

Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





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**World Dance Alliance
Asia-Pacific**

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Cover
*And always this heat smell
 from after the storm...*,
 choreographed by Claude
 Aymon, 23-24 July 2011 at
 Tsoying Dance Theater,
 Taiwan. Photo: Zen-Hau Liu

Executive reports

The Executive Board of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific (WDAAP) is elected by the membership every two years at the Annual General Meeting, which is held in a different country each year and is hosted by the local WDA chapter. The Executive Board consists of the President, the Vice President, the Secretary, the Treasurer and four regional Vice Presidents, who represent the interests of their regions: East Asia, South-East Asia, South Asia and the Pacific. Members with a specific interest in the affairs of one of these regions should contact the designated Vice President. If members wish to contribute to issues within their own countries, they should contact their Chapter heads.



Read more about new the newly elected WDAAP Executive Board on page 30.



President's report

by Yunyu Wang

It is my great pleasure to be the new president of WDAAP. My position as leader means working side by side with my great team, who were and are my best friends, with the same mission of serving dance around the world, not just in the Asia-Pacific region. Since my first encounter with WDA, back when I met many great dance pioneers in a small room in the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts in the early 1990's, it seems that

I run into these core WDA members everywhere! They are in Taiwan, Japan and Indonesia; at the 2000 Feet Festival in Philadelphia, USA, where I chaired the Asian dance groups; and in Dusseldorf, Germany where four dance academies collectively performed Cloud Gate Dance Theatre's classic work *Legacy*. The innovations of those core members of WDA act as a bridge between dance and the wider world. That is the reason I eventually became one of them, starting from WDAAP, the foundation of WDA that was established by Carl Wolz. I am new to this position, but I am not new to this organisation nor to its mission. My heart never stops pounding for WDAAP. I am looking forward to getting together with all of you dance lovers in Taipei, Taiwan, to celebrate the WDA global summit in July 2012.



Vice President's report

by Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsri

Dear friends, this is my first report as the Vice President of WDAAP, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you for electing me to this position. I would also like to acknowledge the bonds of networking, friendship, exchange and sharing, that WDA as a whole and WDAAP has provided to all of us, who have grown in more ways than one, through our association with this organization.

As we prepare for our next Global Summit in Taipei, I would like to repeat something that we have felt and have said time and again. Let us all think what we can give to this organization and not what the organization can give us. I think that most of us would agree that the organization has given us support and strength to grow in whatever way we wanted to.

As we collaborate with different organisations and share platforms with wonderful people from different specialized backgrounds, we also need to consolidate on the issues we have always felt very passionately about, and those are equality, spirit of sharing and respect for all ethnic and cultural diversities in and through dance and the dance community all over the world. With best wishes, Urmimala Sarkar Munsri



Secretary General's Report

by Cheryl Stock

A Global Perspective

2011 has been a year of planning and consolidation for the WDA Global Executive with two excellent meetings being held: the annual meeting in Taiwan at the end of July and a special meeting in Paris at the end of November. The very productive two-day meeting in Taiwan was generously hosted by incoming President of WDAAP Yunyu Wang and attended by President of WDA Americas Jin-Wen Yu, newly elected Vice-President of WDAAP Urmimala Sarkar with guest Ralph Buck (representing both WDA and World Alliance of Arts Educators), and Jeff Meiners, our WDA/daCi representative together with Julie Dyson (Secretary, WDAAP) also in attendance. Several important policy changes were ratified and will be adopted and implemented by the regions at their next Annual General Meeting or Assembly.

Firstly I am very pleased to report an expanded Global Executive from 7 to 11 members in light of increased activity of WDA both within regions and at a cross-regional level. The Executive Committee now comprises the General Secretary, President of each region plus two regional executive members appointed by the regional President and an independent elected member, all for three-year periods; with no more than two members residing in the same country to ensure cultural and national diversity. For 2012, the members are Cheryl Stock (whose term was renewed), Yunyu Wang, Jin-Wen Yu, Joseph Fontano, Anis Nor, Urmimala Sarkar, Hazel Franco, Adrienne Kaeppler and independent member Julie Dyson, with two vacancies for members from Europe.

The second major change was the discontinuing of the Welfare and Status and Management and Promotion networks to be replaced with one network named Support and Development. Over the next year the Chairs will be appointed for this network, whose brief is as follows:

"WDA Support and Development Network focuses on dance-based activities that support and develop the art form in terms of management, promotion, distribution, advocacy, policy and funding, through members who practice in these areas. It equally encompasses members who are concerned with the social and physical well being of dance such as health professionals, somatic practitioners, community facilitators and legal advisors. In all these aspects, communication networks—professional and social—are an important driver for dance sustainability."

Much of the meeting was spent discussing and agreeing to criteria for the above initiatives as well as developing and endorsing policy and criteria for global projects, the role of the global executive and secretary general, use of logo/brand and international affiliations/partners. It was also agreed that the Global Executive could facilitate



Top: Urmimala Sarkar Munsu, Ralph Buck, Julie Dyson, Cheryl Stock, Yunyu Wang and Prof Jin-Wen Yu at the WDA Global Executive meeting, Taipei, 28 July 2011.

Photo: Jeff Meiners

Bottom: WDA Americas president Prof Jin-Wen Yu, Mary-Jane Warner, Prof Mohd Anis Md Nor, Alina Abreu, Ralph Buck, Julie Dyson, Urmimala Sarkar Munsu and Cheryl Stock at a joint meeting with International Dance Group at the Theatre du Chaillot, Paris, 26 November 2011.



the formation of new WDA chapters in regions where there was currently no effective regional representation.

The meeting made a special motion to thank Anis Nor for his inspiring leadership and extraordinary commitment as long-time President of WDAAP which saw the growth of many new country and regional members and ensured dynamic and ongoing activity within and across WDA regions.

We thoroughly enjoyed our two-day meeting, most of us staying courtesy of Yunyu and TNUA in the spacious and comfortable campus accommodation. The beautiful natural surroundings of TNUA were much appreciated on our walking explorations as was the visit to the hot springs and night markets—a must in Taipei. We also spent an extra day to join in the planning meetings for the 2012 Global Summit in partnership with daCi. You will be able to read more details in other parts of Channels but it is shaping up to be an incredibly rich program. I look forward to seeing you all there in Taipei next July!

Courtesy of Julie Dyson working in conjunction with Frederic Moreau from the French Ministry of Culture, several executive members of WDA were

invited to join a gathering of the International Dance Support Group which consists of mostly dance funding bodies (Arts Councils and Ministries of Culture dance directors) in Europe, in particular those involved in creating and implementing National Dance Plans for their countries. Around 20 countries from around the world attended and it was fascinating to hear the state of play of dance in the various countries. WDA gave a formal presentation of its policies and structures and examples of its activities globally and in the Asia-Pacific and Americas regions. WDA members attending were myself, Julie Dyson (representing both groups), Jin-Wen Yu, Anis Nor, Alina Abreu, Mary-Jane Warner, Urmimala Sarkar and Ralph Buck.

The third and final day was particularly interesting with a presentation about future plans and policies of the European Commission until 2025. We also discussed four issues identified by the group: transition and career development for dancers; implementing the various dance plans; development of digital dance in relation to the art form and audience development; and advocacy for dance education.

Our hosts, Centre National de la Danse (CND) and the French Ministry of Culture, were extremely generous providing delicious French meals, a tour of the Conservatoire de Danse along with a stunning performance from the graduating students and a tour of the Theatre de Chaillot followed by dinner looking out over the sparkling lights of the Eiffel Tower and a superb performance by Le Ballet de Flandres of William Forsythe's *Artifact*.

Congratulations for a very successful year for both WDAAP and WDA Americas and all the best for a dance-filled and peaceful 2012.



