



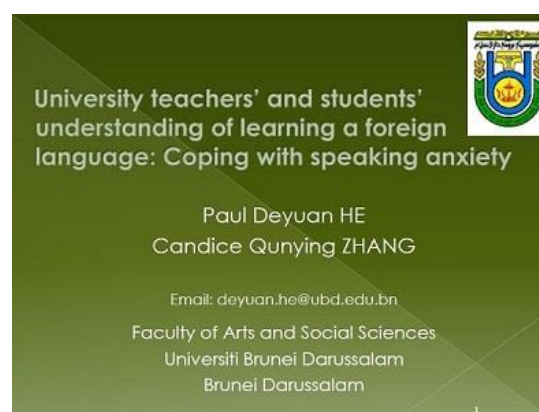
This is the first issue of the 2017/2018 edition covering news throughout the first semester of the 2017/2018 academic year.

The Faculty of Arts & Social Sciences (FASS) embodies a vibrant academic community of expert staff members as well as bright and creative students. *Discover FASS* will provide you with a glimpse of what FASS is all about. We hope you enjoy our FASS newsletter!

## FASS lecturer receives 'Best Paper Award'

Dr Paul Deyuan He of FASS and his wife Dr Candice Qunying Zhang were recently awarded the "Best Paper Award" at the 31st International Academic Conference held in June 2017 at King's College, London, UK, for their paper entitled "University Teachers' and Students' Understanding Of Learning a Foreign Language: Coping with Anxiety".

The organiser of the conference, the International Institute of Social and Economic Sciences, is a scholarly institution founded in 2011 with a mission to promote research and disseminate knowledge.



Dr Paul He & Dr Candice Zhang



The Best Paper Award

## Short film-screening by Advanced Photography students

A screening of short films created by students took place in Lecture Hall 2, ICTC Building at UBD on 18 November. A total of eight short films (each 10-minute long) made by students enrolled in the AC-4304 Advanced Photography module were screened during the two hour event, followed by a brief Q&A session. FASS faculty leaders and some staff members attended the screening.



*Lost in Time*



*J's Untold Story*



*Droqué*

The eight student short films included all the main genres, including narrative, documentary, experimental, and a mix of these genres, and they covered a variety of contents, from the 50th Golden Jubilee Celebrations of Sultan Hassanal Bolkiah's Accession to the Throne and a young Bruneian entrepreneur's start-up story, to some contemporary issues and amusement attractions in Brunei. The successful screening demonstrates that UBD students are both able and ready to embrace and contribute to the thriving digital economy in Brunei as excellent digital storytellers and visual creators.



*The Other One*



*Brunei, My Home*



*The 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Jubilee Celebrations*



*Jerudong Park Playground*



*The Eye of the Photographer*



## Strengthening young diplomatic relations between Europe and Asia

In the land of golden pagodas, Siti Nurhidaayah Barahan represented Brunei Darussalam in the 8<sup>th</sup> Model ASEM which was organized by the Asia-Europe Foundation in conjunction with the 13<sup>th</sup> Foreign Minister Meeting (13FMM) from 15<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017 in Yangon and Naypyitaw, Myanmar. Model ASEM is a youth conference and political simulation of ASEM FMMs. Being the head of delegation for Luxembourg, Siti Nurhidaayah presented the role of the Grand Duchy's foreign minister in the welcoming and opening ceremony, plenary session, intervention, working thematic group and also bilateral meeting. The program overall was based on the actual proceeding of ASEM FMMs where six thematic working topics were discussed which were Education, Skills Training and ASEM Youth, Innovation and ICT as Catalysts of ASEM Connectivity, Joint Efforts in Combating Terrorism, Challenges and Opportunities of Migration, Ending All Forms of Poverty and Renewable Energy and Climate Change. At the end of the meeting, a Chair Statement which concluded the three-day discussions and statements were presented to all 53 partners' foreign ministers during the 13<sup>th</sup> Foreign Minister Meeting by two youth representatives from Myanmar and Spain.

