

TKU Keeps “Singing Our Own Song” as Folk Song 50 Series Unites Musical Passion Across Generations

Campus focus

This year marks both the 75th anniversary of Tamkang University and the 50th anniversary of the Taiwan Campus Folk Song Movement. As TKU is often regarded as the birthplace of campus folk music, the Office of Student Affairs launched the “Sing Our Own Songs” Folk Song 50th Anniversary Series on October 28. Through a retrospective exhibition, campus tour, and live performances, the event revived the fresh melodies of the folk-song era, evoking intergenerational memories of youth and reconnecting alumni with their alma mater through music. The activities drew enthusiastic participation from faculty, students, and alumni.

The “Folk Song 50 Retrospective Exhibition” opened at noon on October 28 in the Black Swan Exhibition Hall, beginning with performances by the 36th Golden Melody Campus Folk Song Award (金韶獎) Best Popularity Winner Yi-Yu Lin (Department of Management Sciences) and Chih-Lin Hsu (Graduate Institute of Civil Engineering). In his remarks, Executive Vice President Chun-Hung Lin noted that Tamkang’s folk-song roots trace back to Shuang-Tze Lee, who ignited a movement of original campus folk songs. Lee’s famous “Coca-Cola Incident” came to symbolize freedom and self-expression—an ethos that resonates strongly with TKU’s open and diverse academic culture.

Vice President for Academic Affairs Hui-Huang Hsu emphasized that although half a century has passed, the spirit of creative expression embodied in the folk-song movement remains a cherished part of Taiwan’s youth culture. He encouraged students to carry on the legacy of “creating boldly and speaking courageously.” He thanked all faculty, staff, and students involved for infusing cultural vitality into the university’s anniversary celebrations. The opening ceremony concluded with VP Lin, VP Hsu, Board Chief Secretary Wen-Chih Huang, Secretary-General Yu-Pei Ma, and Dean of Student Affairs Shih-Jung Wu symbolically strumming guitars to launch the

series of activities.

The exhibition, themed “Sing Our Own Songs,” presents a bilingual overview of the history of the Taiwanese folk-song movement, showcasing classic folk singers, the evolution of the TKU Golden Melody Campus Folk Song Award, and vinyl music accompanied by nostalgic photographs.

Installation art recreates campus scenes of the 1970s, including blackboards, wooden desks, and cassette tapes. In comparison, walls display representative songs from the 1970s to the 2020s, illustrating the transition from folk songs to contemporary pop. Visitors can also participate in interactive lyric-guessing games based on classic songs, such as “Formosa” and “If”, engaging with the cultural emotions behind the music.

On the afternoon of October 30, Chairperson Flora Chia-I Chang toured the exhibition with Chief Secretary Wen-Chih Huang and the curatorial team. She praised the exhibition for its careful design, rich content, and straightforward historical narrative. She joyfully signed a prop guitar, sharing memories of her own youth spent playing guitar.

At 12:10 p.m. on October 31, the “Sing Our Own Songs: Cross-Generational Dialogue on Youth” forum was held, hosted by Tamkang Times reporter Cheng-Chin Yang (Department of Public Administration). Folk singer and TKU alumnus Chien-Fu Li (Department of International Trade) and Golden Melody Campus Folk Song Award recipient Yi-Yu Lin shared their creative journeys and perspectives on folk music. The event was recorded and produced by

“Tamkang Voice Radio,” the practicum media of the Department of Mass Communication. With guitar chords and singing filling the hall, Li described his music as “like the sea and sky—free and gently moving forward.” At the same time, Yi-Yu Lin shared how she explores self-identity through music, expressing youthful emotions and sincerity in her songs. Together, they reflected on the limitless imagination and creative space that define the folk-song spirit.

First-year Chinese major Hsiang-Ni Wang said that entering the exhibition felt like “traveling through time,” and she was touched to learn of TKU’s deep connection to Taiwan’s folk-song movement. Aerospace

Engineering alumnus Lin Ta-Kang returned specifically for the exhibition, recalling that he was not yet a TKU student during the Folk Song 40 celebrations, and eagerly anticipating Folk Song 50. He especially enjoyed the interactive poll on visitors' impressions of folk songs, casting his vote for "freedom," noting that the movement was born in an era defined by that pursuit.

To coincide with the reinstallation of the Lee Shuan Che Monument, the event "Breeze on the Lawn — Youth in Harmony" was held at 2 p.m. on October 31 at Shepherd's Meadow. Participants enjoyed folk music, refreshments, and the relaxed open space. Some picked up guitars to play, and others hummed along, spending a peaceful afternoon reminiscent of TKU's folk-song legacy. Wen-Chih Huang invited folk singers and TKU English alumni Tsu-Chun Yang and Chien-Fu Li to attend the two sat beside the guitar sculpture, recalling the songs and memories of their student days.

Graduate student Xin Lin (Department of Mass Communication) shared that the event provided a relaxed environment for connecting with others while learning more about Lee Shuan-Che's spirit through stories. Off-campus participant Ya-Yun Cheng added that the event's free and easygoing atmosphere helped her better understand folk-song culture and experience TKU's open and inclusive campus spirit.











