



# OCA Report

MAY 2017

November 2016 Taiwan / Thailand Tour

SPECIAL EDITION



**Kaori Hanamiya (Hana)**

My name is Kaori Hanamiya from Common Beat. Please call me "Hana". I was in charge of the Asian Beat tour as a staff member last November and handled the process from a rehearsal tour of Taiwanese casts to this report write-up. I will report on our wonderful tour as meeting many good people in Taiwan and Thailand.

First of all, please see the cover picture of this report. This was taken at Ban Rom Sai in Chiang Mai in November. We played games like Origami and cooked rice and curry with the orphans. We had such a good time that it was very difficult to say goodbye to the orphans.

### Audition and rehearsal in Taiwan

Cast invitations in Taiwan began in May and 15 people were selected after the audition. Five of them were repeaters who had joined last year. Mihoko Arai (Sampoko) and I went to Taichung in June and explained to the cast, their friends and parents about the purpose of the tour at Central Taiwan University of Science and Technology

Then we went to a village of the mountain tribes with the Taiwan cast members for rehearsing and creating new performance ideas for 3 days.

### Summer Camp in Japan

Taiwan cast members came to Japan on August 26th to participate in a summer camp at the Ichikawa Boys Nature House. Including the Japan cast members, there were a total of 40 people. Mika from the Philippines also joined. The program was conducted by Sampoko in English and there were workshops and rehearsals for singing and dancing to exchange images of our cultures. It was only a two-day event, but we all became good friends and at the last performance, we sang a song together with tears in our eyes. We had kept in touch via email or Line to prepare for the Taiwan/Thailand tour.

### Now the tour has started! First is Taichung!

33 people of different ages and nationalities participated in this tour. There were 16 including staff from Japan, 1 high school student who knew about this tour from MRA's HP, 1 from the Philippines, and 15 from Taiwan.

All members gathered in Taichung on the evening of October 29th. The Taiwan cast and their families greeted us with a warm performance and a hot meal to celebrate the reunion from the August summer camp.

The next day, we rehearsed in the morning and then performed a flash mob in front of a famous temple in Taiwan.

A big crowd of people gathered and it was a great success as SNS praised our dance. It was also the ice breaking performance for us and we all felt nervous but the event helped strengthen the unity between cast members. Then we moved to a restaurant which was run by Aboriginal people. It was a valuable opportunity to listen to their beautiful songs and sing "Nada Soh Soh" together.

### Performance and interaction in Taipei

October 31st we visited the Aletheia University in Taipei. Students majoring in Japanese welcomed us. We were divided into groups and visited the university sites and had lunch together. We discussed various things such as the school system and country problems. In the afternoon, we held a forum to discuss the theme "How do young people understand each other beyond languages and cross-cultural barriers to bring Asian peace?" Although it was a difficult theme, there were opinions that various activities such as singing, dancing and eating together, might connect individuals from different countries.

After the discussion, we performed a show at the university's grand cathedral. The neighboring high school students also came, and about 300 people got in at the venue. We performed for about 30 minutes-singing and dancing numbers such as "Soran Bushi" by the Japanese cast, the latest POPS and Taiwanese traditional dance by Taiwanese cast, and "Nada Soh Soh" by the mixed casts in Japanese and Taiwanese languages. In the end, we invited the audience to dance together!

That evening, we had an exchange party inviting OBOG at SING OUT TAIWAN, and we also did a mini performance there as well.

November 1st, we enjoyed Taiwan sightseeing. Then we went to the famous Sho Ron Po restaurant for lunch and then flew to Bangkok.



### Mourning in Bangkok City

We cancelled performances at Chulalongkorn University out of respect as the King had passed away. Therefore we were free and some members visited the Royal Palace and walked around the city of Bangkok. In the evening, students from Chulalongkorn University and friends joined in a dinner party and a reunion.



### Visit Mae Kok Farm in Chiang Rai

We flew from Bangkok to Chiang Rai early in the morning of November 3rd. Ms. Anuluck from Mae Kok Farm warmly welcomed us. In the afternoon, we visited schools that nearby mountain tribe children attend. The children first showed us their traditional dance, and Asian Beat presented our performance to them. Lastly we all got together and danced. After returning to Mae Kok Farm, we went for a walk in the village of the mountain tribes.

In the evening, people from nearby villages came to Mae Kok Farm for a dinner, singing and dancing, and playing with the children. We were just like a big family at Mae Kok Farm.

### Visit Ban Rom Sai (BRS) in Chiang Mai

We moved from Chiang Rai to Chiang Mai by bus on November 4th to visit BRS. Momo Hoshino welcomed us at BRS. She had come to BRS one day earlier. At first they took us around the facility and we had dinner together.