“Participating in the 8<sup>th</sup> Model ASEM, I was able to develop diplomatic and networking skills as well as enhance my critical thinking and management skills. Furthermore, as the head of delegation for the ‘Grand Duchy of Luxembourg’, I had to do research and delegate the tasks amongst my delegation”

During the program, Siti Nurhidaayah was able to apply the knowledge and skills acquired from being a member of the faculty's student and council and being involved in YSEALI's programs before. Being in the discourse of Sociology-Anthropology has also enabled her to participate in the discussion of other thematic working topics other than Education, Skills Training and ASEM youth which she was assigned to such as migration, terrorism, and innovation.

Siti Nurhidaayah believes this program has opened doors relating to diplomacy as a future career path and acted as a great platform for networking with people in diplomatic relations. She also hopes to further enhance public diplomacy in Brunei Darussalam to ensure youth involvement in diplomacy and raise awareness regarding information management.



*Plenary session during the 8<sup>th</sup> Model ASEM*



*Delegates from ASEAN countries*



*Siti Nurhidaayah at the Myanmar International Convention Center*

**The Rajaratnam Endowment-Youth Model ASEAN Conference (SRE-YMAC) experience**



*Bruneian delegates with Dr Siti Mazidah of FASS*



*Presenting to other ASEAN delegates*



*Learning trip to Singapore’s Central Narcotics Bureau*

Nur Amilah Fadhlina binti Haji Abd Wahid from the Geography and Development program was involved in the Rajaratnam Endowment-Youth Model ASEAN Conference (SRE-YMAC) in Singapore which spanned over 5 days.

This conference brought together delegates from all of the ASEAN member countries who were acting as diplomats discussing on current regional and global economic, security, social and cultural issues. Delegates were required to carry out an in-depth research on the respective issue or problems that they were assigned to and try to come up with feasible solutions to tackle them.

Nur Amilah was assigned to the Political-Security ASEAN Community Vision 2025 and given the issue of Narcotics, specifically, the question of “How ASEAN pursue its aspirations of a drug-free region”. Throughout the conference she worked with 26 other delegates passionately debating and arduously trying to come up with solutions that all delegates would agree to.

As a result of her involvement, Nur Amilah was able to gather new knowledge, acquire and improve important life skills such as decision making, problem-solving, critical-thinking, communication as well as interpersonal relationships. It also made her aware of the important of having in-depth knowledge of the current situation of one’s own home country in order to have a stand and to be able to promote and show good values as a Bruneian citizen.



*Signing out from Singapore Polytechnic*



## Book launching of *The Halfling King*



*The Halfling King*, an illustrated short story written by Kathrina Mohd Daud, illustrated by Winnie Cheng of Timeless Realm, and published by Heartwrite Co, was officially launched on Friday 24 November 2017 at Fanboys Infinite in Menglait. The event opened with a short reading and a Q&A session hosted by Tiwin Aji of Progresif Radio's *Hot Mess*.

Inspired by Bruneian folktales, *The Halfling King* is also available through the Singaporean bookstore Books Actually, and made its debut at the Singapore Writers Festival on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November. Kathrina, who is a lecturer in the English Studies programme in FASS, gave a reading at the festival alongside Pulitzer Prize winner Rae Armantrout, Virginia Prize winner Dipika Mukherjee, and Caine Prize winner Helon Habila, amongst others. She also spoke on two other panels at the festival, "Agama Itu Canda Atau Candu?" and "ASEAN 50: Imagining Community."

In 2017, Kathrina also wrote and co-produced the play *The Tudong Monologues* for Salted Egg Theatre. She is currently a Visiting Research Scholar at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) at Kyoto University, where she will be in residence until March 2018.

*The Halfling King* is available at Fanboys Infinite and Nollybook, retailing at BND13.



