

## Performance - creating a platform for joyful learning

### What people say...

My child has gained much from PlayClub. He is able to retain what he has learnt or has experienced in class. He enjoys the programme and looks forward to attending each week. PlayClub's strength is that it incorporates a routinely structured learning environment as well as varied activities that encourage creativity and free expression.

- Mother of child in PlayClub

Lauren's teacher Winnie has been excellent! It is obvious that she genuinely loves what she does and cares a great deal for all her students. It has been a joy attending her sessions.

- Mother of child in PlayNest

Many thanks for such a well run school - keep up the great work. My son has improved tremendously and always wears a happy face when he comes home. Lots of singing and dancing...all this reflects the great teachers, Arun and Zhou Louishi, who have been wonderful and caring. A special thanks to them and you.

- Mother of child at Chiltern House Turf Club Road

Teachers in bright red tee shirts; a musician strumming his guitar; a cheerful family of country green bears or exuberant red bears; colourful storybooks and a host of smiling faces - maybe you spotted one of these while out and about with your family one weekend!



Teachers lead an interactive storytelling session

'Performance', in its various forms, is integral to everything we do at Julia Gabriel Centre for Learning (JGCL). It typifies our teachers (regardless of teaching style), as they enter a studio and take on a role. Our core JGCL programmes, EduPlay and EduDrama, enable the process of joyful learning, the outcomes of which are the ability to communicate effectively, speak expressively, respond confidently and a belief in the reality of one's own success. A benchmark for this is when the shy child volunteers to stand beside their teacher to say a tongue twister; is happy to step up on stage to recite a poem; or is the first to raise their hand in class at school to answer a question.

At Chiltern House, the ultimate benchmark comes at the end of the year, as children in Kindergarten Two celebrate their achievements by performing original scripted pieces on stage at the DBS Arts Theatre in front of family and friends. Moreover, year after year they do it with such aplomb!

As a company, we purposefully seek out staff with that added creative flair! Many of our teachers, both English and Mandarin speaking, are trained actors, dancers, musicians and performance artists, as well as qualified educators. Many relish the opportunity to 'perform' whether at in-house cultural events or, to the public at the numerous storytelling sessions that take place island wide. Allowing individuals to pursue their passions and extend their skills in this way enables them to remain enthusiastic and creative, helps them develop professionally and consequently adds depth to their teaching.

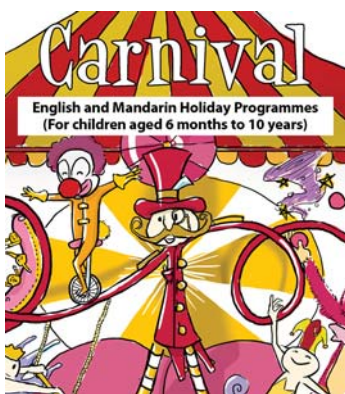
Throughout 2010 our teams of teachers and musicians regularly 'performed' at The Better Toy Store (Ngee Ann City), Harris (Jurong Point), Popular (Marine Parade) and Prologue (Ion). In March, the PlayClub Red Bears visited the BabyCare Festival at Singapore Expo, engaging audiences with their 'journey to the park', while our Mandarin teachers continue to delight audiences at Forum Basement and The Better Toy Store monthly, with their unique form of storytelling using a mixture of songs, music, drama and puppetry. We were invited recently by BBC Singapore to participate in their 'Mr Maker' event at The Paragon, and we are looking forward to taking part in The Esplanade's Octoburst Children's Day Festival for the second year running (1st to 3rd October), when we will introduce a very special friend to the public for the first time - Rainbow Bear himself!

Creating opportunities such as these for a wider audience to enjoy the Julia Gabriel Family experience is very special to us. By building meaningful relationships with other organisations that share our approach to creativity and quality education, audiences enjoy immediate 'face to face' contact with our teachers, engaging first-hand with activities and processes that take place in our studios, with an immediate sense of the benefits. As every experience is wholly interactive, adults as well as children, can join in, sing along and have fun! And an additional reward for our teachers - witnessing children of all ages lose themselves in the experience of watching, listening, wonder and imagination.

