

UMS outshines at Sabah Theatre Fest

Ricardo Unto

KOTA KINABALU: Theatre groups from Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) dominated the Sabah Theatre Festival 2015 which ended Sunday night at the Sabah National Culture and Arts Department (JKKN) Complex, here.

Stage Production UMS grabbed the main award with 'Prebet Kebimbangan', an adaptation of Tennessee Williams' 'A Streetcar Named Desire', aside from winning Best Direction, Best Actor (Shahril Latef), Best Actress (Ismaliza Ishak) and Best Breakthrough Actor Award (Mohd Faizan Deraman).

Nurfarahin Fred Gugal from another UMS team, Seni Kreatif UMS, won the Best Breakthrough Actress Award through her acting in 'Dewan Persidangan' and they also won first runner-up and Best Scenography, while the other team from the university is Kelab Sastera Mahasiswa UMS which staged 'Hartini'.

The first prize winner and first runner-up brought home RM5,000 and RM3,000, respectively.

'Prebet Kebimbangan's' director Sharifuddin Zainal, who is also a theatre lecturer for the Creative Arts Programme (Humanity, Arts and Heritage Faculty) in UMS, said the success is due to the excellent teamwork and discipline among the group members.

"All of the team members put their whole passion and commitment to make the stage play a success.

"UMS had sent three entries under different direction, where I directed 'Prebet Kebimbangan', and one of my final year student directed 'Dewan Persidangan' and another entry is 'Hartini'.

"Even though we sent three entries, all of us cooperated to make them a success... thanks to the students' dedication. They are the main force behind the staging of the plays.

"Apart from that, discipline had also played a vital role especially during practices, the students are punctual and they did their homework," Sharifuddin said after receiving their prizes.



Sharifuddin

He added that preparation was conducted three months before the competition and it involved about 90 students.

"Each production involved about 30 students... so altogether there are 90 students from first year, second year and final year who are majoring in theatre and writing."

'Prebet Kebimbangan' tells the story of a deranged woman named Bella who became mentally unstable after she witnessed her husband committing suicide upon being told that she knew he was homosexual.

She later moved in with her sister at a village after she had spent all of her money and lost her house. Conflicts arose at her sister's house when Bella is having a tough time to interact with her brother-in-law, Sahak. Her condition worsened after she was raped by Sahak.

Meanwhile, the second runner-up was won by Badan Teater Sabah through 'Tetamu' and they received a cash prize of RM2,000. The other category winners are Mazrona Kalinggalan for Best Supporting Actress in 'The Boor' and Jasni Yaakob (Best Supporting Actor - 'Pulau Tanpa Cinta').

The competition was judged by Rosnan Abdul Rahman, Susan Bansin and Mohd Hazlee Ali Zapar.

Sabah Theatre Festival 2015 was organised by JKKN with the cooperation of Greenleaf Theatre House from Oct 17-25.

The main objective is to drive towards high quality stage plays while providing an opportunity for theatre groups in the State to display their talent, build networks, share ideas with other theatre enthusiasts as well as to revive the theatre competition in Sabah.

The festival was participated by eight groups from Kota Kinabalu, Sandakan, Tawau and Labuan. The groups are Empty Studio Production ('The Boor'), Badan Teater Sabah ('Tetamu'), Pertubuhan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian ('Karisma', '2025'), Stage Production ('Prebet Kebimbangan'), Badan Bahasa dan Sastera Sabah ('Pulau Tanpa Cinta'), Kelab Sastera Mahasiswa UMS ('Hartini'), Seni Kreatif UMS ('Dewan Persidangan') and Badan Budaya Perbadanan Labuan ('Legenda Pulau Mayat').

Also present were Tourism, Culture and Environment Minister Datuk Kamarlin Ombi and Sabah JKKN Director Mohd Raizuli Mat Jusoh.



Kamarlin in a group photo with the winners.