## FASS lecturer's translated work used in Singapore theatre

Low Kok Wai, Drama & Theatre Studies lecturer and theatre scholar recently completed his first Chinese translation of a Singaporean family biography, *My Grandfather's Road* by Neo Kim Seng (see picture below). The Chinese edition of the book is targeted for publication in late 2018. Three performances based on Kok Wai's Chinese translation were staged to critical acclaim at the Centre 42 Black Box from 23 to 25 November 2017. It is part of a larger cultural awakening movement amongst baby boomers in Singapore to recover, reimagine and reclaim their heritage as descendants of diaspora pioneers.



The following is an excerpt taken from an interview with the author and producer of the original book and play Mr Neo Kim Seng:



**How did you and Gary work to come up with the Singaporean Cantonese version? Was the process very different when you worked with Cher Kian on the Malaysian Cantonese version?**

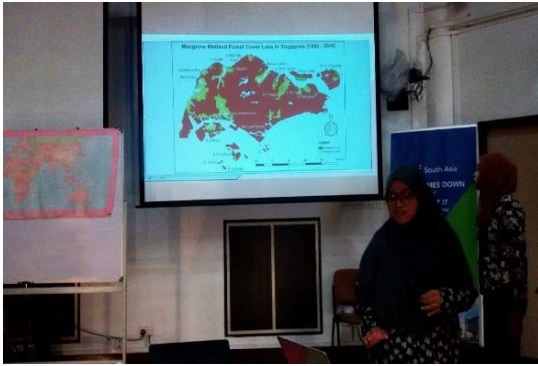
*My original plan was to have the English script translated into Mandarin and from there translate the Mandarin into Singaporean and Malaysian Cantonese, for the presentation. The content for both versions will be the same. So I had the script translated into Mandarin by **Low Kok Wai**.*

*Gary is born Cantonese and a fluent speaker. Gary decided to rework the original English text into a storyteller version. So he's a storyteller telling the stories of people who lived on Neo Pee Teck Lane. He wrote the Cantonese text based only on the original English text. Gary's version is a remixed, reconstructed and reimagined version of the English stories.*

*CK's version will be adapted from **Kok Wai's Mandarin translation** and the original English text. CK will be performing as me/the narrator telling the stories and is more similar in style to the English monologue and written text.*



## World GIS Day 2017



*Khairunnisa presenting group work on mangrove changes in Singapore using GIS*

The event was launched by the Programme Leader of GED, Dr Shirley Chin. This was followed by an introduction to GIS and remote sensing by Dr Shafi, who also shared the various activities and training students of GIS-related courses at UBD are exposed to. The skills that they gain through their studies, he said, make them highly marketable in today's hyperconnected world. Also in attendance at the event were the Deputy Deans of FASS, Dr Mazidah Mohamad and Dr Sharifah Nurulhuda Alkaff.

The event also featured talks by representatives of GIS-related companies. Nazri Razak from the South Asia branch of global GIS company ESRI gave a talk on the applications and benefits of GIS, while Adnin from Soartech Systems Sdn Bhd briefed attendees of the event about global positioning systems that are in use locally.

In addition, the event showcased the work of UBD's FASS students majoring in GED (Module AV-3301 Introduction to Remote Sensing and Module AV-4302 Wetland Ecology and Development) who recently completed projects studying environmental issues using GIS software.



*Dr. Shafi Noor Islam displaying the functions and use of Remote Sensing and GIS applications*



*A GED lecturer speaking at the event*



*All presenters and winners at the World GIS Day 2017*

## ***'Pomologue': A theatre production that could***

Every theatre production is in itself a journey unlike any other. So what makes *'Pomologue'* so memorable? It is more than just a production by UBD's final batch of Postmodern Theatre students, or one that marks the first collaboration between two UBD theatre modules (the other being Drama Studies). It is also unique in the sense that it was initially, as Low Kok Wai comically described, "an 'unwanted baby' that couldn't really survive".

Kok Wai of FASS – the executive producer of the event, with seven years of experience in teaching theatre in UBD and lecturer for both modules – recalls the early days of how *'Pomologue'* came to be. From its very beginning, the process of putting together the whole production was rather difficult. Both modules comprised of very small numbers of students. In fact, Postmodern Theatre was supposed to be closed down earlier in the semester due to its inability to gain a minimum of ten students. On the other hand, although more students had enrolled under Drama Studies, the course also suffered as a lot of people decided to drop the module after its first few lessons. Even when they were able to continue on, the amount of labor that they had to work with was still very discouraging.