We look forward to welcoming you to more of the same at future events.

### Holiday Programmes

22nd November to 10th December 2010



Roll up, roll up to our end of year 'Carnival' holiday programmes and help us celebrate 20 years of creative education. Studios will overflow with colour and excitement, imagination and wonder. Collect a brochure from any of our centres for full details or call 67334322 (Forum), 67375348 (Evans Road) or 63466130 (East Coast Parkway). Ask our friendly Programme Sales Executives about the discounts available!

## CRASH LANDING

An original play written  
by Founder and Creative Director Julia Gabriel



Aliens Grunt and Groan, and their trusted sidekick robot B Sharp, travel to Earth from the planet EYBS - their mission, to find out the special superhero qualities that Earthlings use to succeed and do well in school and in life. Just one problem – they inadvertently crash!

The hilarious antics that follow involve meeting Opie, an earnest Earthling schoolchild who helps them adapt to life on Earth and eventually make their way home. With the help of a whole group of friends (the audience), Opie introduces the shy, introverted Grunt, grouchy pessimistic Groan and monotone B Sharp to human qualities that change their view of what it is to be a superhero.

With thirty years experience of teaching creative arts programmes to children of all ages, and a profound understanding of how to capture the imagination of a young audience, Julia Gabriel has created a script that is funny, charming, inspirational and instructive. Incorporating the values that define the Julia Gabriel Family spirit: Knowledge and Fun, Creativity and Pragmatism, Connection and Continuous growth, Excellence and Integrity, 'Crash Landing' takes young audiences on an exciting intergalactic journey, as together they discover the keys to success are within easy reach for everyone.

'Crash Landing' is an entertaining musical theatre experience that leaves every child feeling, "Yes, I can do it!"

Date: 2nd October 2010  
Show times: 1pm and 5pm  
Venue: Forum, Basement 1  
Admission Free

Call 67334322 for more details.

## Hangzhou - Shanghai Learning Adventure

21st to 28th November 2010

Join us for another cultural exchange and school immersion programme to Hangzhou and Shanghai. This is the perfect opportunity for children to use Mandarin in real-life situations, to experience Chinese culture first-hand and for families to spend special bonding time together in a fun and relaxed environment. For children in Nursery One to Primary 6.

Contact Anna Tan: Tel. 64969418, Email annatan@juliagabriel.com or Shih Ran: Tel. 64969428, Email shihran@juliagabriel.com for more details.

### Withdrawal Notice

If your child is not returning to a JGCL class in Term 1 2011, please inform us by **Sunday 17th October 2010**. We regret that if notice is not received in writing or via email (enquiries@juliagabriel.com) by this date, we will be unable to refund your deposit.

Chiltern House requires one month's notice of withdrawal.

Upcoming Public Holidays  
Fri 5th November Deepavali  
Wed 17th November Hari Raya Haji

# Chiltern House Sports Day

A fun time was had by all at the Sports Day events, when students, parents and staff from Chiltern House gathered at Toh Payoh Sports Stadium on 14th and 21st May for some healthy competition.



Colourful sack race



Toss the bean bag



On your marks!



Winning poses



Time to restore some energy

## Changes at Chiltern House

Sadly, we bid a fond farewell at the end of last term to Yolanda Tessenhohn as Head of Chiltern House East Coast. Yolanda emigrated to Australia after many years of devoted service. Thank you Yolanda for all the love, knowledge and care you gave your many students and staff over the years. We will miss you.

Shanthi Rajasakaran, previously Head of Centre Chiltern House Halifax has taken the helm at Chiltern House East Coast, and we welcome back Agnes Gabriel who replaces Shanthi. Agnes (Aggie) recently returned from sabbatical in the UK where she was studying for a Master's degree in Psychology and Education at Cambridge University.

Also, at Chiltern House Forum, Mallika Muthuvelu takes over as Head of Centre from Iris Lim, who becomes Head of Communications and Development at Chiltern House.



