

Publication: AsiaOne Online

Date: 23 September 2024

Headline: 26-year-old wins Miss Universe Singapore 2024, transgender beauty queen makes top 5

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Just a short distance away from the hustle and bustle of the 2024 Singapore Grand Prix, a glamorous event had attendees on the edge of their seats.

As two beautiful ladies stood on stage, facing each other and holding hands, everyone waited with bated breath.



"The title of Miss Universe Singapore 2024 goes to...Charlotte Chia!"

The audience burst into applause at this announcement.

Charlotte, a 26-year-old public relations account executive, was crowned Miss Universe Singapore 2024 after a two-hour finale gala on Sunday (Sept 22), which consisted of the swimsuit and evening gown segments for the top 15 contestants and a Q&A segment for the top five.

She also received the Miss Body Beautiful award earlier that evening, alongside Miss Congeniality Seraphina Yong and Fan Favourite Amber Li.

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Overwhelmed with emotion, Charlotte thanked her mother and grandmother for their support, dedicating her win to them.

"I am so grateful, so thankful for the opportunity. I will do my best to live up to this responsibility," she said.

Although her 97-year-old grandmother could not make it to the ceremony as she had caught a cold, Charlotte's mother - her biggest cheerleader that night - made her presence known to all as she celebrated her daughter's win.



Speaking to AsiaOne that evening, Charlotte shared that she had not expected the win at all as she felt everyone in the top 5 was deserving of it.

She admitted that when her name was called, she completely blacked out.

"My ears have been blocked lately, so initially I thought I heard it wrong. But I saw my mum jumping up and down, she was [like a] disco ball," she said.

"I was so touched by all the support from the crowd. When the presenter came and asked me 'how are you feeling?', I was like: 'I can't even express [it]'. I was just trying not to burst into tears at that point."

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Charlotte also shared that she was going to video call her grandmother afterwards to convey the good news and her gratitude.

"The person I am today is because of her influence, this win is hers," she said with tears in her eyes.

When asked what message she would like to put out there as Miss Universe Singapore 2024, Charlotte said: "I acknowledge that this isn't just a crown, it's not just a title. This is a job, it's a role, it's a responsibility."

"So, I would like to... keep myself accountable by putting it out there that while I'm grateful for this title, I'm going to work hard for it, and I'm going to definitely use my voice to make an impact for what I believe in."

'I won my people's hearts'

During the gala, an overwhelming majority of attendees could be seen holding LED signs and chanting one name: Qatrisha.

Many of them were friends and supporters from the queer community, including drag queens dressed to the nines.

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Qatrisha Zairyah, 33, has been garnering online attention for being Miss Universe Singapore's first transgender finalist.

An experienced pageant queen who has taken part in various pageants for transgender women, she exuded poise and elegance throughout the gala and while speaking with AsiaOne.

"Regardless [if I] won or not, at least I won my people's hearts and was a great representation for them, even [getting into] the top five," she said.

"It's a tremendous success for me to be up there for a women's pageant, I would say."

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The fashion advisor also thanked her supporters for standing by her throughout her pageant journey.

"I am here because of their support and motivational words," she said.

"I felt so emotional [hearing them cheer] that I teared up backstage... these are my real supporters who followed me throughout my journey."

Qatirisha added that she is hoping to pursue a career in modelling overseas and further represent Singapore in various ways.

Role models for the youth

First runner-up Adelene Stanley, who is the founder of local dance academy The Dance Circus, and second runner-up, TV anchor and entrepreneur Olivia Dewi Cinta Higgins, also expressed their gratitude for their supporters and shared their hopes for the future.

Adelene, 29, a single mother to a two-year-old girl, told AsiaOne that she wishes to be a role model for her daughter as well as her students.

"I always tell my baby girl that she's strong and fearless. She's why I decided to join this competition."

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"I teach so many young girls in schools... I know they see me as their teacher, but I really want them to learn not just dance from me, but also life lessons," she added.

Olivia, who is also 29, said that she aims to bring fitness and education to more people around the world.

"I'm going to keep advocating every single day with my small actions... for people to take control of their lives again," she told AsiaOne.

"I want to start off in my home ground, Singapore, and then go overseas to keep advocating for the spread of knowledge, books and education."

For now, Olivia plans on indulging in some post-pageant coffee and ice cream before training for her third Hyrox competition this year, which will be held in Hong Kong in November.

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