East Asia
Hong Kong
Japan
Korea
Taiwan



East Asia report

Vice President Anna CY Chan

On behalf of East Asia I would like to express our sincere thanks to Professor Mohd Anis Md Nor for his great leadership in developing WDAAP into a strong

international dance organization. Many congratulations to our new President Professor Yunyu Wang who will be setting up her presidential office in Taipei and we look forward to closer collaboration with her.

There will be two exciting events within the East Asia region next year. The 2012 World Dance Alliance Global Assembly will be held at Taipei National University of the Arts in July 2012 in partnership with Dance and the Child International (daCi) for a joint conference and festival - 'Dance, Young People and Change'. The planning committee of Ralph Buck, Jeff Meiners, Yunyu Wang and Ann Kipling-Brown from daCi has been working really hard in the past two years and the festival is looking forward to welcoming up to 1000 young people, teachers, students and academics to attend an amazing program of keynote address, conference presentations, master classes, workshops, performance and cultural tours from 14 to 20 July 2012.

We have been actively exploring opportunities to develop the WDAAP network in China and I am happy to announce that Henan Normal University has invited WDAAP to collaborate and co-present a forum on the opening day of American Dance Festival (ADF) Henan 2012. Henan Normal University initiated this collaboration in respect for the background and achievement of WDAAP members. It is believed that this is a good opportunity to raise the awareness and profile of WDAAP in China. This project is managed and coordinated by Hong Kong Chapter and President Yunyu Wang has agreed to be the facilitator of the forum. In exchange, Henan Normal University is offering eight scholarships for WDAAP, with each scholarship valued at RMB4500 (USD700). WDAAP chapters can take this opportunity to recommend dance artists in their countries to apply for the scholarships, which will enable them to learn from ADF instructors, share their choreography with Chinese audiences, and to understand the latest developments in modern dance in China. The date for ADF Henan will be from 6 to 24 August 2012.

Other activities in the East Asia region have been covered by the chapter reports.



Pacific report

Vice President Dr Christina Hong

- Pacific area
-
- Australia
-
- New Zealand
-
- Fiji
-
- New Guinea
-

2011 has been an extraordinary year. As a resident of Brisbane, Australia, the year began with hasty evacuation preparations and the anxiety of watching the river levels close to home rise to unprecedented levels. The flooding that began the morning of 11 January eventually engulfed vast tracts of Brisbane's lower-lying suburbs and devastated the city

riverfront including significant parts of two university campuses.

Other events of crisis proportions located within our Asia-Pacific region followed. On 22 February a major earthquake struck Christchurch, New Zealand, the first of a year-long swarm of earthquakes, including two large aftershocks in June and September. Then on 11 March we witnessed other images of utter devastation on our screens. This time the calamity was caused by the massive tsunami that deluged cities on the northern Pacific coast of Japan as a result of a 9.0 magnitude earthquake. This giant wall of water, as high as 10 metres in some parts, reached five kilometres inland and not only wiped urban and rural areas off the map but also propelled Japan, and neighboring nations in particular, into emergency action as the threat of a nuclear crisis loomed (<http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-03-11/tsunami-swamps-japan-after-powerful-quake/2661744>). And so the year began, with these and other catastrophic natural disasters that subsequently followed in other regions of the world. As the year has unfolded, history-shattering events have also played out across socio-political and economic arenas that have both amazed and impacted upon our communities. The world has literally been transforming before our very eyes.

Why do I open my report with these reflections on a 2011 year that is fast drawing to a close? The answer is simple, and speaks to the very essence of who we are as a global alliance and regional network of artists and educators. In the aftermath of these life-changing events, artistic communities in each location rallied together and helped to make a difference by organizing benefit concerts and fundraisers. Given the necessary time and space, local artists interpreted their own and others' lived experiences of these exceptional times through the making of creative work in the languages of their various art forms. Time and time again, the power of the arts, manifested through the enterprise, skill and creativity of artists, has assisted, in ways large and small, these ravaged communities to lift their exhausted spirits, to rebuild, reframe, and to make meaning of these occurrences in more ways than words can say.

In Australia, for example, a roll call of Australia's dance music talent, responding swiftly to the calls for support in flood-affected areas of Queensland, staged Dance Aid, a charity benefit by the dance community for Queensland victims.

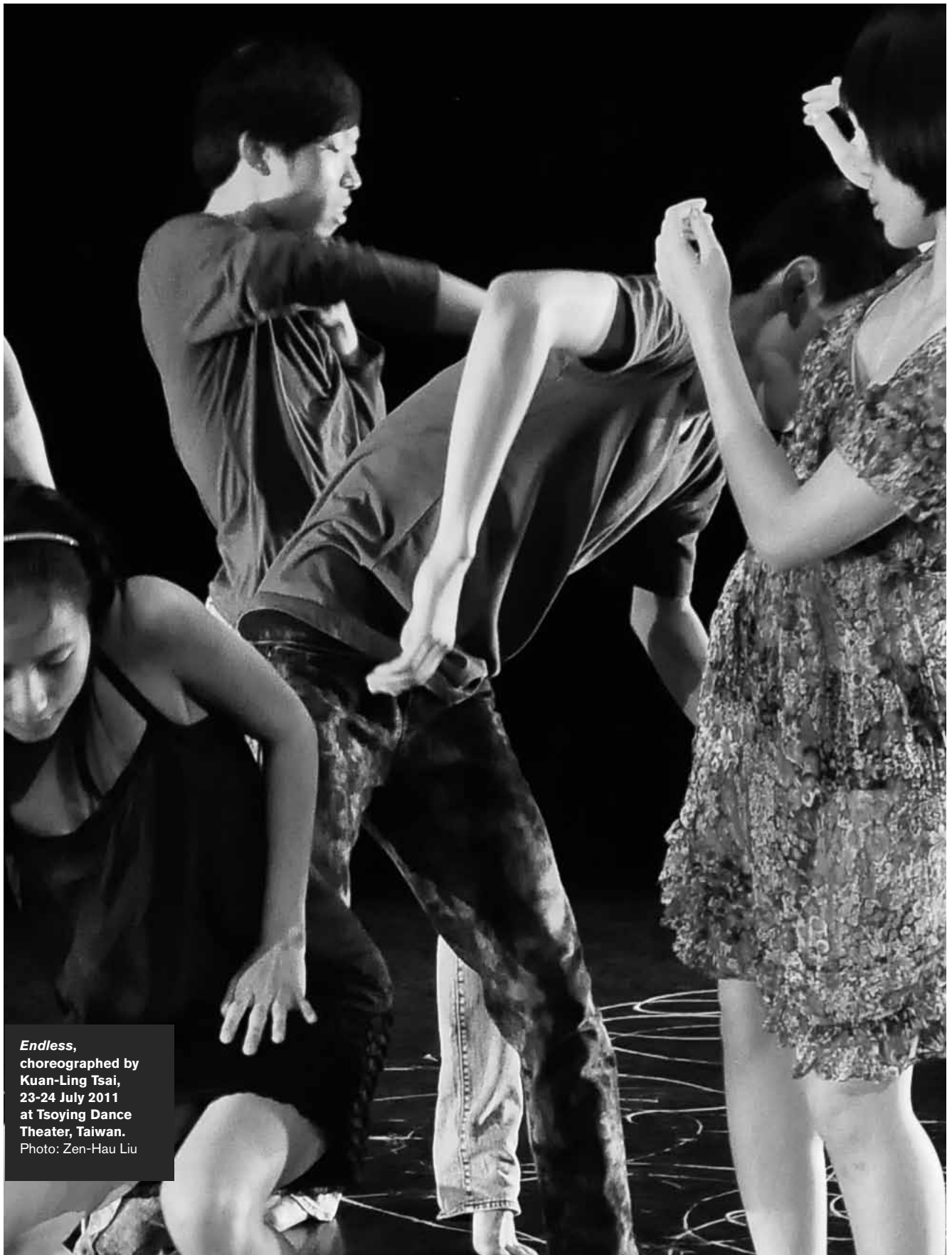
Dance Aid started out in Melbourne but then went national with successful events staged across Australia. In New Zealand, amongst other fundraising initiatives, nationally-funded arts entities such as the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra, the Royal New Zealand Ballet and Te Matatini mobilized to stage free events to raise money in support of the people of Christchurch. As the New Zealand Arts, Culture and Heritage Minister Hon. Christopher Finlayson has said, "The money raised by these events is important. The arts can also play an important cathartic role at times like this. They enable people to express themselves and give shape and meaning to complex and strong emotions that might be difficult to comprehend or deal with. In difficult times the arts can help us to make sense of life and to find our way through." (<http://www.nzballet.org.nz/node/738>)

