

Festival with a heart

Social responsibility and community spirit were the underlying themes of the HKUST Students' Festival 2000, organized by the HKUSTSU Executive Committee 1999-2000 from 21 to 29 February. It was the first festival for two years, as the lack of an HKUSTSU Executive Committee cabinet for 1998-99 meant that there was nobody to organize one last year.

"My cabinet was eager to take up the responsibility of organizing a Students' Festival," says Judy Wai, President of 1999-2000 HKUSTSU Executive Committee. "One of the main goals in our cabinet manifesto was to encourage our fellow students to pay more attention to what is happening both on campus and in society. We decided to build on this theme in the line-up of events for the festival."

▼ Festivities begin with students inviting President Woo to dot the eyes of the lion.



All of the main festival activities—a wishing tree, informal dinner for students and faculty, current affairs' debate, ocean ecology exhibition, news reader competition, on-line news quiz, and an election of prominent HKUST news items—were designed to encourage students to play a more active role in the development of the University and society in general.

"Previous Students' Festivals were mainly for fun," explains Judy. "We wanted to introduce some changes in this year's format, and create a less superficial, more reflective and thought-provoking program. There are already plenty of student activities going on here where the emphasis is on fun and

entertainment."

Judy's cabinet felt that the Students' Festival would be much more worthwhile if it focused on improving communication between students and staff, and bringing information from the world outside the campus to the students so that they become more aware of what is happening around them.

The wishing tree, for example, was devised to motivate students, faculty and staff to think about their hopes and expectations for society and the University, as well as their own futures. Anyone who saw how quickly the bare steel frame was covered with green wish notes blowing in the cool February wind could see that one of the Executive Committee's own wishes was already coming true.

The informal dinner and a student vote on important HKUST new items were two other events that attracted a high level of participation and positive feedback.

"The response to the informal dinner impressed me particularly," says Judy. "Many staff and faculty not only volunteered to attend the dinner, but they really participated in it. President Chia-Wei Woo, Dean Chan Yuk Shee of the School of Business and Management, and Luke Wong, Director of the Student Affairs Office even got up on the stage and sang for the students and other participants. Such an active response from senior staff is really encouraging."



▲ News reading talent is put to the test.

Judy and her cabinet believe that this kind of informal social gathering is a good vehicle for cultivating better communication between HKUST students and faculty and staff members. They hope that the new HKUSTSU Executive Cabinet will continue arranging similar activities.

The HKUSTSU's *X-Post* editorial team is in the process of compiling the wishes collected on the Wishing Tree, together with the results of the students' vote on important



▶▶ Blowing in the wind: the HKUST community expresses its hopes for the future.



HKUST news items. They plan to publish them in the near future.

Not all of the activities met with such an encouraging response, however. Judy attributes the low participation to her fellow students' general indifference to current affairs-oriented activities. She says that many of them feel that outside news events are not closely related to them, or that even if they are concerned, they cannot do anything about these events. She feels that this makes it even more important for the Students' Union to hold consciousness-raising activities, and hopes that her cabinet's successors will not be discouraged from doing so because of the low response rate. Her rationale is that such activities will help students become more aware of the potential of their collective voice. As university students, she believes, they can truly speak from the heart and conscience, unfettered by any of the business or political obligations that can burden working adults.

"No matter how advanced our society becomes, we will still need this kind of innocent voice," Judy concludes. Heart-felt convictions such as this have been the backbone of a very memorable Students' Festival.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	
Digital Enterprise Laboratory opens	2
Two artists in residence	2
Student society elections	3
Best Teachers' awards ceremony	3
QEF talk on computer music	4
Sowers Action walk to Guangzhou	4

New lab helps manufacturers go digital

On 28 February, the University opened a Digital Enterprise Laboratory (DEL) to help local companies upgrade their design technology for the new e-commerce driven era in manufacturing. DEL was established with generous sponsorship and endorsement from Dassault Systèmes, the IBM Corporation and MTech Engineering Co Ltd. Dassault and IBM have donated CATIA V5 and ENOVIA software worth HK\$40 million to the Laboratory. In addition, ten manufacturing companies have already signed up as strategic partners.