On the next day, we cooked rice and curry with the children and the graduates from BRS while some played with the children with the gifts we brought from Japan and Taiwan. Then Ms. Miwa Natori, the representative of BRS shared invaluable stories such as how to use money for society.



### Looking back on the tour

We returned to Bangkok and held a farewell party in the evening of November 5th. A time for looking back on the tour. Some said "I was so impressed with the honest Thai children and their shining eyes.", "I was moved by the Taiwan members' attitude to make everyone happy.", "I want to keep this relationship for good." and so on. Although there was a language barrier, we tried hard to understand each other. We are sure that our friendships and network that have been created throughout the last 10 days' trip will last.



**Hayato Ban (Ban Ban)**

I received three treasures during this tour.

The first is the smile and high fives which are universal in the world. This is magic to comfort people without words. After I returned from the tour, I taught English to elementary school children and I was convinced that we have grown closer. It works even in Japan!

The second is to improve my communication skills. I had an opportunity to interpret Ms. Natori's speech in front of many people. I felt my lack of English skill and that gave me a new goal to become a better communicator.

The third is to change the value of "happiness". Pong Pong, a Taiwan cast member, taught me why she could care about people so naturally. "Just think about how we can make people happy."

For example, if a problem arises, try not to pursue the cause but focus on solving the problem quickly. That will make people happy, won't it?"

It may sound like "whitewashing" in Japan, but it is genuine for her if you remember what happened when Johnson's tooth was lost in the pool.

The Taiwanese did not blame me but jumped into the pool to find the tooth immediately. Their subject is not "I" but "We". This new magic, my new goal, and the new happiness may be the biggest 20th birthday gift for me.



**Kana Yamase (Seattle)**

It was a truly fun and liberating tour!

#### ■ Ms. Miwa Natori

Natori-san has founded a facility Ban Rom Sai (BRS) which accepts orphans infected with HIV by their mothers. I wanted to talk with her during lunch but tears gushed from my eyes when I started to talk to her. Maybe because I received her warm aura coming from her deep thoughts and way of living.

I was interested in global issues because I have lived abroad from a young age (although it was a Western culture). I am also interested in the problems of poverty and the education gap among children in developing countries and the rest of the world. But the thing I most want to do is to make Japan a better society by working on the education of Japanese children. Let Japanese children know the world better so that "a lot of people no longer worry and misunderstand."

Then prejudice will be gone" which Natori-san said. I want to help with such Japanese education. I sometimes feel overwhelmed, though. She said "It is okay, you are you. I sometimes don't consider myself as a Japanese. I may be a Japanese or a Thai, but before that, first I am Miwa Natori." I felt relieved.

#### ■ Members of 2016 Asian Beat

This trip was taken jointly with Sing Out Taiwan (SOT) which does international exchange with Taiwanese singing and dancing. We became very important friends. Our conversations were in a mixture of English, Japanese and Taiwanese. Our schedule changed so much due to the Thai King's passing that information-sharing could not be maintained. Even in such a situation, our performances were a great success in various places, without injuries nor trouble. We all shed tears at the final dinner party.

I am thankful to the Japanese members who made this trip valuable with our Taiwanese colleagues. It was a precious time for me to realize that the teamwork was my favorite thing. Thank you everyone.





**Claire Huang (Claire)**

I participated in the summer camp at the Ichikawa Boys Nature House from August 26. The cultural differences which I was the most impressed with was the "bath" culture - girls take off all their clothes, and shower together. When I got in the bathroom, I felt very shy. "OMG girls are soooo brave!" We chatted, laughed, and became natural. I think this made us much closer!

When we sang the final song "Sing the Peace Song", nationality didn't matter. We sang the same melody, cried, and embraced each other. At that moment, I knew that this would be a lasting memory in my life. I really want to cherish every moment.

The Japanese members came to Taiwan and Sing Out Taiwan (SOT) gathered at the Putian Temple in the morning on October 29. Asian Beat 2016 members met at night, and SOT brought a relaxed and humorous welcome performance to the Japanese, and we enjoyed the Japan popular song PPAP. From the beginning of the meeting we were smiling and caring for each other just like a family, and also had taro and oyster porridge which Amy's mother had cooked.

【That is what I adore – the spirit of "Asian Beat"!】

The Taiwan trip made all the members braver. We went to Lugang Mazu Temple, the most famous temple in Taiwan, and performed a flash show. After the flash show, we saw the Asian Beat on the Taiwan news, and visitors had posted our performance on FB and Instagram saying that they had enjoyed every moment of the performance. I found that because we maintain our enthusiasm while doing what we love, people feel our energy.

