

# A HAPPY, HAPPY 'HOOD

THE SEVENTH EDITION OF THE ANNUAL **SILVER ARTS FESTIVAL**  
BROUGHT CREATIVE CONTENT AND GOOD CHEER TO THE  
KAMPUNG ADMIRALTY COMMUNITY PLAZA.

Senior  
volunteers helped  
the Silver Arts  
festival run  
smoothly



▶ **T**he celebratory vibe at the community plaza of Singapore's first retirement village, Kampung Admiralty, was unparalleled on the weekend of 8 and 9 September. Seniors from across the island and residents living in the northern part of Singapore gathered for the annual National Arts Council (NAC)'s

Silver Arts festival. The programme is a collaboration between artists, arts organisations and community partners to integrate the arts into the lifestyles of seniors. Aiming to enhance seniors' overall well-being, the festival also encourages and invites seniors to showcase their creative talents on stage or to learn a new skill.



Admiralty residents having fun at the Silver Arts festival

### For Seniors, By Seniors

Admiralty residents, good friends and neighbours Mdm Noorzakiah Binte Kamari and Mdm Noorkamariah Binte Mohd Yassar weren't just bystanders at the event, but also participants of an experiential theatre performance titled "It's a Happy, Happy World!". A joint initiative by the NAC and the NTUC Health Active Ageing Hub (Kampung Admiralty), the intergenerational Community Arts Project showcased on stage the meaning of happiness through the perspectives of both seniors and youths.

In preparation for the performance, Mdm Noorzakiah and Mdm Noorkamariah underwent a series of storytelling and creative movement workshops, which started in June. "The whole process was very enjoyable for me," said Mdm Noorzakiah, 59. "Now that my children are grown up, it's time I have some fun with peers around my age." Mdm Noorkamariah, 63, echoed a similar sentiment as she encouraged audience members to pen their thoughts about what makes "a happy, happy world" on a 100-mirror installation set up at the plaza.

The retiree expressed appreciation for the festival and the facilities at Kampung Admiralty, which was officially opened by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong on 12 May. "Ever since this hub opened, my



Seniors putting up an experiential theatre performance

friends, neighbours and I have been coming by almost every other day," Mdm Noorkamariah let in, clearly pleased. "Some mornings we are here for a mass aerobics class, another day a traditional Chinese tapping exercise. I am also attending sewing lessons conducted here. These activities make me happy and help occupy my time."

### Keeping Active

Chinese folk dance and ballet troupe Dance Dynamic, which is made up of members as old as 75 years of age, also entertained the crowd with a

Samara and Shiraz Joseph (extreme right) were there to support their grandmother, who performed at the event





graceful dance number. Some of them, including Ms Sum Sui Cheng, 58, only picked up dance in their 50s. "I started dancing so that I can be active, but the instructor made me realise that dance is actually a form of expression and should be showcased," said Ms Sum, the appointed secretary of the group. "Dancing is beneficial for my physical well-being. It also keeps my mind active as I have to remember all the steps and the choreography. This, I think, will be a good foundation for my later years."

Besides the performers, the festival was also able to run smoothly thanks to the many volunteers present. Semi-retirees Mdm Lilian Tan, Mdm Alicia Chen and Mdm Nancy Chow, who are in their 60s and 70s, had to take the MRT from their homes in Jurong East and Balestier to get to the festival, but were undeterred by the commute. They helped to usher passers-by to available seats in front of the stage and distributed the festival programme guides to the audience.



Chinese folk dance and ballet troupe Dance Dynamic



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*Mdm Noorkamariah, 63 (right) with her neighbour Mdm Noorzakiah, 59*



"I like volunteering my time for arts events such as this," said Mdm Chen, a long-time volunteer and familiar face at various community events. "We have the opportunity to be entertained by the performances while helping out. So why not?"

Meanwhile, in the audience were many families — both young and old. Samara Marguerita Joseph, 12, and her brother Shiraz Joseph, 10, were all smiles as they cheered enthusiastically from their seats. They were there in support of their grandmother, who also performed in the experiential theatre performance "It's a Happy, Happy World!". "[Our grandmother] is 64 and still very active. She likes singing and dancing so we are thrilled that she gets to do what she enjoys even in her old age," said Samara. "We are really proud to see her performing on stage at this Silver Arts festival."

## ON THE FRINGES

In addition to the mirror installation, the community plaza at Kampung Admiralty also hosted the Silver Arts Exhibition. It was made up of a selection of artworks created by the participants from the Community Arts Projects for seniors that took place between December 2017 and September 2018.