Farewell Yolanda Tessenhohn

# Role models and Role play

Both contribute to a child's self-esteem

By Agnes Gabriel, Head of Chiltern House Halifax



Peers enjoy playing together

A child's feeling of self worth arises from the process of their social experiences and relationships. As they develop the ability to use language and reflect about themselves and their surroundings, they begin to make comparisons between themselves and others. This brings about the development of their self-concept – the set of attributes, abilities, attitudes and values that an individual comes to believe define who they are.

As children try to gain this sense of self, they engage in role-play; acting the part of important people they see around them like 'mummy', 'daddy', 'auntie' and 'grandpa'. Children do this through playing with their peers. If you peek into a classroom at Chiltern House, for example, you might catch sight of a group of children playing 'family', with parents, children, and perhaps a baby or a pet cat or dog. As a teacher, I am always fascinated to see the intensity, focus and 'script' as children engage in such activities. They all contribute to the unfolding story, verbally and through their actions, and help decide how their 'family' should play out. Through this, the children are trying to understand and make sense of social roles and, within that process, develop a sense of their own self-identity.

'Significant others' (adults the child looks up to and has a close relationship with) can play a very important role in helping a child to build a positive self-concept.

Research has shown that young children who have at least one key adult in their lives and from whom they know they have unconditional positive regard are generally more resilient and willing to tackle challenges. Such a relationship allows the child to see that who they are and what they do matters.

The child must feel that acceptance from the adult is without reservation and judgement, rather than being dependent on their behaviour. This does not mean that the adult should suspend all judgements about the behaviour of the child, but they must ensure that their acceptance of the child is not threatened by their judgements. If a child wets their bed for example and a significant adult in their life reacts negatively, the child will see bed-wetting as bad, and may come to view himself or herself as a bad person by extension. They may feel self-conscious and anxious each time they go to bed, leading to a repetition of the problem. However, if the child wets their bed and the significant adult reacts in a way that reassures the child that they still love and accept them and shows them what to do if it happens again, the incidences of bed-wetting are much more likely to taper off. Similarly, if the adult reacts calmly and reassuringly when a child comes running with a bruised knee after a fall, the child is much more likely to brush it off and take it in their stride the next time they get a bruise. Through such experiences, positive self-esteem is developed.

We all make mistakes and have negative experiences. That is part of life and growing up. But the child who knows they have the unconditional acceptance of important people in their lives, will feel empowered to 'bounce back' from their mistakes, learn from them, and continue to try new things, seeking out new experiences that will help them to develop and grow as a person.



Cooking and washing - just like mummy

## Mandarin: Drama as a Learning Medium

By Dong Yue, Head of Mandarin EduDrama, Julia Gabriel Centre for Learning

My EduDrama colleague Chong Wen and I recently conducted a two-hour workshop, 'Drama as a Learning Medium', at the Overseas Family School. Teachers of Mandarin, from kindergarten to high school attended, all eager to receive tips on how to teach Mandarin to their students in the most innovative way possible.



Dong Yue in discussion with Mandarin teachers at OFS

The teachers were all craving practical strategies and techniques that they could immediately employ in the classroom, so it was important to ensure that the workshop was very 'hands-on'. After analysing the various difficulties they face as teachers of Mandarin in school, we got down to business - having fun! The teachers themselves took part in drama games, role-play and reciting poems – all of which they loved. We demonstrated how they can use drama to gain the attention of their students, to help with discipline issues and

simply to make the learning process more fun for everyone! The best way for adults to understand fully what children need is to experience it themselves, and that is what these teachers did. In fact, they told us afterwards that two hours was not enough. Perhaps they enjoyed playing the games just a little too much!

(Contact Lynette Chua, Head of Julia Gabriel School of Education at [lynette@juliagabriel.com](mailto:lynette@juliagabriel.com), if you or your school might be interested in similar workshops).

# Anne Marie Lim, EduDrama teacher

Funky, charitable and definitely not predictable!