The June edition of the WDA Asia-Pacific Channels carried both text and photographs describing the efforts of ballet artists in supporting the restoration efforts in Japan. Even now, long after the media focus has moved onto other 'breaking news', the sensibilities of artistic communities continue to reach out to families in quite extraordinary ways. A recent example is the sell-out concert organized by New Zealand musician Don McGlashan and friends in November with the aim of raising money to bring relief to earthquake-affected Christchurch families, by bringing them to Auckland for some rest and relaxation next March 2012.

In the aftermath, new dance works such as *Tilt*, choreographed by Christchurch resident Fleur de Their, emerged to be showcased at the rescheduled Christchurch Arts Festival held late August-early October this year. As the dancers literally perform on a moving floor within a moveable set, *Tilt* explores the physical and metaphorical motif of how we try to maintain strength, balance and control in an unstable and changing environment. Undoubtedly, creative work informed by life-changing experiences and events will also have been created and performed in other devastated and crisis-struck locations across the globe.

It is the spirit and collective power of the arts community, and for us in particular the dance community across the Asia-Pacific, that binds us. I am reminded of the strength of the network and the collegiality between members from across the region as I reflect on the highly successful Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference held in Kuala Lumpur this past September. There, the collegiality and collaboration that is so evident across our Asia-Pacific regional community of dance practice manifested and celebrated its successes in many ways, including the launch of not one but two significant publications as a result of the work and contributions of a significant number of individuals.

As a WDAAP member and the newly elected Vice-President for the Pacific region, I feel fortunate to be in such good company. I acknowledge the past and present achievements of the WDA Asia-Pacific network and the commitment and successes of the WDAAP Executive team, and specifically that of the out-going WDAAP Executive members. I look forward to working collaboratively to initiate and assist in realizing projects that work toward achieving the goals of WDA.



Endless,
choreographed by
Kuan-Ling Tsai,
23-24 July 2011
at Tsoying Dance
Theater, Taiwan.
Photo: Zen-Hau Liu



Network reports

The World Dance Alliance works through four Networks, based on specific areas of interest and embracing the mandate of the organisation. Each of the networks has a chairperson and co-chair who coordinate activities to advance the issues raised by these special interest groups. These networks may also be duplicated in each chapter.

The positions of Network Chairs and co-chairs are not subject to election, but nominations may be received by the President for discussion and negotiation at the AGM.

Network Chairs initiate and drive the work of special interest groups within the WDAAP and provide two reports annually on their activities for *Asia-Pacific Channels*.

About the Networks

- **The Creation & Presentation Network** provides opportunities for choreographic development, networking and cultural exchange.
- **The Education & Training Network** provides a forum for professional exchange to improve dance curriculum content and delivery, and opportunities for sharing information and resources.
- **The Research & Documentation Network** promotes dialogue and identifies, supports and initiates projects that preserve dance's heritage through conferences, print and online publications.
- **The Support & Development Network** focuses on dance management, promotion, distribution, advocacy, policy and funding, as well as the social and physical well being of dance practitioners.

Education & Training

Co-chairs Dr Ralph Buck
and Jeff Meiners

We are thrilled to report that at the 36th session of the General Conference of UNESCO, 193 member countries agreed to:

1. Adopt and support the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education (http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41117&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html)
2. Designate the fourth week of May as International Week of Arts Education
3. Support a Third World Conference on Arts Education.

The full resolutions as recorded at the UNESCO General Council are outlined below (thanks to Canadian and German Commissions for UNESCO).

World Dance Alliance along with Dance and the Child International has been active via the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE: International Drama Education Association, International Society for Education in Art, International Society for Music Education and World Dance Alliance) in developing and advocating for these initiatives.

Thanks go to the Korean Arts and Culture Education Services (KACES) and the Korean delegation at the 36th UNESCO General Conference for their advocacy for arts education during the conference in Paris. A statement from KACES regarding the announcement may be found at <http://www.artezine.kr/english/view.jsp?articleidx=1498>.

2012 will see the inaugural celebration of the International Week of Arts Education. This provides a focal point for WDAAP celebrations and initiatives and we encourage you to contact local Ministries of Education and advocacy groups to plan events. More on this will be discussed at our next Network meeting in Taipei during the daCI/WDA Global Dance Summit, 14-20 July 2012, at TNUA in Taiwan.

Indeed, don't forget to register to attend the Dance Global Summit in Taiwan. The programme is great; the event is cheap; Taipei is a thrilling city; there is so much dance to see and participate in; and, your practice and scholarship will be extended. Honestly, it will be the dance event of 2012. Go to www.daciwdaintaiwan.org and see for yourself.

At this time of year when many of us are getting ready for holidays we say thank you for a wonderful 2011 and let's make 2012 even better.

Item 5.13—Implementation of the “Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education”, outcome document of the Second World Conference on Arts Education

The General Conference,
Recalling 35 C/Resolution 40 on the promotion of arts education,
Taking into consideration 185 EX/Decision 44,
Having examined document 36 C/55,

1. *Welcomes* the positive results of the First and Second World Conferences on Arts Education (held in March 2006 and May 2010) which highlighted the importance of high-quality arts education for all and of strengthening cooperation among various stakeholders (national authorities, local governments, teachers, artists, researchers associations and NGOs) and through the network of UNESCO Arts Education Observatories and Chairs to the development of best practices and the reinforcement of the position of arts education in schools and in societies;
2. *Invites* Member States to ensure the follow-up to the Second World Conference by employing the strategies proposed in the Seoul Agenda and by implementing in a concerted manner the action items set out therein for the renewal of education systems;
3. *Requests* the Director-General to provide support for the mobilization of extrabudgetary resources for the holding of the Third World Conference on Arts Education and to ensure appropriate intersectoral cooperation between the Culture and Education Sectors of UNESCO in promoting and integrating arts education, in particular in the context of the education for all (EFA) and education for sustainable development (ESD) plans;
4. *Decides* to proclaim the fourth week of May as the International Arts Education Week and to encourage all Member States, civil society, professional organizations and communities to organize relevant activities on that occasion at the national, regional and international levels.

Australia chapter

by Julie Dyson

Chapter reports

Countries or defined geographical areas within a regional centre may become Chapter members, providing information and coordinating the dance activities within their boundaries. They are important points in regional and global communication and networking. These Chapters propose and implement projects that address not only the general goals of WDA and WDA Asia Pacific, but also the specific needs of the local dance community.

The second half of this year has seen the premieres of many new works by Australian companies, graduation performances by the country's leading dance training institutions, and the Spring Dance Festival at the Sydney Opera House in August-September.

It has also been a period of change, with new artistic directors of Melbourne's Chunky Move and Dancehouse being announced. Anouk van Dijk from the Netherlands will replace long-time Chunky Move director Gideon Obarzanek, and Angela Conquet from France will replace David Tyndall, who formerly headed the producing organisation Dancehouse.

There have been changes in the funding landscape also, with Tasdance, Balletlab and KAGE Physical Theatre all receiving new triennial funding from the Australia Council, while several other small companies were unsuccessful in retaining theirs. Ausdance is lobbying the federal government to increase its overall support for the Australia Council so that these highly effective small companies can be sustained.