Honorable guests attending the opening ceremony included Ms Annie Choi, Assistant Director-General of the Industry Department, Mr Francis Bernard, Dassault Systèmes' Senior Executive, Mr Francis Ngai, General Business Manager of IBM China/Hong Kong Ltd, and Mr Stephen Au, Managing Director of MTech Engineering, as well as Prof Chia-Wei Woo, HKUST's President, and Prof Mitchell M Tseng, Head of the Industrial Engineering and Engineering Management Department.

"The explosive growth of e-commerce is revolutionizing the manufacturing industry," said Prof Tseng. "We envisage that successful companies will be those who can build upon

the strength of conventional commerce to create a new business model where customers from any corner of the world can receive the best value offered anywhere in the world."

DEL will provide local manufacturing companies with training and support in advanced software-based design technology. It will help Asian manufacturers tap the advantages of digital enterprise technology to create significant business opportunities.

"As part of its strategy, Dassault Systèmes is willing to create partnerships and build networked companies that help implement the digital enterprise vision," announced Mr Francis Bernard at the opening ceremony.

DEL's other key partners, MTech and IBM, will provide the new laboratory with technical support and product development assistance.

The opening ceremony was followed by a role-play demonstration of digital enterprise operations based on a real-life scenario. The case study showed how a toy manufacturer won an overseas contract by offering its customers value-added support on product de-



▲ Software and endorsement from Dassault Systèmes, IBM and MTech give DEL a promising start.

velopment and design in the manufacturing process. The final session demonstrated how the efficiency and flexibility of digital enterprise operations helps manufacturers address their customer's last-minute changes in design and specifications—an important capability for the manufacturing industry.

"Local industries have to optimize their use of manufacturing tools and make radical changes towards new product development processes in order to be successful in the global market. We are ready to help them achieve this technological breakthrough," concluded MTech's Mr Stephen Au.

Delights for the ear and eye

The University campus has been graced by two stimulating but very different artists-in-residence during the last few weeks. Their residencies were timed to coincide with the HKUST Arts Festival 2000, during which they entertained—and educated—



▲ Liu Sola receives a souvenir from Danny Yung, Artistic Director of HKUST's Center for the Arts.

the University community with an array of creative activities.

Internationally-renowned composer, author and vocalist Liu Sola is a Beijing-trained artist with a distinguished career in the States. Her six-week residency kicked off with an opening performance, entitled *Making Music*, on 29 February. Supported by Japanese dancer Mr Makoto Matsushima and Chinese opera singer Ms Wong Siu-king, Ms Liu captivated the audience with the hauntingly magnetic quality of her voice.

"Her affinity for free jazz and blues, the unmistakably Chinese flavor of her music, and the impromptu elements of



◀ Tat Tat Wing (second from left) conducts a creative workshop against the background of his own works.

her vocal expression added an unforgettable dimension to the total impact of her music," a listener mused.

Her inaugural concert was followed by a demonstration and seminar, and a series of creative workshops.

Hong Kong-born-and-bred Tat Tat Wing, a young but prolific comic-strip artist, staged an exhibition called *Speedy Twenty* at the Exposition Hall from 25 February to 2 April. All of the 20 exhibits—comics and stories—were completed on a single Sunday afternoon, Tat Tat Wing said. The amazing speed with which he completed his work was definitely in keeping with the theme of his comic strips—technology and speed.

"His work is like a mechanical amoeba and its variable appearance is supported by a specific mechanism of transforming the rational into absurdity. Maybe it is what he calls 'irrational logic,'" wrote one critic.

During his residency, Tat Tat Wing also gave workshops and personally guided tours of his exhibition.

Election fever—what is really going on?

Canvassing for votes by the Atrium elevator seemed to reach a new pitch in the run up to the student society elections this February and March. It left some of our (non-student) readers curious to learn what running for office involves, and what happens after the 'elevator canvassers' have packed up their banners and souvenirs, and the votes are cast.

Voting facts

HKUST students are a pretty active bunch when it comes to student societies and elections. So far this year, they have already organized elections for some 40 of the 90-plus student societies affiliated to the HKUST Students' Union (HKUSTSU).

The purpose of these elections is to vote in new executive committees to run the HKUSTSU, hall associations, school and departmental societies, sports clubs, and the various independent societies that represent extra-curricular interest groups. Voting is open to all full members of the respective society or association.

