

**Permata eyes links to NY arts academy**  
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KUALA LUMPUR, March 2 — Permata Negara is seeking a tie-up with the Juilliard School in New York to enable promising young performers earmarked under the federally-funded scheme to be groomed there, Bernama Online reported today.

The Juilliard School is a school for the performing arts and has gained a prestige through its exclusivity and the luminaries in its alumni. Established in 1905, it accepts no more than seven per cent of the thousands of applicants yearly.

Graduates of the school have garnered among them 105 Grammy Awards, 62 Tony Awards, 47 Emmy Awards, 26 Bessie Awards, 24 Academy Awards, 16 Pulitzer Prizes and 12 National Medals.

Speaking in New York, patron of Permata Datin Seri Rosmah Mansor expressed hope that the acceptance of 13-year-old music prodigy Tengku Ahmad Irfan Tengku Ahmad Shahrizal would open the doors for more Malaysians at the school.

"Malaysia would be most happy to have any form of collaboration with the Juilliard School in the field of performing arts," Rosmah was quoted as saying by the state news agency.

Tengku Ahmad Irfan is pursuing majors in piano and composition under a scholarship from the school.

Welcoming Rosmah was Juilliard School President Dr Joseph Polisi, who later said the school, which offers education up to the doctorate level in fine arts, currently has 800 students with the majority, a total of 650, taking up music, and the rest, dancing and acting.

Permata is an early childhood education and care programme that is funded directly by the Barisan Nasional government and receives millions in allocations annually.

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