

Potensi seni sebagai pilihan kerjaya

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TIDAK mudah bagi Encik Muhammad Masuri Mazlan meyakinkan orang terdekat dalam hidup seperti neneknya bahawa seni boleh membangun masa depan cerah.

Neneknya yang kini berusia 84 tahun bimbang tentang keupayaan seni itu dijadikan kemahiran cari makan dan sumber penakatan yang mantap.

Namun, setelah tiga tahun bertugas sebagai pegawai khidmat pesakit di sebuah hospital tempatan, Encik Muhammad Masuri mengambil langkah berani mendaftarkan diri bagi kursus ijazah seni halus di Maktab Seni Lasalle.

Sebelum tirai pengajian di Lasalle ditutup tidak lama lagi, anak bongsu dalam keluarga tiga beradik itu berpuas hati bidang seni banyak membawa pulangan rezeki dan pengalaman buatnya.

Ia bahkan boleh dijadikan sandaran sebagai kerjaya masa depan apabila kerja seni yang dihasilkan menarik minat ramai sebagai bahan kesedaran sosial atau kebudayaan sehingga membawa pada bermacam anugerah.

Selain Anugerah Belia Harapan Goh Chok Tong, beliau juga penerima Anugerah Seni Antarabangsa Takifuji dari Jepun dan Anugerah Kembara Winston Oh kerana kerja seni cemerlang.

Encik Muhammad Masuri, 27 tahun, juga adalah antara sebilangan besar anak Melayu yang memilih bidang kreatif untuk dijadikan sumber rezeki di sebalik apa jua jerih payah yang dihadapi.

Minat terhadap pendidikan seni kreatif di institusi pengajian tinggi juga kian bertambah. Ini dapat dilihat menerusi pelbagai pilihan kursus di samping kadar kemasukannya sejak akhir-akhir ini.

Perangkaan Kementerian Pendidikan (MOE) menunjukkan kadar kemasukan pelajar diploma dalam kursus seni kreatif bertambah sebanyak 30 peratus dari 2006 hingga 2015.

Kadar kemasukan pelajar kursus ijazah pula bertambah sebanyak 40 peratus dari 2010 hingga 2015.

Sedekad yang lalu, Sekolah Seni Singapura (Sota) yang mula beroperasi pada 2008 juga berdepan dengan tanda tanya sama ada pelajarinya boleh menyara hidup berbekalkan kecintaan terhadap seni.

Sota yang menyambut ulang tahunnya ke-10 tahun ini juga bertarung menentang salah tanggapan ramai tentang pilihan alternatif belia yang memburu impian dalam seni kreatif tanpa mengabaikan bidang akademik.

Sekolah itu sudah menghasilkan 777 lulusan sejauh ini dengan kebanyakannya daripada mereka meneruskan pengajian ke sekolah muzik terbilang

Maktab Muzik Berklee di Boston dan sekolah seni pementasan The Julliard School di New York.

Sedang dua pelajar tahun perintisnya menerima Biasiswa Suruhanjaya Perkhidmatan Awam (PSC) pada 2013, sebilangan besar yang lain kekal aktif dalam sektor kesenian.

Ditanya tentang potensi seni sebagai kerjaya, Encik Muhammad Mazlan menjelaskan:

“Saya mempunyai prinsip bahawa kecemerlangan dalam kerjaya itu dapat dicapai kalau kita benar-benar meminati bidang yang diceburi.

“Ia tidak akan terasa seperti kerja. Malah, keceriaan dan semangat positif yang kita tanam dalam hati itu akan membuatkan kita lebih mudah berse-ni demi masyarakat.

“Ilmu seni itu membuka minda tentang kemanusiaan dan ehwal semasa dunia. Kerja seni berteraskan kesihatan sepertimana yang saya ukir-kan bagi projek tahun akhir saya juga boleh mencetus kesedaran tentang perihai penting yang tidak boleh diambil mudah.”

Beliau juga merebut peluang mengembara ke luar negara bagi mengkaji budaya lain di samping menghasilkan projek seni berdasarkan penemuannya.

Encik Muhammad Noor Hilman Noordin, 22 tahun, yang bakal menerima Diploma Animasi daripada Lasalle juga mengharapkan kerjaya dalam bidang animasi di syarikat pembangunan permainan komputer suatu hari nanti.

“Walaupun saingan sengit dengan pasaran kecil di Singapura, saya didorong pencapaian beberapa lulusan kursus animasi dari Singapura yang berpeluang bekerja di luar negara bagi projek antarabangsa.

“Banyak projek filem Hollywood misalnya mendapatkan sumber tenaga daripada juruanimasi di Singapura. Saya juga gigih mengkaji tentang industri animasi permainan komputer yang pesat.

