we left the Thang Loi Hotel where ASEAN Youth Camp happened with lots of precious memories we will keep forever in our hearts and minds.

Few days after the ASEAN Youth Camp, we had a so – called “Post – Camp” in ICAM Room of NCCA and Harbour Square in Manila. What we did was a group meeting and planning for the next activities. We also continued our interview needed for the documentary video about our journey to ASEAN Youth Camp which supposed to be finished by the end of May.

Another significant event happened when we're invited for a live t.v. guesting at the Sining – Gising, an arts and culture talk show of National Broadcasting Network (NBN – 4) hosted by former Executive Director of NCCA and current Presidential Adviser for Culture and the Arts, Hon. Cecile Guidote – Alvarez. During our live t.v. guesting, we shared our memorable experiences and video footages were presented. Some of our noteworthy artworks were also featured. As a sign of appreciation I offered my award – winning photographs to Hon. Cecile Guidote – Alvarez and other guests of the t.v. show such as Dr. Vilma Labrador (NCCA Chairman and Department of Education Undersecretary), Dr. Mona Valisno (Department of Education Secretary) and Mr. Rolando De Leon (2010 ITI Awardee and President of On – the – spot Artists Association).

Now, I'm hoping that more good things are going to happen after the ASEAN Youth Camp. In behalf of the Philippine Delegation, I'm grateful and very much thankful to the organizers from Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Vietnam, to the support given to us by National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) and especially to all the friends and people that I met and whom I shared my valuable time in Hanoi, Vietnam.

For a young artist like me, traveling abroad is dream come true. It immerses me in such wonderful places bounded by rich and diversified culture. Exploring interesting sceneries and meeting new people broadens and enriches my learning. One thing is for sure, our exhilarating experiences and precious memories in ASEAN Youth Camp will stay with us for life. The Philippine Delegation will

always cherish and treasure our journey to Hanoi, Vietnam. It truthfully proves that the group that travels together, stays together...

MY PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND REALIZATION

ASEAN Youth Camp is a key project of the ASEAN Committee on Culture and Information (ASEAN-COCI). It began as the ASEAN Youth Friend Programme, held in the Philippines in 1998 and Thailand in 1999. The aim was to build a stronger regional identity by raising awareness of Southeast Asia's history and heritage through the arts. The camp themed "Dragon: Legend in ASEAN Culture" was held to mark the 1,000th founding anniversary of Thang Long – Hanoi and the year that Vietnam takes over the ASEAN presidency.

Solidarity amidst cultural diversity. Spending valuable time with people from different countries was worthwhile for me. Singapore will also be the next host of 2012 ASEAN Youth Camp.

Exhilarating journey and enriching experience for all the participants of ASEAN Youth Camp.

ASEAN Region composed of Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam took the active role in the 2010 ASEAN Youth Camp including China. Since 2000, ASEAN Youth Camp has been doing—exposing young people to the arts, crafts and culture of ASEAN and contributing to the development of future cultural leadership in the region.

New friends, new discoveries and new experiences. In other words, Youth camp gives its participants a chance to widen one's network, horizons and knowledge.

Young brilliant artists from ASEAN Region and China were given a valuable opportunity to express their ideas, to share their talent, to showcase their exceptional works and to enrich their cross-cultural experience.

Opportunity to share one's culture and heritage and an opportune time to meet and mingle with diversified people having different language, religion and customs is what ASEAN Youth Camp was all about.

Understanding and Unity among ASEAN Region and China was a good reason for having ASEAN Youth Camp.

Thank you very much and God Bless to the ASEAN Youth Camp organizers and coordinators, National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), Heads of Delegation and Delegates who made my daily life from April 23–28 momentous and meaningful. I treasure you all.

History of Vietnam became rich because of its famous Water Puppetry, arts and crafts and famous landmarks. Halong Bay tour was also one of my most unforgettable experiences that brought joy and excitement.

Capturing the grandeur of Vietnam was like winning a prize in a photo competition. Camaraderie among the participants was also highlighted the ASEAN Youth Camp.

Art made my life worthwhile and blissful. As a Photographer, freezing those moments and taking photos of memories give more life to me. A simple life blessed with very good people whom I met during ASEAN Youth Camp.

Meaningful activities such as charity work at Bo De Pagoda, photo documentation, exhibition and tour around Vietnam were really memorable. Indeed, a celebration of life.

Philippine Delegation where I belonged was proud of being part of ASEAN Youth Camp. Philippines' rich arts, culture, identity were shared and made known. It's also an honor to represent my beloved country.

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!

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

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.

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

By Supasana Sirisaengtaksin (Thailand)

It was an unforgettable experience that I was very lucky to be a part of. It was a very fast week that everything had made me realized how little I know about my friends, ASEAN countries and China. Many enjoyable activities were held since the first day of the ASEAN Youth Camp since the very first day we arrived Hanoi.

The very first thing we all have to do was to finishing up the exhibition about our own country in the first night. And that was when we started to learn and share about each other and when a little bond has created among us. In the first official morning eleven manikins warring different but yet with the same essence of Asian traditional dresses were stand welcoming to all of us. But that was nothing when everyone came down with their own traditional clothes and performances. It was very a "love at first sight".

The camp was officially divided everyone into five groups of activities: dance, music, pottery, visual art, and photograph. But that did not stop our friendship between groups. Each group had their own activities relevant to their field under the theme "ASEAN, the legend of Dragon". From the activities, we had learned and shared each country different and similarity in those fields with a new expression of their traditional art and culture.

Apart from the activities related to each field, the host also brought us to the most beautiful overnight trip to Halong bay where we had so much fun day and night! Not only Halong Bay that we had explore Hanoi, but also the cute water puppet show and the old town where we can try traditional food and shop traditional products.

From the first day that dinner table were divided in countries till the last day that you can find any countries everywhere, the camp had given us so much that I can not write everything down in words. Although the camp had hended, but what is still going on is our relationship that will never ever end.
