



Singapore Drumfest 2008

Recognizing the tremendous pool of musicians and the emerging trend for local and regional talent, Singapore Drumfest organized a series of summer events in 2008 for the active promotion of performance, music culture and talent in all age groups, music genres and nationalities.

As such, Singapore Drumfest 2008 kicked off with a resounding bang with the Drum Circle weekend on June 7 and 8. Held at the *scape Youth Park, the Drum Circle was led by internationally renowned drum facilitator, Christine Stevens, and saw over 650 attendees, including the kids from Bishan Home for the Intellectually Disabled, over the course of two days. Other performing artists such as Mohd Noor, Brandon Khoo, Heartbeat Percussion Band, The Strikeforce, Lila Drums, and Kallang Community Club's own community drumming group also graced the event with their percussive skills for a fun-filled weekend of rhythm and joy.

On June 28 and 29, Singapore Drumfest rolled out the second part of the summer events for 2008 with the Drum Challenge Asia (DCA) and Singapore Band Challenge (SBC) auditions at US Studios. The age categories for the Drum Challenge Asia are 20 & above category, 19 & below category and 12 & below category respectively. As for the Singapore Band challenge, the two categories are 18 & above and 17 & below. With over S\$40,000 worth of cash prizes and vouchers to be won in the two competitions, the event attracted over 300 participants who were keen to prove their mettle and make a name for themselves.

After the audition rounds, a total of 18 bands from the two SBC categories and a total of 24 drummers from the three DCA categories emerged, showing a diversified lineup of genres ranging from trash metal, hard rock, pop rock, pop, screamo, acid jazz, drums N bass and more. The contestants went through the preliminary round of competition under the watchful eyes of the public on July 12 at *scape Youth Park. The non-ticketed event also saw over S\$1000 worth of lucky draw prizes that were given away to the 1000-strong audience that day.

After the preliminaries rounds, 11 drummers and 11 bands were selected for the semi-finals held on July 26 at The ARENA, Clarke Quay. As the standards get higher with the competition proceedings, all contestants put on a good fight in front of their friends, families and the judges. The event was capped off with lucky prizes worth S\$5000 given to the audience. Two "Favorite Crowd Award" were also given to DCA contestant Jeremy Yeo and SBC contestant Perpetual Flame, who gathered the most votes from the audience for their category respectively. As a means to showcase their talents, the eight DCA and eight SBC finalists came together on August 2 for a free public Finalists Showcase August 2 at *scape Youth Park.

The finalists for DCA and SBC came together for the grand showdown on August 16 and August 23 respectively at the ARENA, Clarke Quay. After much fierce competition, Er Chow Kiat (19 & Under Grand Champion) and Patrick Ang (20 & Above Grand Champion) won their respective category under DCA; and Indonesia's 15-year-old drum prodigy, Demas Narawangsa, also took home the award for 'Best Foreign Contestant'. Polarix (17 & Under Runner-up), Della Madre (17 & Under Grand Champion), Sonofa (18 & Above Runner-up) and Juxtapose (18 & Above Grand Champion) took home their trophies under SBC. With their unique 'sound of the future', Sonofa was also the proud winner of the 'MTV Cutting Edge Award'. The rising talents from both categories also put up a fantastic Winners Showcase on August 30 at *scape Youth Park. Other than showcasing the winners, the event was also the finals for the DCA's Under 12 and Percussion Duo categories, which saw the birth of grand winners Aaron James Lee Han Ming and Uan & Sharan, respectively.

After battling it out at the prelims, semis and the grand finals, all winners were also given the chance to perform at Singapore Drumfest 2008's Concert In the Park and Main Event that featured a stellar lineup of international artists such as AMERICAN IDOL's drummer Teddy Campbell and R&B Singer Sy Smith, ROCKSTAR's Storm Large, rock powerhouse MAGNETICO, Johnny Rabb and more on September 13 -14 at the Fort Canning Park.