“Pokoknya, saya perlu tanamkan tekad tidak penat mengasah kemahiran dan rajin mencari peluang dan ruang berseni,” tambahnya.

Awal tahun ini, ketika berucap tentang kepentingan pendidikan seni di majlis ulang tahun ke-80 Akademi Seni Halus Nanyang (Nafa), Menteri Pendidikan Ong Ye Kung berharap seni akan terus menjadi aspek penting dalam perkembangan menyeluruh Singapura.

Nilainya, tambah beliau, tidak boleh diukur hanya menerusi sumbangannya kepada keuntungan ekonomi, Hasil Dalam Negeri Kasar (GDP) atau pekerjaan dalam industri.

“Seni membantu Singapura, sebagai sebuah negara, mengembangkan jati diri dan jiwa kita serta menyemai identiti individu dan kolektif bersama,” ujar beliau.

Cinta ‘game’ animasi dorong belia gilap bakat

— Muka 10



SENI PEMBUKA MATA: Encik Muhammad Masuri Mazlan yang meninggalkan kerjaya dalam sektor kesihatan dan mendalami ilmu seni ukiran arca di Maktab Seni Lasalle yakin kerja seni seperti tentang sel barah dan ketumbuhan yang diukirnya mampu mencetus kesedaran masyarakat agar mempertingkatkan kesihatan. — Foto BH oleh HARYANI ISMAIL

Potential for the arts as a chosen career

He reassured those closest to him in life, such as his grandmother, that the arts could bring about a bright future. His grandmother, who is now 84 years old, worried about how his artistic ability could be turned into a skill to generate a stable livelihood and steady source of income.

After three years serving as a patient services officer in a local hospital, Muhammad Masuri Mazlan took the brave step of enrolling himself into the BA(Hons) Fine Arts programme at LASALLE College of the Arts.

The youngest of three siblings is happy that the arts have brought him some income and lots of experience, even before he has graduated from LASALLE. In fact, it is something he can rely on in future, especially since his works of art have garnered a lot of attention, as multi-award winning media for social or cultural awareness. Apart from the Goh Chok Tong Award for Most Promising Youth, he is also the recipient of the Takifuji International Art Award from Japan and the Winston Oh Discovery Award for excellence in artistic achievement.

Muhammad Masuri Mazlan, 27 years old, is also among a group of young Malays who have chosen the creative path as a means of their livelihood despite all the challenges he has had to brave.

Interest in a creative arts education at an institution of higher learning has definitely increased, as can be seen through the variety of courses offered and the rise in enrollment levels for such courses these days. Statistics from the Ministry of Education (MOE) show that the number of diploma students in creative arts courses has increased by 30 percent from 2006 to 2015. Enrollment rates in degree courses have also risen by about 40 per cent from 2010 to 2015.

About a decade ago, the Singapore School of the Arts (SOTA) which began operations in 2008 also faced uncertainties about whether their students could maintain a living based on their love for the arts. SOTA, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, has also had to grapple with the misconception of the masses pertaining to the alternative choices made by young people when they pursue their dreams in the creative arts, without sacrificing their academic studies. The school has already produced 777 graduates to date, and many of them have furthered their studies at renowned music schools such as Berklee College of Music in Boston, and The Julliard School of Performing Arts in New York. Two of their pioneer students received the Public Service Commission Scholarship in 2013 and many others remain active in the local music sector.

When queried about the arts becoming a potential career, Masuri explains: "My principle is that excellence in a career can be achieved if we are really interested in the field we delve into. It would not feel like work. In fact, happiness and a positive spirit in our hearts make it easier for us to pursue art for society. Artistic knowledge opens the mind to human issues and global current affairs. Works of art related to health, such as those I sculpted for my final year project, can spark awareness about the importance of issues that should not be taken lightly."

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He also had the opportunity to go overseas to explore other cultures, which led to him producing an art project based on his discoveries.

Muhammad Noor Hilman Noordin, 22, who will soon receive his Diploma in Animation from Lasalle, also hopes for a career in animation at a computer game development company one day. “Although there is stiff competition in this tiny Singapore market, I am encouraged by the success of several animation graduates from Singapore who were able to work overseas on international projects. For example, many Hollywood film projects have tapped into the animation talent pool in Singapore. I am also hard at work studying about the animation industry of computer gaming which is developing very quickly. In a nutshell, I have to be steadfast and not get tired of sharpening my skills and must work hard to uncover opportunities and spaces to work at my art,” he adds.

Earlier this year, while speaking on the importance of art education at the 80th anniversary celebrations for Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Education Minister Ong Ye Kung expressed the hope that art will continue to be an important aspect in the overall development of Singapore. Its value, he adds, cannot be measured only in terms of contributions to the economy, the Gross Domestic Product or employment in the industry. The arts help Singapore, as a country, to develop self-confidence and a soul as well as establish an individual and collective identity, he said.