【Proud of be a part of the Asian Beat.】

We left for Thailand on November 1st. Although we could not sing or dance with joy, we sang a slow song, and enjoyed a dinner with Chulalongkorn University students. They were very nice. Some students are fluent in Japanese, some are fluent in Chinese which is one of the most difficult languages to learn. Though we

were born in different countries, we can understand each other with our heart.

At Mae Kok Farm, we enjoyed dinner with the children and neighbors. We overcame the walls of nationality with our musical performance. There were no language or cultural problems but a lot of laughter in the room. Before the night party, I chatted with a boy using body language. I smiled in his eyes, the two of us understood each other. He could not understand English nor I could not read the Thai language, but we communicated with our hearts. During the party, the shy boy shouted loudly when I was on the stage, saying that he liked us.

We visited Ban Rom Sai, an orphanage for children infected with HIV by their mothers. We knew that hugging and face kissing would not cause us to be infected. I touched the children's hands and held them up and I saw their smiles. I painted a portrait of Soyse, one of the girls. She asked a Japanese member to paint my portrait. I could not stop crying when she gave me her portrait and took my portrait with her little hand. I thought that she wanted to remember me. After taking photos, the time had come to leave. Soyse grasped my hand tightly showing she was afraid of losing me. If I have the chance, I want to come back to find her, and give her a big hug again.

【You are afraid, because you do not understand.】

Many thanks to 「Sing Out Taiwan」 and 「Asian Beat Group」 for letting me see a powerful and colorful world. How lucky I am! I hope this kind of feeling of being touched will continue, and I can become a better person who has the ability to give. The Asian Beat Tour has created an unforgettable memory in my life. I truly appreciate it!



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# 2016 Taiwan / Thai Tour

## Participants from Taiwan



Amy  
林庭羽  
Ting-Yu Lin



Claire  
黃榆喬  
Yu-Chia, Huang



David  
林奕廷  
Y-Ting, Lin



Eric  
杜哲旭  
Zhe-Xu, Tu



Eva  
王瀨玉  
Jin-Yu, Wang



Gruuu  
陳鈺婷  
Yu-Ting, Chen



Johnson  
蔡禮謙  
Li-Chien, Tsai



Matt  
莊英愷  
Ying-Kai, Chuang



Paul  
黃淩軒  
Ling-Hsuan Huang



Penny  
康文品  
Wen-Pin, Kang



Pon Pon  
彭歆庭  
Hsin-Ting, Peng



Star  
何星瑩  
Sing-Ying, Ho



Sun  
李宜玲  
Y-Lung, Li



Teresa  
杜懿靛  
Yi-Dian, Tu

# 2016 Taiwan / Thai Tour

## Participants from Japan (continued)



Ban Ban  
伴 捷人  
Hayato Ban



Damon  
木暮 美樹  
Miki Kogure



Imami  
今井 美咲  
Misaki Imai



Koh  
浜松 幸  
Koh Hamamatsu



Men Men  
毛受 永理奈  
Erina Menjyo



Miki  
平山 美樹  
Miki Hirayama



Rakko  
木下 桜子  
Sakurako Kinoshita



Sachi  
柳瀬 幸恵  
Sachie Yanase



Seatle  
山瀬 加奈  
Kana Yamase



Takeshi  
齋藤 猛  
Takeshi Saito



Yusa  
佐藤 ゆさこ  
Yusako Sato



Sayaka  
鈴木 彩夏  
Sayaka Suzuki



Mika  
大城 ミカ  
Mika Oshiro



Momo  
星野 桃子  
Momoko Hoshino



Sampoko  
新井 三保子  
Mihoko Arai



Takahashi  
高橋 信幸  
Nobuyuki Takahashi

# 2016 Taiwan / Thai Tour

## Participants from Japan (continued)



Ted  
我妻 宣忠  
Noritada Agatsuma



Ryo  
安達 亮  
Ryo Adachi



Hana  
花宮 香織  
Kaori Hanamiya

## Special thanks to (continued)



David  
林 定三  
David Lin



Robert  
陳建舟  
Robert Chen



Tobe sensei  
戸邊 治朗  
Jiro Tobe



Anuluck  
<Mae Kok Farm>



Mon  
<Mae Kok Farm>



Miwa  
名取 美和  
Miwa Natori



Miho  
名取 美穂  
Miho Natori



Ohara  
大原 美穂  
Miho Ohara



Akiyama  
秋山 泰三  
Hiromitsu Akiyama



Momo  
星野 桃子  
Momoko Hoshino

# 2016 Taiwan / Thai Tour

*This project was organized by*



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高橋 信幸

Nobuyuki Takahashi



Ted  
我妻 宣忠

Noritada Agatsuma



Ryo  
安達 亮

Ryo Adachi



Sampoko  
新井 三保子

Mihoko Arai



Hana  
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