

# Shawn Mendes follows formula that rocks Singapore fans

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## Singapore

IF IT ain't broke, don't fix it, goes the saying. Shawn Mendes, playing to a much larger Singapore crowd than in his last performance in the city-state in 2017, stuck to a tried-and-tested formula last Friday.

Backed by a relatively stripped-down, four-piece rock band at the Singapore Indoor Stadium, the pop idol switched between the guitar and piano for this sold-out performance reminiscent of his 2017 show at The Star Theatre.

But the pop idol, who has officially dethroned fellow Canadian Justin Bieber as the "Prince of Pop" by being the fourth most streamed artist on Spotify, definitely kept fans in the front row happy, as he tossed guitar picks into the crowd.

The Mendes Army (what his fans call themselves) reciprocated by screaming their adoration through the evening.

No longer the teen awkwardly recording song covers from his bedroom, the 21-year-old worked the crowd like a seasoned showman, from the start of the Justin Timberlake-inspired "Lost in Japan" to the closing song, the rousing anthem "In My Blood".

On the piano, Mendes teased the audience with a brief rendition of the hugely successful "Senorita", written with rumoured girlfriend Camila Cabello, before launching "I Know What You Did Last Summer", on which he and Cabello first worked together.

Staring straight into the camera recording his moves onstage, he then flashed fans a roguish smile, earning deafening cries from the crowd of mostly teenage girls.

He sounded as good live as he does in the studio, hitting the high notes effortlessly on tracks like "Nervous", also from his 2018 self-titled album, and the soulful, John Mayer-esque "Ruin" from 2016's *Illuminate*.

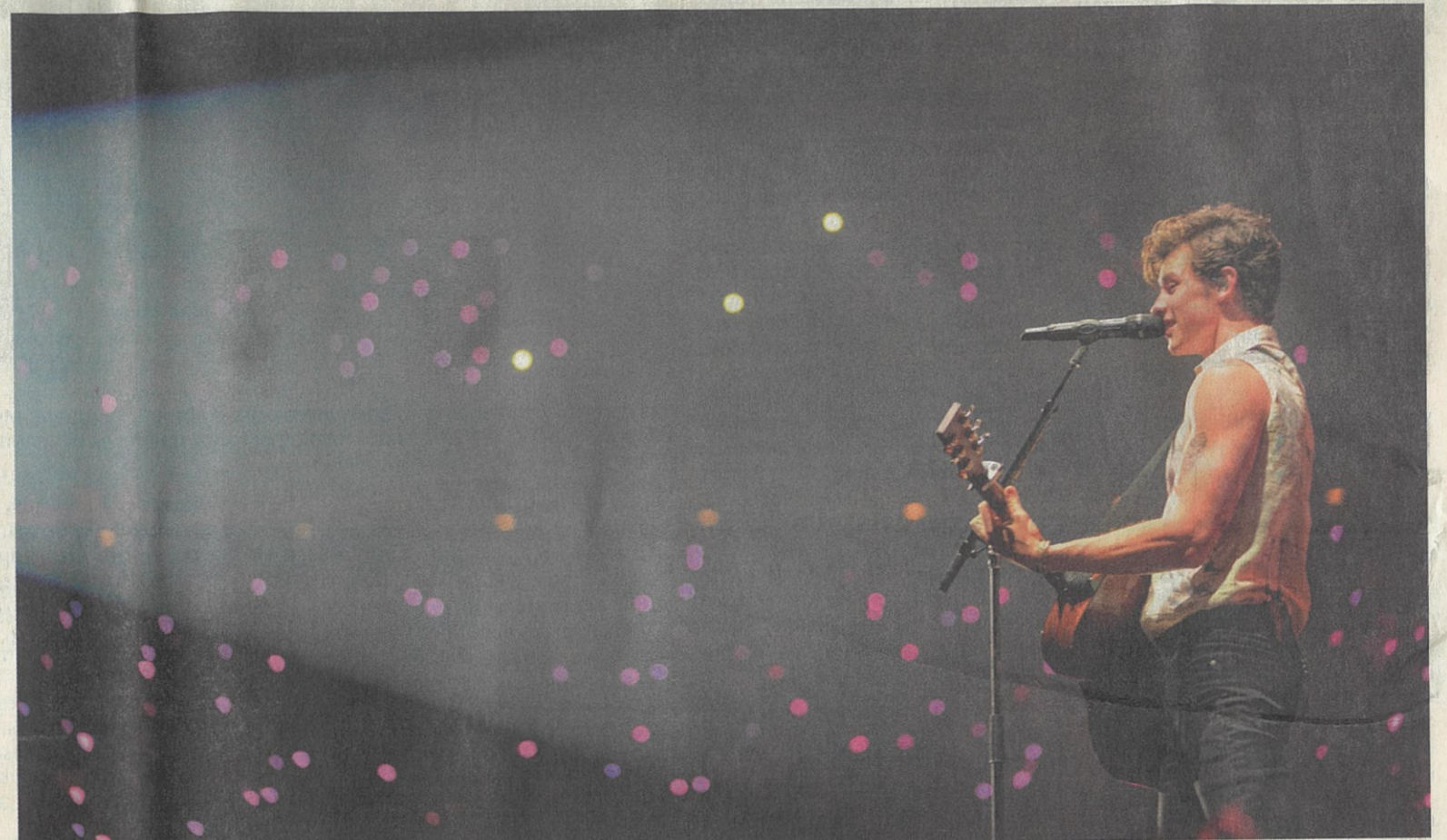
Mendes, who reportedly learnt to play the guitar by watching YouTube tutorial videos when he was 14, also showed his musicality with guitar solos on "Ruin" and "Youth".