Image –

Eye opening art: Mr. Muhammad Masuri Mazlan who left a career in the healthcare sector and delved into the art of sculpting at LASALLE College of the Arts, believes that art works like the cancer cell and tumour he created are able to spark awareness in society to improve their health. – Photo BH by HARYANI ISMAIL

Walau apa pun kesukaran yang dihadapi dalam perjalanan hidup, tiga belia ini betah bertahan dalam bidang kreatif yang dicintai dan ingin dijadikan sumber pencarian rezeki. Kesedaran mengejar impian dalam bidang seni itu tercetus di peringkat berbeza – sama ada di Institut Pendidikan Teknikal (ITE), politeknik atau institusi prauniversiti. Wartawan **HARYANI ISMAIL** (haryani@sph.com.sg) melaporkan usaha mereka menggilap kemahiran tukikan dalam seni halus, animasi dan hiasan dalaman.

Ukir minat pada seni demi manfaat masyarakat

DENGAN nama yang diberi kepadanya persis penyair terbilang, Allahyarham Masuri SN, Encik Muhammad Masuri Mazlan pernah mengimpikan kerjaya sebagai seorang sasterawan.

Namun, setelah tamat pengajian Sijil Am Pelajaran (GCE) Peringkat 'A' di Institut Millennia, menjalani Perkhidmatan Negara (NS) dan bekerja sebagai pegawai khidmat pesakit di hospital, timbul pula minat ingin mendalami bidang seni halus.

Encik Muhammad Masuri, 27 tahun, yang baru sahaja tamat pengajian ijazah seni halus daripada Maktab Seni Lasalle akur beliau mengambil masa lama untuk temui cinta dalam dunia seni ukiran arca.

Pada awalnya, beliau terfikir-fikir apakah kelulusan dalam seni halus akan menjamin masa depan.

Namun, setelah kuatkan semangatnya dan bertekad fokus dalam menajua karya seni, anak bongsu dalam keluarga tiga beradik itu bersyukur bidang pilihan itu mengembirakan hatinya.

Tiga anugerah cemerlang malah diperolehi sebagai pembakar semangat sepanjang pengajian di Lasalle.

Anugerah Belia Harapan Goh Chok Tong diterimanya dua tahun lalu.

Karya seninya yang dianggap menarik dan membuka mata dunia juga dinilai seniman terbilang dari Jepun dengan Encik Muhammad Masuri dipilih sebagai penerima Anugerah Seni Takifuji Antarabangsa.

Baru-baru ini pula, beliau menerima Anugerah Kembara Winston Oh berupa ge-

ran bagi menjalankan kajian seni di luar negara.

Pemuda berkaca mata yang ramah dan murah dengan senyuman itu telah ke Jepun bagi mengkaji mitos di sebalik Pesta Bintang atau *Tanabata* di Tokyo.

Pesta itu mengisahkan mitos tentang dua kekasih (dilambangkan oleh bintang Vega dan Altair) yang hanya mampu bertemu setahun sekali pada waktu langit cerah.

Encik Muhammad Masuri ingin tahu mengapa pada hari tersebut, penduduk Jepun berhimpun dan menulis harapan mereka pada kertas berwarna kecil yang dipanggil 'tanzaku'. Kertas itu kemudian digantung pada pepohon buluh.

Pepohon itu kemudian dihanyutkan di sungai atau lautan serta dibakar keesokan harinya.

Ketika ditemui *Gah!* di Lasalle baru-baru ini, Encik Muhammad Masuri berkata:

"Saya tidak pernah mengabaikan nasihat orang tua. Saya berpegang pada pesanan nenek saya yang ingin saya selesa bekerja dengan pendapatan yang mantap.

"Seperti ramai warga emas lain, beliau risaukan masa depan saya. Beliau enggan saya membuang masa dengan berseni.

"Itulah sebabnya pada awalnya, saya teruskan mengambil kursus prauniversiti malah mengambil Sastera Melayu."

"Namun, selepas bekerja di hospital selama tiga tahun, saya dambakan sesuatu yang membahagiakan saya.

"Saya ingin lakukan sesuatu yang bermakna dan sesuai dengan naluri seni saya.

"Setelah kumpul simpanan secukupnya,

saya pun gagahkan semangat mengambil kursus ijazah seni halus ini. Alhamdulillah di sebalik segala jerih payah, saya dapat luahkan onak duri yang saya lalui dalam kerja seni saya.

"Hasilnya menggalakkan sebab seni juga wadah penyampai maklumat dan pencetus kesedaran masyarakat," katanya lagi.

Setiap anugerah yang diperolehi dijadikan pendorong baginya melakukan yang lebih baik lagi.

Bagi projek tahun akhirnya, beliau menghasilkan arca yang diperbuat daripada styrofoam ringan.