The statistics currently available for the 2000-2001 elections show that 1,449 students, or 26% of full members, voted in the HKUSTSU Executive Committee election this year; and between 44% to 85% voted for their departmental societies. At a rough estimate, around 1,000 students have been actively involved in election campaigns for the HKUSTSU and its affiliated societies.

Cabinets are go

Running for office starts by getting together a group of eight to 14 people to form a cabinet. Choosing a catchy name, a group uniform, designing posters and banners, and canvassing for votes by the Atrium elevator (sometimes handing out token souvenirs in the process) tend to be the most visible campaign strategies employed. However, cabinets also put a lot of energy and thought into communicating their goals through Q&A forums and cabinet Web sites, backed up by e-mails and messages on the Electronic Notice Board.

Campaigning tends to be enthusiastic even if there is only one cabinet running for office because the election period is a major opportunity to attract new members and network with other societies, as well as to encourage existing members to vote.

In the experience of Judy Wai, President of the 1999-2000 HKUSTSU Executive Committee, most cabinet members put considerable time and effort into running the so-

cialties. Accountability is a major incentive, and society members are free to voice disapproval of complacent or lazy cabinets during society meetings.

"Of course, fulfilling your cabinet's promises in terms of year-plan activities and audit is only the basic part of the job. The key is responding creatively to new issues and situations as they crop up," she explains.

She gives little credence to the idea that students might participate with the ulterior motive of gaining a hall place. At least 40% of her own cabinet had qualified for hall places before they became involved in the elections. Besides, as Student Affairs Officer Faith Ho confirms, participation in a society executive committee is only one of many criteria that the Student Affairs Office considers in assessing a student's contribution to campus life.

Judy feels that the election process could be even smoother if all the societies followed the HKUSTSU's lead in defining clear guidelines for election procedures in their constitutions. She would also like to see nominated cabinets putting more effort into developing an electoral platform, rather than just on promoting their name.



▲ Students canvas for votes in the Hong Kong Jockey Club Atrium in the run up to the society elections.

"Effective mission statements involve more than outlining activities for the coming year. My own cabinet found having a manifesto of three major goals really helped focus our work once we were in office," she says.

Positive energy

Barring the odd complaint about noise, community feedback, especially from the students, sees the elections in a positive light. Faith and Judy believe that more students are participating than ever before because they are recognizing the value of all-round education.

Moreover, Faith concludes, the elections are "a great opportunity for our students to practice organizing complex group activities before they go out into society. They provide a wonderful arena for developing team spirit, and leadership and communication skills."

Campus Calendar

Until 23 Jul 7:30 am - 10:30 pm

Hong Kong Artists Series:
Photography by So Hing Keung
UC Gallery

7 Apr - 14 May

"Centrifugal Vision"-Video Circle 2000

Opening Ceremony: 7 Apr, 5 pm
1-5 pm (Tue - Fri)

10 am - 6 pm (Sat, Sun & Public Holiday)
(Closed Mon)
Exposition Hall

17 Apr 7:30 pm

Elegance & Pops—
2000 Wind Ensemble Annual Performance
Exposition Hall

14 Apr 6:30 pm

HKUST Students' Union Executive Committee
Eighth Session Inauguration Ceremony
Lee Wing Tat Lecture Theater

18 Apr 1-2 pm

European Media Art Tour 1999/2000:
Video Programs
Briefing Room

26 Apr 1-2 pm

European Media Art Tour 1999/2000:
Film Programs
Briefing Room

28 Apr 7 pm

Video Circle 2000 Performance (I):
Wei Ying Chuan (Taipei)/
Makoto Matsushima (Tokyo)/
Xiong Yuan Wei (Shenzhen)/Sin Cha Hong (Seoul)
Exposition Hall

Trophy time: winners of this year's Ten Best Lecturers Election (see April's *Genesis*) with Prof Peter Dobson (AVP-AA) at the prize giving ceremony organized by VERTEX, House II Students' Association on Friday, 3 March. "This teaching award is particularly meaningful to those selected, since it comes from the students themselves. Appreciation from the people who see you do your job every day has got to count a lot," comments Prof Dobson.



School music embraces IT

Music teachers in Hong Kong's secondary schools are eager to embrace technology in the classroom, if the number who turned up at HKUST for a Saturday morning talk on computer music is anything to go by.