"I thought, how are we going to do a production with less than ten people?" Kok Wai expresses, "and so there was an existential crisis from the beginning".

However, the small figures were only some of the few obstacles that *'Pomologue'* had to encounter. Lacking students in both modules, the team had to make do with the production's limited amount of resources. In addition, most of the students taking the module were rather new to the theatre and performing arts field. And as if things were not already bad as they were, Kok Wai, at the same time, had to endure the loss of a family member.

"My aunt's passing away made me realize how much I love teaching," he laments, "When I am in class, I am actually temporarily healed. Being in touch with what you do best and what you love most gives me a drive".

Therefore, with this realization and encouragement, Kok Wai was dedicated to overcome the difficulties, and made what would become his latest theatre production. Because of the restricted manpower, Kok Wai knew that unlike the previous semesters, he would not be able to create two separate productions. And because there were not enough performers, the students had no choice but to individually produce and present their own solo performances. He thus decided, for the first time in UBD theatre, to combine two different drama modules under a singular production.

Under this arrangement, the Drama Studies students were therefore assigned as the event's pre-show – performing their very own separate piece entitled *'Rashomon'*. The play consisted of individual monologues written and presented by the students, who attempted to incorporate Japanese elements and four different classical plays – which were *'King Lear'*, *'Oedipus Rex'*, *'A Doll's House'* and *'Descendants of Cheng Ho the Eunuch Admiral'* – into their performances. One of the co-producers, Lynn Amal, explains that "We didn't even think of doing *'Rashomon'*. We were asked to do solo performances and at one point Mr. Low became really interested because we have two Japanese students". With this concept, the play further pursued to push the theatrical and literary boundaries with its intention to evoke a "truth and deception effect". Each performer, within their monologues, was to tell their own versions and perspectives of a particular story, thus killing the actual truth of the play.



*The enthusiastic performers who were under the guidance of Low Kok Wai*



*The representation of truth within the play was symbolized through the installation of the dead body outline on the theatre setting ground, giving the audience the perception that the truth is dead.*





*Lynn as she portrays her character on the rehearsal set*



*Akmal performing as the Samurai on production night*



*Siti as she portrays her role as the housewife in her piece entitled 'Ticks'*



*"I am thankful and inspired that despite the challenges that we had to face, and despite the fact that I was having my own existential crisis, my students managed to soldier on. That is the beautiful thing about teaching in Brunei"*  
– Low Kok Wai

## FASS's student council holds *Minggu Nostalgia*

'*Minggu Nostalgia*' was an event held by the Student Council of FASS at the Student Centre last October. It was a 5 day event which commenced on Monday, 23rd October. The main objective of the event was to recreate Brunei's past memories for the UBD community in the hope that through this, they will be able to visualize how the Brunei environment was in the past decades. The event also aimed to represent Brunei's identity to further elevate the community's appreciation for our very own tradition through Brunei's traditional activities.



The main highlights during '*Minggu Nostalgia*' were the '*Bandar 70-an*', '*Putaran Masa*', '*Kejutan Klasik*' and '*Rentak Irama Retro*'. '*Bandar 70-an*' showcased the illustrations and decorations which exhibit the vibe of the nostalgic era. To further enhance the nostalgic ambience, a number of activities were prepared such as an Instagram Clothing Contests where participants were required to wear classical attire and accessories from the past and upload their photos according to the given terms and conditions. '*Putaran Masa*' was another activity held during the event in which visitors could experience Brunei's transition from the present to the past through the activities provided. '*Kejutan Klasik*' was where the improvisation and modernization of Brunei's traditional and classical games took place. This was done to create a more entertaining means for the participants to remember the traditional and classical games. And finally, the closing highlight, '*Rentak Irama Retro*', where performers were invited to perform classical songs, as well as short acts from our very own members based on Brunei's Folklore.

