Union Choir, HKUSU went for a trip to Singapore in 1-5 July to participate in the Orientale Concentus 2016, an international choral competition this year. In this five-day trip, the Choir has experienced a various of events, and have learnt a lot of things.

The Choir departed from Hong Kong to Singapore on 30 August night, then rested immediately in the hotel after arriving. The choir members were all so tired that we could not have any rehearsals on that night. After enough resting, the Choir went to the rehearsal venue and had rehearsal, during which we prepared for the competition ahead in the following days. Then we went to School of the Arts of Singapore (SOTA), a well-known music school which has an incredible concert hall there, and registered for the festival. After the festival registration, we then had an opening ceremony.

On the following day, we went to SOTA again for competition after rehearsal in the morning. Then we went sightseeing in Gardens in the Bay, a landmark tourist attraction in Singapore, where we spent a great evening together. Members built better bonding during this time during the sightseeing time, as they were allowed to group freely with at least 3 persons. They were thus able to group with their closest friends during the sightseeing.

On the third day, we went to SOTA again after rehearsal to participate in the Concert in the Dark, which was a concert held by the organizer of the festival aimed to help the blind, making it a concert for a public cause. This was a very meaningful concert, as it was intended to raise fund for the disabled. Through this concert, as a choir, we were able to show compassion to different stakeholders, especially the underprivileged. It is important for a choir to understand the difficulties of different people in the society, and it was the main objective of the Choir to promote warmth through choral music to the public. Therefore, participating in the concert, the Choir was able to experience what a blind person experience every day. Even in a concert, they could not enjoy as we do, as they were deprived of their sight, which made them listen to everything more sensitively. After we experienced what they experience, we learnt more about what they have to be through, which made us appreciated and cherished what we had more, and how to care for those unfortunate ones more, and most important of all, empathy. Through this unique opportunity of listening music in the dark, we also learnt to listen and appreciate to music itself more, not only depending on our eyes.

On the final day of the festival, we also joined the master classes held by famous choral conductors. These master classes really broadened our horizons, and inspired our student conductors, making them better conductors and with better music makers. Our members also learnt to be better choristers, and the relationship between sheet music and performed music. After that, we went to the Grand Prix, when it was announced that we were the category winner of the category. When we heard the cheering for us by the other Hong Kong teams, our sense of belonging towards our homeland, Hong Kong, was also enhanced.

On the last day of our trip, we planned a free day for every member to bond. At night, we gathered again to have dinner together. Through sight-seeings and meals together, the bonding among members was also better. After this trip, besides the improvement of bonding, the music ability of fellow members and sense of belonging towards the Choir and Hong Kong were also enhanced.

View the performance of HKUSU Union Choir here.