The Australian Ballet premiered Graeme Murphy's new *Romeo and Juliet* in September, a major event in the classical repertoire. Also premiered recently were Queensland Ballet's new *Swan Lake* choreographed by artistic director Francois Klaus, and West Australian Ballet's *Cinderella* by Jane Smeulders. It has also been a busy year for independent practitioners who continue to produce innovative work and provide employment for Australia's excellent performers.

We were lucky enough to see one of these independent practitioners, Daniel Jaber, perform at the launch of the two latest Celebrating Dance publications, *Sharing Identities* (Malaysia) and *Shaping the Landscape* (Australia). The books were launched by distinguished architect Hijjas Kasturi, whose daughter Bilqis, President of MyDance Alliance, organised a spectacular book-shaped cake to celebrate the launch.

The Australian Dance Awards were held in Brisbane this year at an event organised by Ausdance Queensland and supported by the

Queensland Performing Arts Centre. Outstanding winners included Ruth Osborne who won both services to dance and outstanding achievement in youth or community dance, Valda Craig for services to dance education, and Expressions Dance Company for outstanding performance by a company.

Sydney Dance Company featured twice, with Rafael Bonachela taking out best choreography for *6 Breathes* and Amy Hollingsworth for best female dancer. Narelle Benjamin won best independent work for *In Glass*, and great performances by Daniel Gaudiello (The Australian Ballet) and Alinta Chidzey (*West Side Story*) won both dancers outstanding performer awards. Ausdance WA will host the Australian Dance Awards next year on 1 September in Perth.

Australian youth dance practitioners are looking forward to the World Dance Alliance's Dance, Young People and Change festival and conference to be held in Taipei in July 2012. This will be a



The picture cake for the launch of the two Routledge volumes *Sharing Identities* (Malaysia) and *Shaping the Landscape* (Australia) at the Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference, September 2011.

Photo: Julie Dyson

major global event for WDA, and already our youth dance companies are fund-raising to make the long journey. Ausdance's Australian Youth Dance Festival will be held in Sydney in April, great preparation for the Taipei event.

Finally, Ausdance National launched its new website in November, providing new ways for the Australian dance community to access dance resources and advocacy information. You can visit the site at www.ausdance.org.au

Aotearoa New Zealand chapter

by Tania Kopytko

Kia ora, greetings to WDAAP from Aotearoa New Zealand, where we have had an exceptionally busy year in dance, particularly in the latter half. It has been a turbulent year for New Zealand with the dreadful second Christchurch earthquake on 22 February 2011 and then, at the other end of the scale, the Real New Zealand Festival celebrations as part of the Rugby World Cup in September and October.

September and October also featured the annual major New Zealand dance festivals. These were the TEMPO NZ Festival of Dance in Auckland, The Body Festival of Dance and Physical Theatre in Christchurch and Kowhiti Dance Festival in Wellington. The latter featured traditional and contemporary Maori performances as well as guest artists: the Nikosinathi Cultural dance group from South Africa touring with the Rugby World Cup South African contingent. While the earthquake damage prevented Christchurch from hosting a Rugby World Cup this did not prevent the city from celebrating this very important New Zealand-hosted event with music, song, dance and art, with the Body Festival contributing to this as well as their closely following dance festival.

Once again this demonstrates the resilience and determination of the Christchurch dance people and artists. The continuing earthquakes have had a huge impact on Christchurch city with the February quake causing devastating loss of life and an enormous impact on the city infrastructure. Much of the dance and arts organisations have had to be re-housed from the old studios, buildings and the Art Centre in the centre city.

It is at times of disaster that the arts become vitally important. They bind and link people together, raise their spirits and enable them to tell their stories and express their thoughts, individually and collectively. And so as part of the Christchurch Festival contemporary dance artist Fleur de Thier

presented a new commissioned dance work called *Tilt*. Staged on a moveable set, black wood sheets laid at angles on piles of old car tyres, the dancers explored the interior and exterior experience of the earthquakes. It drew people in and they could relate their experiences to what they saw on stage. As reviewer Andrew Paul Wood wrote on Theatreview:

"This is not a pretty dance—it's raw and uncompromising. Dancers collapse on their feet, fall down, and are inscribed with chalk, just as disasters and dramatic changes bring us down and leave their marks. The circling and repetition through which the dancers move suggest panic, uncertainty and entrapment perfectly expressed.

"But it is not all pessimism. The way the dancers intimately interact with each other, supporting each other's weight, suggests how human beings still help each other in moments of tragedy and suffering. Their vertical leaps, pushing and pulling, and unfolding from confinement, suggests catharsis, recovery, renewal and growth. This is a marvellous production, inspired by Christchurch, created by Christchurch. Anyone who experienced the quakes and aftermath—or any major life and community-altering trauma—will find themselves nodding in recognition."

The Real New Zealand Festival was a catalyst for an enormous amount of New Zealand art making and dance. The games' opening ceremony was choreographed by New Zealand Arts Foundation Laureate Shona McCullagh, working with a strong dance team representing Maori haka or traditional dance and contemporary dance. As part of the national wide celebrations companies such as Black Grace, Footnote and Atamira Contemporary Maori Dance presented programmes, while many other diverse dance groups presented community based performances. Especially commissioned was a new work by the national kapa haka organisation Te Matatini. Called *Arohanui—The Greatest Love*, it was a successful venture into "haka theatre", combining song, dance and Maori martial arts, using 30 of the best kapa haka exponents from around Aotearoa on an "uplifting journey into Maori culture". Atamira Dance Company, by contrast, produced a powerful piece of political dance theatre with *Te Houhi*, which explored on many levels the effect of colonisation on the Tuhoe people. New works also featured in the dance festivals with Malia Johnston's *Body/Fight/Time* and Southern Lights Dance Company's second season. For more information on New Zealand dance visit the website of DANZ, the national service organisation for New Zealand dance: http://www.danz.org.nz/news_events.php.

In all, 2011 has proven that despite economic recession and natural disaster, New Zealand dance and dance practitioners are strong and determined.



1] Performers in *Maui: One Man Against the Gods*, choreographed by Tanemahuta Gray, Merenia Gray, Kereama Te Ua and Kurahapainga Te Ua, in Kowhiti-Dance 2011, Wellington, New Zealand.

Photo: Masanori Udagawa
2] Erica Viedma and Aleasha Seaward in *Fleur de Thier's Tilt*.

Photo: Sean James

Cambodia chapter

by Fred Frumberg

Amrita Performing Arts

Amrita Performing Arts is evolving into a new phase of development that emphasizes capacity building among Cambodian choreographers.

One of our emerging artists, Chey Chankethya, is now pursuing her master's degree in choreography at UCLA as a Fulbright and ACC Fellow. Four other young artists are currently being mentored by three American choreographers: Gaelen Hanson, Peggy Piacenza and Amelia Reeber. This workshop will conclude at the end of November 2011 with our first choreographic platform.

With this platform, we will officially launch our new three-year plan that emphasizes capacity building through a program consisting of at least four workshop-based public platforms per year, featuring works by both Cambodian and international choreographers. Platforms for 2012 include collaborations with American-based choreographer Cynthia Ling Lee and Indonesian artist Eko Supriyanto.

As a prelude to this transition, we are pleased to share with you our revised mission statement:

'Amrita Performing Arts is committed to creating contemporary Cambodian dance and theater for a

new generation of artists passionately dedicated to ushering their country's ancient performing arts heritage into the future.'

Recent works in progress have included *Khmeropédies III: Source/Primate* by French/Khmer choreographer Emmanuèle Phuon, and *Thin White Line*—a work in progress by Australian choreographer Paea Leach which was presented on 2 September 2011.