Anne Marie Lim has remained close to 'the stage' since completing her Diploma in Theatre Arts at LaSalle [in full] in 2005. The skills she acquired in performance and technical arts stood her in good stead for acting roles in SRT's The Young Company, Voices of Eve, a female theatre company she formed with five EduDrama colleagues from Julia Gabriel Centre for Learning (JGCL), and her present role as Stage Manager for JGCL's original production, 'Crash Landing'. Currently studying for her Trinity Guildhall Grade 8 exam, Anne Marie, who confesses to being very shy, explains why performance is the perfect antidote to her introvert personality.

"I love acting because I'm a very complex person. People think I am predictable, but I'm not. I'm just inwardly very shy. Theatre gives me a chance to express myself better in a way that I'm not able to do in person. It allows me a channel to express my best self." Anne Marie talks here to Let's Talk about performance, her work and her favourite pop idol:

**LT: Tell us about Voices of Eve?**

**AM:** We are a group of friends and colleagues, all from a performance background. We all enjoy acting, and all wanted to explore our roots again. We last worked together on a play called 'One Bed Three Pillows', written, produced and directed by JGCL alumnus Michael Corbidge, now Assistant Art Director at the SRT. We staged it at The National Library's Black Box theatre. Being able to continue acting in this way undoubtedly brings a richness to our teaching so it's a great thing to do for our professional development as well as being able to pursue our passion.

I do enjoy the technical side of performance too. As Stage Manager of 'Crash Landing' (see p.2) it is a bit stressful making sure everything comes together: sound, lights, props, costumes, set and so on, but it definitely gives me a buzz. I enjoy it.



Michael Jackson fans use their club as a chance to raise funds for charity (Anne Marie kneeling centre)

**LT: What programmes do you currently teach at JGCL?**

**AM:** I teach EduDrama for children from Nursery One to Primary Two. I am also the level coordinator for our nursery programmes which involves creating the curriculum for each term and the holiday programmes, in addition to mentoring new teachers at this level.

**LT: Why do you particularly enjoy teaching nursery aged children?**

**AM:** Ah, I love children at this age because they are so free and so direct. There is no holding back! If they like something, they like it. If they don't like something, they don't like it and you know it! I suppose I am a bit like that. Usually, with this age you don't have to explain – just have fun! I am still a child at heart!



Anne Marie (left), with fellow Michael Jackson fans

**LT: What are the highlights of the Trinity Guildhall exam you are currently working towards?**

**AM:** The main task is to perform four pieces of work, prose and poetry, a narrative and something lyrical. Each piece is connected by a theme, which in my case is 'empowerment', more precisely, 'self-empowerment'. One of my pieces is from Maya Angelou's 'I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings'. It's very profound, very beautiful, very moving.

Every stage of development is important of course but from about Nursery One, we are laying the foundations for vital social skills such as the ability to work as part of a team. Also, because most of the curriculum is tied around letter and sound introductions, it's a crucial literacy stage for children too.

**LT: Beyond your teaching at JGCL, you have developed quite a reputation for being a Michael Jackson fan. Explain more!**

**AM:** In December 2009 I started The King of Pop Fanatics, Singapore – the first Asian branch of Michael Jackson's fan club outside the USA. We meet about once in every two months but we also organise charity events. It's not just about MJ's music and dancing, it's about trying to make a difference, giving back to society and building friendships. On 4th September I spearheaded an event to raise money for Melrose Home Children's Aid Society.

Melrose Home is a small but vital organization established in 1920 which supports children from three to eighteen years old who have suffered abuse or whose family are experiencing difficulties in some way. Some children stay in the home, some go for after school care. We organised a concert with MJ impersonators, sold T-shirts and raised a total of \$4468!

For someone who describes herself as shy, Anne Marie certainly displays a wealth of hidden talents and willingness to step outside her comfort zone. At the end of last year, she took herself off to the United Kingdom, having never travelled abroad alone before, because, in her own words, "I wanted to know I could do it!" In London, she visited the famous Madam Tausaards waxworks museum, where she was finally able to meet her Thriller hero, Michael Jackson himself!