General

Nurul Atiqah – a budding engineer who is equally good on the theatre stage

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Not everyone is born gifted or blessed with talents. In fact, if it is not discovered or honed, we may not know how far one can go.

That was the case with Nurul Atiqah Mohd Aidi, also known as Ika, a student of bachelor's degree in mechatronic engineering who used to be a shy girl and a bit of an introvert.

However, it is different now. Ika is now a bolder and more confident person, not afraid to be in front of the public.

It started when she first entered an English drama competition at school, just for the sake of trying out new experience. However, Ika, 23, did not expect that it would lead her to representing her school at the district level.

Since then, she would always find the opportunity to learn about theatre and dancing from her teacher who was actively involved in cultural activities while schooling at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Taman Jasmine 2, Kajang, Selangor.

She would always watch plays such as *Mahsuri, Mana Setangginya, Badai Semalam, Menggamit Kenangan 60-an* and *Natrah* at the Istana Budaya.

When Ika was in Form Three, she joined a theatre production titled, 'Forest' as a crew. The production was performed by autistic children for the Malaysia Books of Records.

“I had not expected my interest in acting can be further expanded in UMP. There are a lot of facilities and programmes that give opportunities to students to be involved in arts and cultural activities.

“In UMP, I am one of the members who are actively involved in the Senandika Theatre Group, under the Culture and Arts Secretariat (SKK). We started with the play titled, *Taubat* (2016), which was also a platform to discover new talents from among first-year students.

“The next play that I performed was a collaboration with Waris Theatre Production of SKK, called *DORM* 12,” she said.

Her passion for acting has indeed paid off as the Kuala Terengganu-born lass was named the Most Promising Actress for the year 2016 and received the Best Performance Award for *DORM* 12 from the Centre of Sports and Culture.

Ika had also entered a Story Telling Competition on My Country for the Pahang zone that was organised by the Information Department. She was placed fourth.

In 2017, Ika got the opportunity to participate in Pahang Theatre Festival (FTP) and performed ‘*ASRAMA-RA*’, a script written by Khairunazwan and directed by her friend, Fendi Shah.

“We emerged as the champion for FTP and moved on to the finals as the best six theatre groups in Malaysia. We won second place in Malaysia Theatre Festival (FTM) 2018,” she added.

Ika also said she continued to be actively involved in theatres in UMP and performed in several plays such as *‘Selamat Tinggal Bunga Ku’, ‘Rumah Lama Kampung Baru’* and *‘Penglipur’*.

On her studies, Ika said she would try to balance her time the best possible way, adding, she would concentrate fully during classes and make sure that she understood the subjects taught.

Ika said she would also do revisions with her friends and complete her assignments at the library.

“I would also do my revisions after stage rehearsals. Normally, rehearsals are carried out between 9 pm until midnight and after that, I would spent two hours to study” said Ika who wanted to be a mechanical engineer.

On public appreciation towards theatre, Ika said she hoped they would be able to understand more about the performing art because it could make them be people with more quality.

Theatre activities should be upheld and not side-lined by main stream development and modern gadgets, she added.

“I hope that theatre enthusiasts will carry on with their fight and continue to be passionate in this field so it will continue to be inherited by a versatile generation. I hope that UMP’s Culture and Art Secretariat will continue to move forward and be well-versed in developing the next group of actors and actresses,” said Ika.

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