Over 200 music teachers and other educators interested in computer music gave up their Saturday morning to attend the Quality Education Fund (QEF) Saturday Talk on Information Technology and Creative Music jointly hosted by the QEF Secretariat and HKUST in the Lee Wing Tat Lecture Theater on 26 February.

Computer music research at HKUST

The morning kicked off on a lively note with an introduction to computer music by Dr Lydia Ayers and Dr Andrew Horner of the Department of Computer Science, the designers of HKUST's popular computer music courses, *COMP342* and *COMP542*.

Any Saturday morning lethargy soon dispersed as the duo warmed up the audience with a quiz to identify whether snatches of taped music had been performed on real musical instruments, on a computer, or on both. Having shown that synthesized sound quality can fool even the trained musician's ear, they introduced their ongoing research on simulating computer models for traditional Chinese musical instruments using *Csound* programming language.

The audience listened appreciatively as Dr Ayers demonstrated the live sound of nearly 20 classical and folk percussion, plucked string and wind instruments, such as the 'Indonesian' gong, *pipa* and *dizi*, echoing each with one of the sound card models that they have designed in *Csound*. Dr Horner rounded off the talk by describing his encouraging success in synthesizing a fake French horn to a level realistic enough to be mistaken for a live instrument in a tape audition for Interlochen Arts Camp, a well-known summer program for high school musicians in the US.

Computer music in schools

They were followed by two experience-sharing sessions given by teachers from secondary schools that have set up computer music initiatives with QEF funding. Mr Andrew Hsu of St Paul's Convent School showed examples of Form 2 to 6 students' experiments in composing music on computers using commercial notation software. Mr Lee Ming of St Joseph's Anglo-Chinese School described the process of setting up an IT music classroom, and incorporating IT into the music curriculum as a tool for teaching mu-

sic notation, theory and composition.

Both teachers have found IT a great way to tap into their students' creativity. Dr Ayers and Dr Horner agree, explaining that in the area of music notation alone IT has the potential to free up as much as 30% of the composition time traditionally spent in painstakingly laying out a score by hand. The use of technology is already revolutionizing the production of commercial music, so why not music education too?

IT's role in quality education

Prof Roland Chin, Head of Computer Science at HKUST, suggested computer music as a topic for the Saturday Talks in his role as convenor of the IT panel of the QEF's Pro-

motion and Monitoring Sub-committee. "It's important to illustrate how IT can be integrated into the curriculum of non-science subjects, and I knew Lydia and Andrew would give a colorful performance," he comments. "If I were a music teacher, I'd be especially excited by their progress in modeling traditional Chinese instruments."

The goal of the QEF Saturday Talk series is to disseminate information and ideas on quality education initiatives among Hong Kong's school teaching community. HKUST's Center for Enhanced Learning and Teaching (CELT) co-hosted a similarly successful Saturday Talk on Web-based teaching with the QEF Secretariat on 29 January. Again, some 300 school teachers turned up on campus for

an introduction to online education by CELT's Instructional Development Officer, Mr Tak S Ha, followed by a demonstration of Web-authoring software by HKUST undergraduates, Kevin Cheung Wai-yin, Catherine Lau Chi-fan and Rambo Lai Chung-lam.



IT musician: Dr Horner shares the fruits of his and Dr Ayers's computer music research with Hong Kong school teachers.

"Sowers" walk for kids in China

Five members of the HKUST community joined the Sowers Action Walk to Guangzhou 2000, a charity event to raise funds to help provide basic education to children in rural areas of the Chinese Mainland.

"I was happy to find that I was not the only HKUST member taking part," says Student Affairs Officer, Bonnie Cheng.

Their six-day trip started on 7 February with a ferry ride to Zhuhai, where the 219 "sowers" continued their journey on foot.



▲ HKUST Sowers: Bonnie Cheng (SAO), Clara Lam (PURO), postgraduate student Terry Au-Yeung (CHEM), and alumni Stella Wong (BIOL '96) and Leo Liu (BIOL '95).

They walked 146 kilometers across Zhongshan and Panyu, and finally arrived in Guangzhou on 12 February.

Sowers Action is a local voluntary organization now helping more than 200 primary schools in the Chinese Mainland.

"Their campaign aroused my concern about the millions of

children in rural areas of the Chinese Mainland who are not able to receive even basic education. Without it, they are sadly doomed to end up as illiterates," explains Bonnie.