Crack, our new work of contemporary Cambodian dance by Arco Renz, will tour to Belgium in March 2012 and to the Indonesian Dance Festival in June 2012.

Khmer Arts Ensemble

The Khmer Arts Ensemble presented the Cambodian premiere of Artistic Director Sophiline Cheam Shapiro's *The Lives of Giants* in September 2011 as part of the annual Our City Festival and performed the piece in Berkeley and Santa Barbara, USA, in October. It will host a ten-day Goethe Institute-sponsored Southeast Asian choreographers' exchange and a book launch for *Dance at the School of Fine Arts 1981-1993: A Photographic History* in December this year.

Chumvan Sodhachiv
(Belle) in Paea Leach's
Thin White Line,
2 September 2011.
Photo: Anders Jiras





Fiji chapter

by Sachiko Miller

Things have been ticking over nicely in the microcosm that is Fiji's dance industry.

We were honored and lucky to have the Hip Hop World Champions, the Philippine All-Stars, come to Fiji in August during the hype of the Hibiscus Festival—'the mother of all festivals'. The All-Stars were brought to Fiji by Saltwater Productions in collaboration with the Fiji Dance Alliance and while they were here they offered dance workshops to the local dance community in genres such as popping and locking, break dance, old school, new school, house and raggaton. They created life-long friendships and we look forward to working with them again as they plan to return in 2012.

Fiji's most famous traditional meke group, Kabu Ni Vanua, has just completed their fourth tour to the United States in 2011, wowing audiences all over the country with their energetic performances in conjunction with the programs of Tourism Fiji.

VOU, Fiji's premier fusion dance company, has been busy these past few months, working with the University of Auckland on their tour to China to collaborate with the students of Nanjing Academy of the Arts. After the China tour, two of VOU's dancers traveled to Malaysia to represent Fiji in

the MyDance Alliance-hosted MyDance Festival. They were so grateful for the warm hospitality they received in Malaysia and spoke very highly of a fantastically organized event. Following on from this project the dancers of VOU were once again invited to continue their collaborative work by traveling to Auckland to perform with the students of the University of Auckland and the dancers from Nanjing Academy of the Arts.

VOU is also very busy with the VOU music and dance school. The last intake for their third term of classes has reached 120 students and is still growing. They hope to further develop the talent of Fiji's youth.

Peter Espiritu has taken up the role of head choreographer at the Oceania Center at the University of the South Pacific and has begun revitalizing the work of the centre as a whole with great enthusiasm. The center is working towards getting a Pacific Performing Arts Program up and running at the University of the South Pacific.

The director of the Oceania Centre, Vilisoni Hereniko, is about to open his play titled *Fine Dancing* next week, which stars established Pacific choreographer Allan Alo and Oceania Centre dancers Ateca Ravuvu, Glen Lord and Sadrishan Velaidan.

Patricia Naisara and Sharleen Ali performing *I Lakolako Takosova na Vanua*, choreographed by Patricia Naisara, as part of the International Artists' Showcase at the MyDance Festival, 22-24 September 2011, in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Photo: Lora Kunkel



Hong Kong chapter

by Joanna Lee

The past six months was a period of learning and sharing for the Hong Kong Chapter.

Legend Lin body training workshop

Legend Lin is a highly renowned dance group from Taiwan. Ms Lin Li Chen, Artistic Director, has been dubbed "one of the eight most important choreographers of our times" by ARTE. Ms Lin is recognized for her impeccable sense of ritual dance aesthetics that appeal to our primordial sensibility. She empowers her dancers with both her life philosophy and her exclusive body training system. In August 2011, Hong Kong Dance Alliance conducted a Legend Lin body training workshop for professional dancers in Hong Kong. The training emphasized extreme slowness, concentration on the body center where life originates and where our emotions sit, spine elongation, and respect for the space. The participants, who have received professional dance training, highly appreciated Legend Lin's training logic, and Ms Lin's perspective of what makes a successful dancer.

"Close the Loop"—Arts administration talk for dance practitioners

A high-quality dance production is the combined effort of artistry and execution excellence. Yet not many dance artists possess arts management and administration skills. In view of this, Hong Kong Dance Alliance and Hong Kong Arts Administrators Association co-presented an open talk on 13 Oct 2011 and invited two veteran dance administrators, Ms Helen Ng and Ms Clementine Chan, Managing Director of City Contemporary Dance Company, to introduce to the participants the various aspects of dance/arts administration. Contents of the talk included:

- Arts administrators: who they are, and the skills required
- Administrators as curators: how to bring out the best from the artists and from the program
- Be organized: the basics of project management
- About money: budgeting and financial management
- About people: managing the team and other human resources/contractual issues
- Post-performance issues—looking for further opportunities to perform re-run programs locally or abroad

This talk was the first part of a longer-term arts administration mentorship program. While the registration target was 30, the final registration was 75. The over-registration reflected an increasing awareness of the importance of arts administration in Hong Kong.

Public lectures: Dance video and 100 years of *Rite of Spring*

The Governments of Hong Kong and Burgundy reached an agreement in 2010 to mutually promote



their commerce and culture. Under this agreement, a Burgundy Week was organized in HK in October 2011. Two French artists, Marisa Hayes and Franck Boulègue, were appointed cultural ambassadors by the Burgundy Government. They spoke at two public lectures co-presented by the Hong Kong Dance Alliance, and the HKAPA.

The first lecture was on dance videos. Dance videos are gaining a high popularity worldwide and the lecture gave an informative overview of current trends. The other lecture, which was a focused research on the choreographic styles of the *Rite of Spring* over the past century, attracted participants from both inside and outside the dance field. This lecture covered an informative and well-presented analysis of what contributes to the universality of *Rite of Spring*, and how worldwide choreographers have interpreted the Stravinsky score along different dimensions. Video clips such as the 1987 reconstruction of Nijinsky's original version by Millicent Hodson & Kenneth Archer and the 1959 Bèjart version were shown during the lecture.

1] Participants practice during the Legend Lin body training workshop, August 2011.

2] Marisa Hayes and Franck Boulègue from Burgundy speaking in Hong Kong.

3] A full house of dance practitioners at the 'Close the Loop' arts administration talk.

Photos: Joanna Lee

4] Left: Screen capture from the 1987 reconstruction of Nijinsky's "Rite of Spring" by Millicent Hodson & Kenneth Archer.



Malaysia chapter

by Bilqis Hijjas

Above: *Zaitun*, choreographed by Khairulazhar Mohtar, in the Emerging & Independent Malaysian Dancers program of MyDance Festival, September 2011. Dancer standing: Gloria Patie. Photo: Huneid Tyeb

For MyDance Alliance, the latter half of 2011 has been dominated by the MyDance Festival, which successfully took place over 17 days in September, and included 11 evening performances of six different shows, 23 workshops and a dance video forum, as well as the Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference (APIDC). This was a huge undertaking for the MyDance Alliance committee, and it has given me renewed respect for the committees who carried out the previous MyDance Festivals in 2001, 2003 and 2005.

Despite the hard work, it was delightful to witness the depth and diversity of the dance performances in the festival, not only by Malaysian dancers, but also by dancers and choreographers from Taiwan, Singapore, Fiji and Australia. The generosity of the performing artists, all of whom contributed their time and their work for free, continues to amaze me. But I realize this is neither a sustainable nor a desirable model in the long run—artists deserve to be paid, and if we are to continue this festival in future we must find the means to do so. The festival had its downs as well as its ups: audience numbers, especially, were not what we expected. This too raises questions about the most efficient methods to attract new audiences, and our capacity as a volunteer committee to do so.

