

PRESS RELEASE

Open call for the Paul Abisheganaden Grant for Artistic Excellence

Extending the music pioneer's legacy through the development of young performing artists

Singapore, Monday, 30 September 2019 — NUS Centre For the Arts is seeking applications from young, talented Singaporeans for the Paul Abisheganaden Grant for Artistic Excellence.

Established in memory of the Singaporean music pioneer and Cultural Medallion winner, the Paul Abisheganaden Grant for Artistic Excellence is awarded to NUS students and recent alumni who are recognised by their peers and the wider arts community as having contributed to the performing arts, whether in music, dance or theatre.

Applicants are assessed on the programmes they have initiated, their original works and awards, and also how they have contributed to the community.

The grant of up to \$10,000 enables recipients to pursue short developmental courses to further their artistic skills and collaborate with other artists.

“Paul Abisheganaden was a musical pioneer and passionate educator who guided Singapore’s musical development and led the Centre For Musical Activities [now Centre For the Arts] at NUS for many years” said NUS Centre For the Arts Director, Sharon Tan. “This grant ensures that his legacy continues to inspire the young and assist our brightest talents to flourish and make the arts a part of their education.”

Applicants have three months to submit their proposals as applications close on 31 December 2019.

Recent recipients

Joey Lau, 2018



2018 Paul Abisheganaden Grant recipient, Joey Lau

The grant for 2018 was awarded to up-and-coming violin soloist Joey Lau. Currently a Violin Performance student at the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory of Music (YST), the grant funded Ms Lau's search for an international post-graduate professor under which to continue her planned development beyond her 2020 graduation.

"I was able to participate in a Summer Violin Institute at Northwestern University in Chicago. This is a two-week course where each student plays in six masterclasses with different professors" she said. "This ... experience not only expanded my knowledge ... but also connected me with so many new people in the field."

Ms Lau cited a decade of performances and awards in her application and has consistently volunteered her time to perform and facilitate musical education with both children and the elderly over many years. This community-minded approach to the arts echoes Paul Abisheganaden's own history of sharing the love of music at many levels, making her an ideal recipient of the Grant.

Through the unique experience afforded by the Grant, Ms Lau has been set on a path for further development on the international stage.

"I found a professor that I really liked who is very passionate about teaching and also very effective in solving the problems that we [as violinists] encounter," she said.

Gabriel Lee, 2017

Noted for the extraordinary diversity in his output, violinist Gabriel Lee performs with numerous symphony and chamber orchestras, yet he is perhaps best known for his performances as a founding member of the Lorong Boys musical group.

“As artists we need to constantly look for fresh ideas and inspiration,” said Mr Lee, who’s search had led him to perform across Asia and the United States in styles as varied as tango, Indian fusion and orchestral and chamber music.

The grant made it possible for Mr Lee to participate in the Creative Strings Workshop in Ohio, which was directed by international jazz violinist Christian Howes.

“I spent a week there learning all kinds of fiddle styles and jamming with great musicians,” said Mr Lee. This experience has influenced his performing style and he now shares the knowledge through his Adjunct Faculty position at YST.



*2018 Paul Abisheganaden Grant recipient,
Gabriel Lee*

Photo by Juliana Tan

Kah Chun Wong, 2012 (inaugural recipient)

The inaugural recipient of the grant was renowned international conductor Wong Kahchun. Having studied composition at YST, the Grant afforded him the opportunity to attend conducting masterclasses in support of his post-graduate studies in Europe.

He is now the Chief Conductor of the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra in Germany. However, the groups he established during his time at YST, the Yong Siew Toh Conservatory Sinfonia (an orchestra for incoming freshmen), and the Asian Contemporary Ensemble (a unique combination of Malay, Indian and Chinese instrumental music) stand as a testament to his ingenuity and commitment to the development of the arts in Singapore.

“There are a few aspects to why this grant really mattered to me so much,” said Mr Wong when reflecting on the Grant. He describes being the inaugural recipient as



*Inaugural Paul Abisheganaden Grant
recipient, Kah Chun Wong*

Photo by Torsten Hoenig

being “recognition of my passion, of my dreams” and views the legacy of Paul Abisheganaden as an ongoing reminder for him to give back to the community.

“I’m grateful for the trust and goodwill that I have received, and I will continue to do my very best every single day,” he adds.

A complete list of recipients over the Grant’s history is included as Annex A

Applications

The grant is available to all current NUS students and alumni who have graduated within the previous 6 years.

Application forms can be downloaded from the NUS Centre For the Arts website: cfa.nus.edu.sg. They must be submitted by 11.59 PM on Tuesday, 31 December 2019.

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About NUS Centre For the Arts (CFA)

Established in 1993, NUS Centre For the Arts is a vibrant space for the appreciation of the arts and nurturing of the creative and inquiring spirit. We support student engagement with the arts and the integration of the arts into the life of the University.

CFA includes the NUS Museum, NUS Baba House and a Talent and Development arm that oversees 21 student arts excellence groups. Through our myriad of programmes, practices, exhibitions, workshops and outreach, such as NUS Arts Festival and the ExxonMobil Campus Concerts, we enrich the university experience and contribute to the building of knowledge and transformation of students.

We also manage facilities such as the University Cultural Centre, with its 1700-seat Hall and 425-seat Theatre, and rehearsal spaces in Runme Shaw CFA Studios and University Town.

For more information, visit cfa.nus.edu.sg

About National University of Singapore (NUS)

A leading global university centred in Asia, the National University of Singapore is Singapore's flagship university, which offers a global approach to education and research, with a focus on Asian perspectives and expertise.

NUS has 17 faculties and schools across three campuses. Its transformative education includes a broad-based curriculum underscored by multidisciplinary courses and cross-faculty enrichment. Over 38,000 students from 100 countries enrich the community with their diverse social and cultural perspectives. NUS also strives to create a supportive and innovative environment to promote creative enterprise within its community.

NUS takes an integrated and multidisciplinary approach to research, working with partners from industry, government and academia, to address crucial and complex issues relevant to Asia and the world. Researchers in NUS' Schools and Faculties, 30 university-level research institutes and centres, and Research Centres of Excellence cover a wide range of themes including: energy, environmental and urban sustainability; treatment and prevention of diseases common among Asians; active ageing; advanced materials; risk management and resilience of financial systems. The University's latest research focus is to use data science, operations research and cybersecurity to support Singapore's Smart Nation initiative.

For more information on NUS, please visit www.nus.edu.sg

Annex 1: Past Paul Abisheganaden Grant recipients

2018	Joey Lau
2017	Gabriel Lee
2016	Azariah Tan Peng Chay
2015	Alan Choo Su Ho
2015	Yang Lynn Cherry
2014	Chen Zhangyi
2013	Emily Koh
2012	Kah Chun Wong