

The Mid-Autumn Festival Concert program was written in February 2010. The planning and execution took many more months, with interruption like the Summer Camp in China, the calligraphy and painting workshops, etc. It was a small miracle that it went ahead at all. I was most impressed with all the students who took part in the concert, all the teachers and Zhiming who so ably took the helm when I was away with the students at the Summer Camp. The evening started well, with the story of the Mid-Autumn Festival, the tradition of eating moon-cakes and carrying lanterns, etc. This was followed by the famous CAV School Orchestra which performed unique pieces of music arranged by Sandra Wu.

In the warm CAV hospitality manner, the younger students sang the welcome song to welcome all at the concert. To carry the theme for the evening, the students did a choral reading on the moon and the Mid-Autumn Festival. They then showed their ability in understanding and expressing the traditional Chinese song, Molihua, by singing the song with hand-movements, and beautiful facial expressions.

Older students dressed up as old (as in historical, not old as in age) scholars, reciting popular Tang Dynasty poems relating to the moon. They even copied the walking style of old scholars as they walked and read their books!

The CAV Cultural Dance Group showed off their adult and children's group with a dance each, much to the delight of the audience. It was good to see so many school children joined the children's group performance.

The best kept secret of the evening was a soloist singing, with some of our older students accompanying him in the chorus part of the song. Much to the amazement and disbelief (in a very pleasantly surprise way) of many of the audience, our soloist, the Consul General of China in Melbourne, Mr Shen WeiLian, sang 我的中国心 My Chinese Heart. He was the talk of the evening and many weeks afterwards; people commented on how well Mr Shen sang, others wanted a recording of his singing (which, for copyrights reason, I have declined). I am so very grateful to Mr Shen for helping us in our first concert, and to Mrs Shen for persuading him to do so.

With the help of student from 飞马 *Feima* and 唐太宗 *Tangtaizong* classes, students returning from the Shanghai Summer Camp performed the Red Scarf Dance. A big credit to these students for doing so well even though they only had 4 lessons before the concert, as we were rather push for time. All of them did very well indeed. The younger children took the dance so seriously that they organised themselves in the dance practice, helping each other with positioning and movements. I was very impressed by their sense of responsibility. It is when we have activities like this that the students have the chance to excel themselves in so many aspects of their own development.

No concert is complete without the Tai Chi performance. Mai Saw wisely chose her group's newer students, who are also school parents, to perform that night. Students were so happy to see their parents participating in their school concert.

The last dance was to be deleted from the program, however, the teachers decided that since it was advertised, that we should take over and do the performance ourselves, so in one afternoon, the teachers got together and learnt the dance. It was very courageous of them, and I think their effort is to be applauded, even though some of them did not finish the dance, and exit the stage

prematurely. However, at last night's farewell dinner for Zheng Laoshi, teachers promised to do better next time.

When the Giant Jade Rabbit and the Giant Panda enter the hall, squeals and delighted cheers went up from the younger students' section. The two giants led the lantern parade out the hall, around the yard, and back into the hall. We were blessed with a clear evening; 嫦娥 Chang Er must have asked the rain to stay away just for the evening, so we did not have to put our contingency plan into action. Supper bags were handed out to all at the end of the evening.

At the end of the evening of Saturday 11th September, one of the teachers came over, gave me a big hug and told me she was very moved by the number of people who came to support our very first concert. She was also amazed at what our students can do to help make the concert a memorable event for all the students who attended. Other teachers came over and gave me hugs, too. I was exhausted physically, but the spirit was just the opposite.

The concert program aside, this event lifted my spirit a lot when so many people came to help, in so many ways. One of my old friends, Doris Ngui, whom I met through CAV, said that as soon as she received my "SOS" (= email), she and her husband came to help. The same was repeated with Kim and Peter Ho, Sandra & KL Siaw, etc. Many thanks to all the Canteen helpers and the children who helped to pack the bags. Special thanks to Lillie Giang for co-ordinating the supper. When a family member spends so much time organising a charity event, other members of the family are affected in that time is taken away from them. Much appreciation go to Fay Giang, Jenny Huynh and other members of Lillie's family, for their understanding and for helping out in the kitchen. The same goes to other families who help out that Saturday. My sincere thanks to all of you, for the time which all of you, collectively, had given to the School. Indeed, so many people came to help. I am sorry I cannot list every name here, but my heart sings with appreciation for all your assistance, be it big or small help. I am very lucky to see the 真善美 (truth, benevolence / kindness, beauty) side of our community, here in CAV School's Mid-Autumn Festival Concert.

After supper, karaoke singing began, and Alishan group-dance commenced. It was a joyous song and dance session.

Teachers have been teaching students about Chinese song, poems, myths and legends as part of the Chinese culture in their study of LOTE - Chinese Language and Culture. The concert is the actualization of the activities in class; it is also a way of training students to have the confidence to stand up in front of people and perform. I believe that a teacher's job is to teach the whole child, not just a subject; by that I mean every teacher should provide pastoral care, apart from teaching the knowledge-based subject that he/she is engaged to teach. As such, I believe in helping children develop the seven intelligence, for now and future. Learning to be a member of a group, working with a group and performing as a group is an important part of this development. Every child grows and develops in his/her own way, at his/her own pace. However, no child who was reluctant to join in was forced to participate in the concert. Some children have already asked about the next concert. The next concert ? ! It took days afterwards to tidy and put everything away! Too much work! We shall have to think about that!

Dear Ramona,

My heartiest congratulations on your outstanding Chinese Moon festival..... The orchestra sounded superb. I only wish that other groups could see each other's cultural events.

This made a big impression on my mind and thank you so much for inviting me. You must have worked very hard to get so many students willing to perform, to act in unison, especially getting teenage boys on stage. I hope you were not too tired at the end of the evening but am sure that you must have felt very satisfied with the outcome.....” Adrienne Horrigan, VCAA 12th September, 2010.