He kept banter to a minimum this time, sharing only brief anecdotes on a few songs like "Fallin' All In You", which he described as "super special" because he wrote it with his idol, English singer Ed Sheeran.

He declared Coldplay classic "Fix You" as one of his "favourite songs of all time", serenading the crowd with it as the centrally controlled strobing bracelets given to the audience glowed blue, turning the stadium into a field of lights.

Taking to the piano again, the singer also briefly put his own spin on Whitney Houston's "I Wanna Dance With Somebody (Who Loves Me)".

The loudest cheers were reserved for his own hits, including when he took fans on a trip down memory lane with a medley of his old tunes, like "A Little Too Much" (from 2015's *Handwritten*) and "Patience".



The pop star, all of 21 years old, worked the audience of adoring teens like a pro, lobbing guitar picks at them and flashing a roguish smile at the camera recording all his energetic moves on stage. Next stop: Kuala Lumpur.

It's a reminder of how far the Grammy-nominated singer has come, despite having just turned 21 in August.

Dressed in a sleeveless white shirt and skinny black jeans, he energetically zipped across the stage throughout the night, never losing his breath through the 105-minute set.

Biceps on full display and floppy hair falling into his eyes, he looked every part the pop heart-throb as he blew through a blistering total of 24 tracks in Singapore.

Blowing kisses to the crowd left and right, he left the stage as quickly as he came onto it, with no encore.

Singapore fans who later camped at the airport, hoping for more glimpses of him before he left for Kuala Lumpur, the next Asian stop on his world tour, were left disappointed when the star took a coach there instead.

Perhaps next time, the new prince of pop will give his people more.

## DJ Dongfang Billy raises money for BT Budding Artists Fund

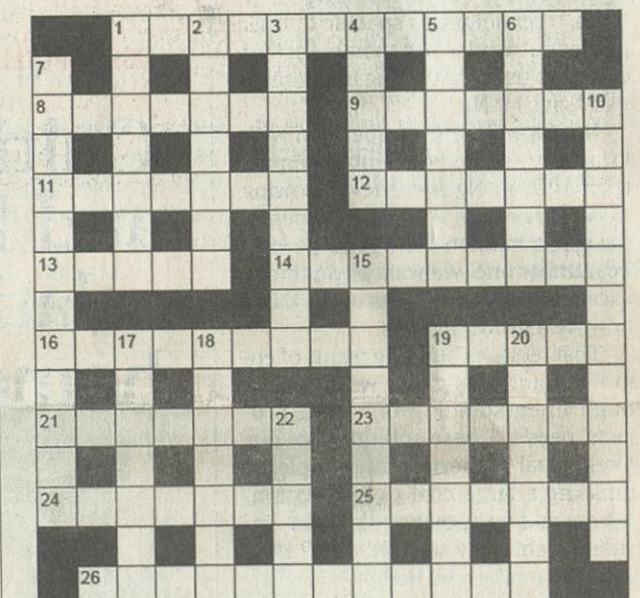
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TWO charities – The Business Times Budding Artists Fund (BT BAF) and The Straits Times School Pocket Money Fund (STSPMF) – are benefiting from a series of "afternoon tea sessions" with Chinese radio DJ Dongfang Billy.

The first six sessions of his *An Afternoon Tea Rhansodv* with Billy are sold out



## CRYPTIC CROSSWORD



### Across

- 1 Memory concerning small fuss around clubs (12)
- 8 Isolated, practically abuse a Republican (7)
- 9 Possibly fast opening to accident black spot (7)
- 11 Gentleman sent back German dish (7)
- 12 Damage with ruler leaving bruise? (7)
- 13 Dish is gone before end of tea (5)
- 14 Former sweetheart purchases sink with new device (9)
- 16 Clash of European knight

### sergeant-major (5)

- 5 Guaranteed king will get followed around (7)
- 6 Moan, article examined reportedly for poison (7)
- 7 Perhaps spin doctor Premier's dispatched (12)
- 10 Caught with the lights on changing outside attire (12)
- 15 Punch from barkeeper for a teetotaler (9)
- 17 Wine consumed by Bacchian tippler (7)
- 18 Open can's pull almost broken (7)
- 19 Sweetheart anxious with one's elevated position (7)
- 20 Deal made once each in