I was grateful that many WDAAP and wider WDA members were able to meet in Kuala Lumpur in conjunction with the festival, most of them to attend APIDC, and that MyDance Alliance was given the opportunity to once again host the WDAAP AGM. Elsewhere in this issue Annalouise Paul presents her experience of APIDC in greater

detail; I only wish to note that the excitement of the many reunions and new meetings was palpable, and that this was an invaluable occasion for the building of our regional community. While Prof Mohd Anis Mohd Nor has stepped down from his post at the helm of WDAAP, Joseph Gonzales has taken up the reins as Vice President of Southeast Asia, and I am pleased that there is continuing Malaysian involvement in the WDAAP executive.

Despite the dominance of MyDance Festival, the other activities of MyDance Alliance have continued. In July, the Akram Khan Company visited Penang to perform in the Georgetown Festival. MyDance Alliance was lucky to have the opportunity to organize an afternoon workshop by two dancers from the Company, Eulalie Ayguade Farro and Andrej Petrovic, exploring the themes and movements of Khan's work *Vertical Road*. The workshop quickly sold out, with several dancers driving four hours from Kuala Lumpur to attend.

As soon as the MyDance Festival ended, Dancing to Connect began in Penang, Kuala Lumpur and Sabah. This project, conducted by dancers from Battery Dance Company, New York, and ASWARA, the national performing arts academy of Malaysia, involved the dancers working with five teams of high school students of diverse backgrounds, providing tools for choreography and helping them to release the dancer within. MyDance Alliance was proud to connect Battery Dance with other organisers: Aida Redza in Penang and Jade Ong with Lotuspond Outreach in the Klang Valley. The final performances and the experiences during the week-long workshop were inspiring examples for the potential of community dance in Malaysia.

MyDance's popular Dancebox performance platform program also continues. This December we have been given the opportunity to present works at the new Penang Performing Arts Centre (Penang PAC). MyDance is bringing together four short new works by Malaysian women choreographers from Kuala Lumpur to Penang for two nights of performance. Penang PAC, which is a sister institution to the successful Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre and The Actors Studio, is an exciting new development for the burgeoning arts scene in Penang. MyDance Alliance is proud to be part of their opening events, and we hope that this will anticipate further projects by MyDance Alliance in Penang.

The Research and Documentation network under Prof Mohd Anis Mohd Nor has been particularly busy this year. The APIDC launch of the Routledge anthology *Sharing Identities: Celebrating Dance in Malaysia*, alongside *Shaping the Landscape: Celebrating Dance in Australia*, represented the culmination of years of hard work by Prof Anis producing a comprehensive collection

of Malaysian dance research and writing. The work continues: a selection of the papers presented at APIDC will be published as an anthology next year. I would like to take this responsibility to thank the Australia-Malaysia Institute for supporting the launch of the two books in the *Celebrating Dance in Asia and the Pacific* series, and of course Prof Anis, who continues to spearhead dance scholarship in Malaysia and to provide valuable guidance to the MyDance Alliance committee as our national advisor.

I would also like to welcome Daman Harun, the newest member of the MyDance Alliance committee, who joins us as Secretary. Daman has worked in New York for many years, as a dancer and in arts management. His artistic ability, as well as his professional capacity working in media, will be in great demand in his new post. With his help, I look forward to another year of great challenges and new experiences for MyDance Alliance!

2] Andrej Petrovic of Akram Khan Company teaching sections of Khan's *Vertical Road* to Malaysian dancers in a workshop at the Whiteaways Arcade in Georgetown, Penang in July 2011. Photo: Alla Azura Abal Abas **3] Focus Dance Company from Taiwan performing *Songs and Dances of Mangayaw of the Puyuma People* in the International Artists' Showcase of MyDance Festival, September 2011. Rehearsal directors: Balangatu Wei-Malasilan and Ping Heng.** Photo: Huneid Tyeb **4] High school student performers in the showcase for Dancing to Connect at Penang City Hall, Georgetown, Penang, in October 2011. Choreography by the dancers, under the guidance of Lorna Hoong and Sean Scantlebury.** Photo: Neoh Chee Jin **5] Alexander Bryce and Clancy Sullivan performing *Agile* by Australian choreographer Daniel Jaber, in the International Artists' Showcase of MyDance Festival, September 2011.** Photo: Soli **6] *Harmony in Contrast*, choreographed by Judimar Hernandez, in the Emerging & Independent Malaysian Dancers program of MyDance Festival, September 2011. Dancer on the left: Elaine Petra Pedley.** Photo: Tanes Jitsawart **7] The contributors to *Sharing Identities: Celebrating Dance in Malaysia* at the launch of the Routledge Publication, Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference, 22 September 2011. In the center, holding the book, co-editor Prof Mohd Anis Md Nor.** Photo: Latimin Keman **8] *Den*, by Dua Space Dance Theatre, choreographed by Anthony Meh Kim Chuan and Aman Yap Choong Boon, in the Established Malaysian Dance Companies program of MyDance Festival, September 2011. Dancer on the left: Lily Ho Choy Lee.** Photo: Jeff Lee



Philippines chapter

by Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz

Maniya Barredo is often billed as the Philippines' foremost prima ballerina. This year, she returned home to stage *Romeo and Juliet* for Philippine Ballet Theatre (PBT) in July. This was created for her and Nicolas Pacana by Thomas Pazik in Atlanta Ballet. She brought in Naomi Hergott and David Kiyak to lead the company directed by Ronilo Jaynario.

Following in September and November were Jean Paul Comelin's *Cinderella*, and Michael Chernov and Gelsey Kirkland's *The Nutcracker*, both featuring PBT's own dancers. In December, Ballet Philippines presented *The Sleeping Beauty* led by USA International Ballet Competition silver medallist Candice Adea and partner Jean Marc Cordero. All these performances took place at the Cultural Centre of the Philippines.

Across the street at Aliwan Theatre, Ballet Manila (BM) returned from a tour of Britain, performing back-to-back with Singapore Dance Theatre. In October, BM's own artistic director-ballerina Lisa Macuja Elizalde, who was once a member of the Kirov Ballet in St. Petersburg, bid farewell to two of her favourite roles in *Swan Lake* and *Romeo and Juliet* by Sergei Vikulov.

The ballet world was indeed kept busy with shows from the Royal Academy of Ballet member schools, and the Association of Ballet Academies-Philippines (ABAP). Headed by Sol Fernandez, ABAP honoured senior teachers Vella Damian, Eddie Elejar, Sony Lopez Gonzalez, Inday Gaston Manosa, Nida Onglengco Pangan, Pinky Mendoza Puno, Felicitas Layag Radaic, Amelia Garcia Yulo and this writer. Noordin Jumalon, principal of the CCP Dance School who had been a student of Fe Sala Villarica in Cebu and who went on to train at GITIS in Moscow, was also honoured posthumously.

At University of the Philippines (UP) in October, seniors Chaya Baris and Sarah Samaniego staged *Les Sylphides* from a Benesh score, as well as their contemporary ballet *Kontsert* to Shostakovich's second piano concerto. They also presented a three-part contemporary piece *Laro (Game)* to original music by Alexander John Villanueva. That show also honoured Damian and Elizalde, former teachers of both recitalists.

Ballet and contemporary dance combined in *Class Menu Reprise* from UP Dance Company in August. It paid tribute to the late Tony Fabella with an excerpt from his work. Other included works were by Balanchine, Liza Fernandez, Elena Laniog, Ava Villanueva, Chantal Primero and Michael Barry Que. Some members also danced at the Federation of Asian Cultural Promoters conference in October. The current UP Dance Company directors are Angel Lawenko Baguilat and Herbert Alvarez.

Contemporary dance went full out in Airdance's *Adarna*. This presented an updated version of a European story that gained popularity in the Philippines under Spanish rule. Artistic director Ava Villanueva herself played Ada, making her a woman with her legendary bird-being. She co-choreographed the work with her associates Rhosam Prudenciado, Jed Amihan and Mia Cabalfin, to a challenging contemporary libretto by Clarissa Mijares.

The Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference in Kuala Lumpur was attended by three representatives from the Philippines: Ruth Jordana Pison, Joelle Jacinto and this writer. Pison and I read papers on the conference theme addressing



Airdance Company performing *Adarna*, choreographed by Ava Villanueva, Rhosam Prudenciado Jr., Jed Amihan and Mia Cabalfin.
Photo: David Garcia

hybridity in dance.

For the seventh time, the National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) conducted its ballet competition in mid-November. This year attracted the largest number of finalists ever, including those from the regions. The competition is held annually at the Cultural Centre which supports this much-valued national event for young musicians and dancers.

Regretfully, 2011 lost a number of artists associated with dance in the Philippines: National Artist Alejandro Roces, writer and founding president of PBT; National Artist and stage designer Salvador Bernal who had superbly enhanced so many ballets and plays; noted dancer-teacher Lydia Gaston in Bacolod City; and dancer-choreographer Lito Calzado.

Singapore chapter

by Dr Siri Rama

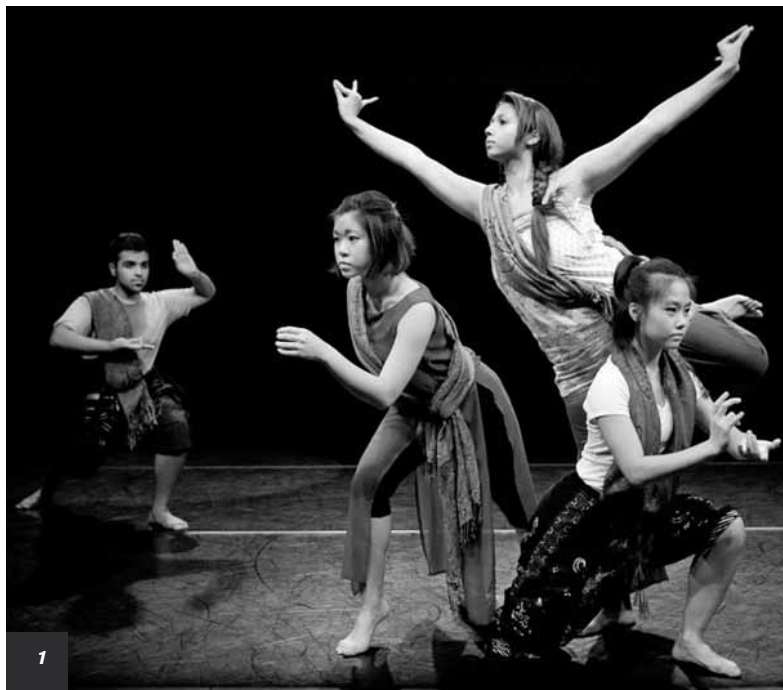
This is the first report from the new executive committee of WDA Singapore since July 2011: Dr. Siri Rama (President), Dr. Caren Carino (Vice President), Hwee Bin (Treasurer), and Jyoti Unni

new dance works. It featured the new work of young dance artistes and supported the creations of young choreographers from Singapore and overseas. The debut of CReations 2011 featured new choreographers Sheriden Newman from Brisbane, Australia, and Sufri Juwahir from Singapore, and renowned contemporary Indonesia dance artist and choreographer Eko Supriyanto. The young choreographers were mentored by Angela Liong, artistic director of The Arts Fission, and Noor Effendy, artistic director of Substation, respectively.

Global Dance in Unison, the sixth biennial Xposition 'O' Contemporary Dance Fiesta by home-grown dance company Odyssey Dance Theatre (ODT) took its global flight from November 2011. The brainchild of artistic director Dr Danny Tan, this year's festival (7–16 November in Singapore and 22–28 November in Seoul, South Korea) set a unique and bold strategic shift in the company's orchestration of the biennial event. With 40 original creations by companies and artists from more than 10 countries across five seasons of Xposition 'O', ODT stepped up its role as producer to assist more local and international artists to create new refreshing works with access to global audiences. In partnership with South Korea's Onstage Art Management & Trade, Xposition 'O' 2011 presented collaborations between well-known artists and companies from Australia, Singapore, South Korea and Japan. This touring festival hopes to serve as an important platform for artistic collaborations and promotion of their creative journeys across Asia.

Under Madame Som Said, Sri Warisan Som Said Performing Arts Ltd. undertook arts education programs in schools, local collaboration productions and national events such as Singapore Heritage Festival and the specially-curated Maritime Museum launch showcase. Dancing to Connect, a collaboration workshop/performance with Battery Dance Company from USA supported by the American Embassy, was another milestone that brought together traditional and contemporary dance groups sharing and exchanging dance. This was followed by the group's participation at international festivals in Melbourne, Australia, Cheonan, Korea and Tokyo, Japan with *Stories of Singapore*.

Sri Warisan also played host to a pioneer Internship Performing Arts Development Program between Sri Warisan and Institute Seni Indonesia Jogjakarta. Five ethnomusicology postgraduates from ISI Jogjakarta went through an internship at Sri Warisan from 23 October to 5 November 2011. With support from National Arts Council, a step-by-step DVD guide to Malay dance was officially launched on 5 November 2011 at the Goodman Arts House. Initiated by founder-director Madam Som Said, the resource kit and the DVD is dedicated to



1] NAFA students Divesh Idnani, Yuteka Tripatti, Stephanie Chan, Yange Ce in *Borobudur: Revisited*, Artistic Director: Dr Siri Rama.
Photo: Yi-Chun Wu
2] *Puteri Gunung Ledang*, presented by students of the theatre department of Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD) as part of the inauguration of the In-Between Spaces platform on 12 November.

(Secretary). During the AGM the various networks were officially dissolved and now members have been urged to contribute proposals for new projects suitable for the Singapore chapter. The new committee is looking to revisit all the activities launched by WDA Singapore in the last few years and position WDA Singapore in a way that provides support to its members and those in the Asia-Pacific region more effectively.

Singapore Dance Week 2011 (21-27 May) supported by the National Arts Council was completed successfully under the creation and promotion network chaired by Nirmala Seshadri in the tenure of previous President Teresa Pee. It has grown from a one-day event launched in 2008 under Dr. Caren Carino to a full week of workshops, dance performances by amateurs, community groups and professionals. We are now in the process of planning Singapore Dance Week 2012.

We have many member activities to report, beginning with the prolific Maya Dance Theatre under artistic director Kavitha Krishnan. They presented *Seeking Sita*, which was performed as part of the Bali World Cultural Forum 2011 with support from Singapore International Foundation (SIF) and the National Arts Council. September 2011 saw the launch of CReations which is a new dance series initiated by Maya Dance Theatre to set the stage for young dancemakers creating

all practicing Malay dance instructors and teachers as a special gift for reference and practical application of the training system of the Malay Dance Foundation in Singapore.

Joey Chua, who previously served as secretary to WDAS, is artist in residence at Rydal Design Centre in Sweden (28 November–16 December 2011) and also presented a paper at the International Symposium on Performance Science held at University of Toronto in Canada (24–27 August 2011).

Experimental dancer, choreographer and Young Artist Award recipient Nirmala Seshadri conceived, choreographed and directed *Radha Now*. Through this experimental work, Nirmala Seshadri revisited a traditional and time-honoured myth, exploring its relevance in modern times. *Radha Now* made its Singapore debut on 8 October 2011, under the auspices of the Bhaskar's Arts Academy. Apart from Nirmala herself, the production involved 11 dancers—one woman and ten men—with participation from prominent local artists Neewin Hershall, Renjith Babu and Madhu Sudhanan, leading Kathakali artists Kalamandalam Biju, Kalamandalam Prasad and SK Santhosh, and a special appearance by cultural medallion awardee Santha Bhaskar.

