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Voices in harmony

By **JASON CHEAH**

WITH over 60 performance ensembles of a wide range of genres of music from all over the world converging in Kuala Lumpur last week, it would have been difficult to decide what kind of music you might have wanted to hear.

All that was part of the 27th International Society for Music Education (ISME) World Conference, which was hosted at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre from July 16 to 21.



Taiwan's Maoli Children's Choir

The ensembles and groups were predominantly youthful in nature (with a few exceptions). A fair example of what was musically going on around town would have been the ISME Sentuhan Festival offering at the Dewan Filharmonik Petronas (DFP), KLCC, last Tuesday.

The evening performance featured choirs from different corners of the world showcasing their best.

The Keystone State Boys' Choir from the United States, sang trademark American contemporary, doo wop, soul, even African-roots, along with some classical music thrown in.



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Malaysia's Operafest Children's Choir

The Maoli Children's Choir from Taiwan, meanwhile, entertained with Hakka folk songs and dressed up in mountain tribal costume.

Viva from Norway, resplendent in Norwegian national dress, sang Scandinavian folk, classical and spiritual songs.

Malaysia's Operafest Children's Choir took on some Asian songs and sang excerpts from opera music.

Other DFP appearances during the week included Malaysia's Jit Sin High School Chinese Orchestra and The Australian Voices.



Norway's Viva

Over at KLPac, there was the Sentuhan Fringe Festival, featuring performances from the likes of the Ballanta Academy (Sierra Leone), Temple of Fine Arts (Malaysia), Gagaku Music Society (Japan), Harmoni Harp (Malaysia), Vasek School for Violin and Strings Ensemble (Australia), our own Jeep Latino Jazz ensemble, the Perth Youth Dixieland Orchestra (Australia), the Young Conservatorium Singers (Australia) and the Chung Hua Alumni Choir (Malaysia).

Elsewhere during the week, there were Turkish Quartets at Sedaya International University College, Norwegian rocker chicks at Planet Hollywood, *Sufi* chanting from Egypt at Sultan Idris University, Filipino music at the Sokai Gakai hall and various showcases at the International Institute of Foreign Languages, KLCC Suria Concourse and Berjaya Times Square, KL.

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Keystone Boys' Choir from the United States

Other Malaysian performers during the week included the Universiti Sains Malaysia Ensemble, Gamelan Club, Harp Harmoni Ensemble, Anne Lim Orffkids, Menora and Mak Yong groups, Caklempong and Kompang ensembles, dancers presenting the Tarian Galah and Tarian Endang, Festive drum performances, Foon Yew High School Choir, Ethnica, National Symphony Orchestra, Temple of Fine Arts and Asika.

Internationally, young ensembles from the likes of China, Taiwan, Finland, England, Japan, Sierra Leone, Mexico, Hong Kong, Russia, Costa Rica, Singapore, India and South Africa, were all featured as well.

Of course, the conference won't be hosted here next year, so something as widespread as this isn't likely to be experienced in the near future. Those who managed to catch the concerts must have enjoyed the music.

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