Kerana saiz arca itu dan bentuknya yang mengerikan, ia tampak berat untuk diangkat.

Menurut Encik Muhammad Masuri, arca itu dihasilkan selepas mendapat inspirasi daripada pengalaman peribadi menjaga nenek yang sakit dan dimamah usia 84 tahun itu.

"Karya saya ini nampak buruk tetapi ia ada maksud mendalam. Ia lambang ketumbuhan atau sel barah yang menggerunkan.

"Nenek saya tidak mengalami barah tetapi beliau sakit tua. Dalam keadaannya yang lemah, sayalah yang membersihkannya dan memastikan dirinya terjaga.

"Saya harap arca yang nampak buruk ini akan menyedarkan ramai tentang pentingnya menjaga kesihatan. Namun, di sebalik apa yang kelihatan buruk dari mata kasar, wujud kecantikan yang terselindung. Itulah pesanan tentang nikmat kesihatan," ceritanya yang ingin terus berseni demi kesejahteraan masyarakat.



LALUAN PANJANG CEBURI SENI: Encik Muhammad Masuri yang pernah bertugas sebagai pegawai khidmat pesakit di hospital menjadikan pelbagai anugerah yang diperolehi sebagai pembakar semangat untuk terus berjuang menghasilkan kerja seni yang membuka mata masyarakat. Arca ini melambangkan sel barah dan ketumbuhan yang membawa mudarat kepada manusia jika kesihatan tidak dijaga.

Carving out an interest in arts for the community

Just like the famous poet, the late Masuri S. N., Muhammad Masuri Mazlan once dreamed of a career as a writer. However, after completing his GCE A-Level at Millennia Institute, undergoing National Service and working as a patient services officer at a hospital, he instead started developing an interest in the fine arts.

Masuri, 27, who has just completed a BA(Hons) Fine Arts Programme at LASALLE College of the Arts acknowledges that he took a long time to find his love in the world of sculpture. Earlier, he had thought about which qualification in the fine arts would offer him a good future. Now, after mustering up his courage and focusing his determination on creating works of art, the youngest of three siblings is grateful that his chosen field makes him happy.

In fact, he has won three awards throughout his studies in LASALLE, which have continued to fuel his love for the arts. He received the Goh Chok Tong Promising Youth Award two years ago. His art work, deemed attractive and eye-opening on a global standard, had been evaluated by a famous Japanese artist, and Masuri was picked to receive the Takifuji International Art Award. Recently, he became the recipient of the Winston Oh Discovery Award, a grant that will enable him to conduct research in the arts overseas.

The friendly bespectacled young man had gone to Japan to research the myths behind the Festival of the Stars, or Tanabata, in Tokyo. The festival is about the myth of two lovers (represented by the stars Vega and Altair) who are only able to meet once a year when the skies are clearest. Masuri wanted to find out why, on that day, the population of Japan would gather and write their hopes on pieces of coloured paper called 'tanzaku'. The slips of paper would then be hung on bamboo, which would be floated down the rivers or at sea and burnt the next day.

When he was interviewed by Gah! at Lasalle recently, Masuri said: "I have never ignored my parents' advice. I also hold on to the advice given by my grandmother, who has always wanted me to work in a comfortable environment and earn a stable income. Like other senior citizens, she worries about my future. She won't let me waste my time with the arts. That is why earlier on, I persevered to complete my pre-university course in Malay Literature. However, after working for three years at the hospital, I longed for something that would make me happy. I wanted to do something meaningful that is also suited to my artistic sensibilities. I saved up enough money, plucked up my courage and took up the BA(Hons) Fine Arts programme. Thank God, after all my hard work, I am able to express all the ups and downs I have gone through in my art work. The results are encouraging as art is also a platform to relay messages and spark awareness in society," he added.

For his final year project, he made a sculpture out of light-weight styrofoam. Due to its size and gruesome shape, it appears as though it is too heavy to be carried. According to Masuri, the sculpture was inspired by his experience looking after his frail 84 year-old grandmother that year. "My work looks terrifying but it has a deep meaning. It symbolises a tumour or cancer cell that is terrifying. My grandmother did not have cancer but she was old and sickly. In her weakened state, I was the person who cleaned her and ensured she was cared for. I hope this ugly-looking

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sculpture will bring about awareness to the public on the importance of looking after one's health. However, behind what looks ugly to the naked eye, there is a hidden beauty. That is the message about the benefit of health," recounts the artist, who wants to continue creating art for social welfare purposes.

Image –

Lengthy path towards the arts: Mr Muhammad Masuri who once worked as a patient services officer at a hospital regards the awards he has received as fuels for him to continue producing art works that bring about social awareness. This sculpture symbolises a cancer cell and tumour that endangers humans if one's health is not looked after.