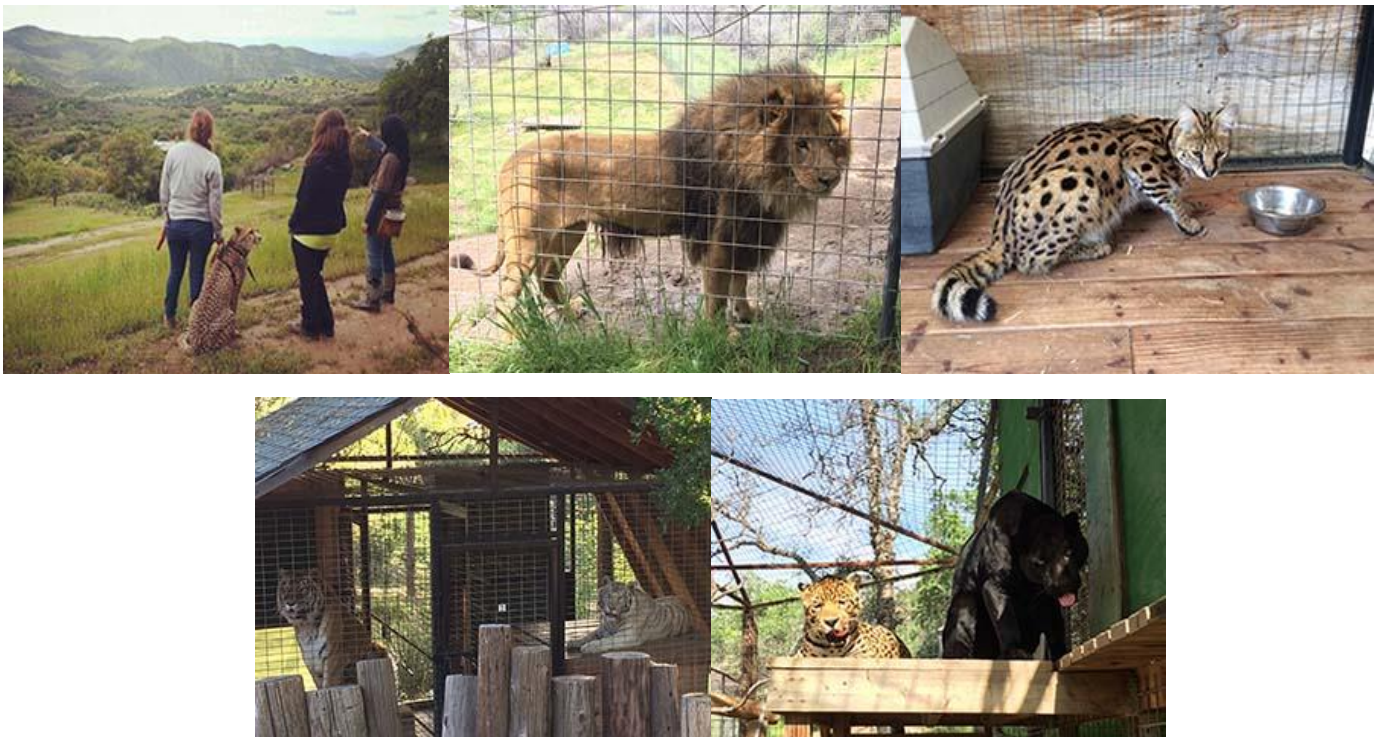
The highlights and activities provided may be a great insight for the UBD community to appreciate and ponder on the value of Brunei's identity as these traditions show the origin of our very own beloved country. In addition, '*Minggu Nostalgia*' also brings the UBD community to experience the nostalgic vibe of Brunei in the 70s through the interactive showcase provided.



## Discovery Year experience at Cat Haven



Nurul Nadiatul Hidayah Hj Safirudin, a FASS student who is majoring in Professional Communication and the Media, recently completed her Discovery Year internship as a volunteer at Project Survival's Cat Haven in the Fresno county, California, where she helped look after the animals and also worked as a guide.



## Links to our faculty



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