WDA Singapore member Kok Wai, who is now based in Brunei, has launched In-Between Spaces, a platform for creative collectives to engage and energize alternative communities through the arts in non-conventional and non-traditional spaces. As the inaugural event, students from the theatre department presented their final performance piece on 12 November at the Universiti Brunei Darussalam (UBD). They staged a contemporary bilingual version of the Malay folk tale Puteri Gunung Ledang with influences from *Bangsawan*, P. Ramli films and Bollywood as well as contemporary dances.

Dr. Chua Soo Pong, Kok Wai and Sophie Mason presented papers at New Asian Imaginations: (Re)searching the Arts in Southeast Asia, a symposium organised by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), Singapore, from 19 to 21 Sept 2011. This symposium, chaired by Dr. Caren Carino, saw scholars and artists from all over the world present their research and creations. A book comprised of selected papers from the symposium is scheduled to be published in the first quarter of 2012. The inaugural symposium event on 19 September saw the premiere of *Borobudur Re-visited*. The interest to explore Borobudur and respond to it through multiple art forms became the primary objective of an interdisciplinary project proposed by and conducted under the artistic direction of Dr. Siri Rama, a lecturer at NAFA. In June 2011, a group of student artists from NAFA's departments of Dance, Design & Media, Fine Arts and Music were selected to participate in the project which included a study trip to Borobudur, Indonesia.

Dr. Siri Rama also saw her student Sangeetha Madhavan from Singapore present her solo debut bharata natyam performance in Chennai in June 2011, and two other students, sisters Shubhra and Soumya Ojha, perform for the Heritage Festival in Singapore.

Dr. Stephanie Burridge, amidst her busy schedule, continues to write for Flying Inkpot, and invites new writers for the same. Flying Inkpot, which reviews both local and international shows and has an online site, can be accessed internationally while being an invaluable part of the local Singaporean dance scene.

We have this year seen that WDA Singapore member activities have become very diverse and seem to travel a lot within Asia,

reflecting the dynamic arts scene in Singapore. We end this note from Singapore wishing everyone happy holidays and best wishes for the New Year 2012!

India chapter

by Utpal K Banerjee

Tagore's dance persona, seen in the 21st century

Any maestro's artistic outpouring is capable of multiple interpretations, in the beholder's eye. William Shakespeare's classic plays have been showcased by Peter Hall in London's circus-arena and by Peter Brook in Avignon's discarded mine-pit. Wolfgang von Goethe's great poems "Gretchen at the Spinning Wheel" (from his *Faust*) and "The Erl King" have been immortalised by Franz Schubert in his *lieder* (art-songs), with the piano imitating the galloping horse for the latter, as it did with the spinning wheel earlier. Now it is the turn of Rabindranath Tagore when fifty-five inmates, incarcerated in Kolkata's jails and correctional homes, mounted on stage his *Valmiki Pratibha*, in Kolkata and then Bombay, and now at the capital's India International Trade Fair in November 2011. While Tagore penned *Valmiki Pratibha* in 1881 as a Wagnerian opera (essaying the eponymous role himself with some elements of dance), all the operatic songs could be set to dance, as Alokannanda Roy—the renowned Bharatanatyam and Odissi dancer and choreographer—has proven, using vigorous choreography to transform the opera into a dance-drama. Interestingly, the title-role here is enacted by a prisoner who has reportedly been convicted for murder. Says Alokannanda, "*Valmiki Pratibha* is the story of the transformation of the dacoit Ratnakar to the sage Valmiki, the composer of the Ramayana. For me, all these inmates have undergone immense transformation." With a security escort of only thirty-one for each metro, this was the outcome of a remarkable mind-set!

In Tagore's own time, many mutations and amalgamations of forms in his dance-oeuvre took place in the two decades between the late 1910s and late 1930s, as witnessed by the town of Santiniketan, which Tagore made famous for its arts and learning. In general, folk dances of Bengal and Gujarat found favor in group choreography, sans *abhinaya*, while the classical style of Manipuri (and later Kathakali) came in mainly for solos with *abhinaya*, but without their costumes and facial make-up. Even later came in the virility of Kandy dance from Sri Lanka for men and veneers of graceful Legong dance from Bali and Serimpi dance from Java for women. Post-Tagore, the classical momentum came during his birth centenary in 1961. This was spearheaded by dance-celebrities like Mrinalini Sarabhai taking *Tasher Desh* to China (and facing its shows being banned forthwith, due presumably to regulatory implications in the play!); Rukmini Devi Arundale touring Southeast Asia with a Bengali *Shyama*; and Vyjayanthimala Bali performing a spirited *Chandalika* all over the country: each using her own blend of distinctive classical styles.

In 2011, another classical upsurge is now on—commemorating the 150th anniversary of Tagore's year of birth. The first offering was *Bhanusigher Padavali*, a score of songs that Tagore composed in the old Brajabuli dialect on the Radha-Krishna love-

theme during his mid-teens in the 1870s. This was presented as a ballet by Delhi Ballet Centre under the baton of the octogenarian Valmiki Banerjee. It was possible to adopt the classical dance approach, as was done during Tagore's 125th birth anniversary in the 1980s—by Padatik from Kolkata in Odissi style with beautiful Sharmila Biswas as Radha; or by Manipuri Nartanalaya, also from Kolkata, under guru Bipin Singh with Kalavati Devi and Jhaveri sisters in Manipuri style, or recently by Santiniketan Asramik Sangha also in Manipuri style—primarily because Manipur's spirit of *rasa* lends itself well to the spirit of these love poems. Guru Valmiki followed the other alternative of a free format—using Tagore's own dicta, as far as possible, in what he called 'Rabindranrityam'. "I'm convinced that this form has its own identity—with dance-elements of *anga*, *upanga* and *abhinaya* comparable to *Natya Shastra*—and symbolises the grand symphony of life and nature."

Bhanusingher Padavali was also presented in Mohiniyattam style, by Bharati Shivaji, ably assisted by Mom Ganguly. Their presentation was embellished with Vidyapati and Govindadas lyrics which had inspired Tagore setting them to tune. They also linked the creation of the dance-drama with Tagore's own reminiscences of his elder sibling Jyotirindranath and his bride Kahambari Devi, who had many temporary partings and reunings—perhaps setting the Poet's mood. Another variation on the *nayika* (heroine) theme was brought in by the famous danseuse Sonal Mansingh who, in her early youth in 1961, had dazzled the Mumbai firmament with her Bharatanatyam, danced to the impeccable Rabindra Sangeet by Pankaj Kumar Mullick. Her *Nayika*, presented in 2011, wove a garland of classical dances like Kuchipudi (by Meenu Thakur); Mohiniyattam (by Jayaprabha Menon); Manipuri (by Vaijayantimala Devi); and Odissi (by Sonal herself)—besides Odissi-cum-Chhau (by Dinabandhu) and Rabindra Nritya (by Durba Ghosh). While Sonal's exquisite choreography was beyond a pale of doubt, the basic question lingered: once *Bhanusingher Padavali* is put on the back burner, how far could Tagore's very different kind of music be straight-jacketed into the classical mould of *ashta nayika*, redolent of the Radha-Krishna love-dalliance in the Indian psyche?

From the Northeast, came a luminous presentation, *Viday Abhishap* (A Farewell Curse) from Jawaharlal Nehru Manipuri Dance Academy of Imphal. Choreographed by N Amusana, it was pegged on the eponymous long poem of Tagore of 1899 as a flashback. The play recapitulates the heaven-born Kach's journey to earth to seek special knowledge needed by the gods from the demon-guru Shukracharya; discovering a tender relationship with Devyani, the guru's daughter during his arduous apprenticeship; seeking her farewell at the end for return; incurring her wrath for abusing her love all this while; and getting cursed that he would never be able to apply his knowledge in heaven. The dance-drama had little of Tagore's flavour but the memories of heaven were wonderfully silhouetted on the backstage-top in misty white and the Manipuri dances were a triumph of subtlety. One has seldom seen such subdued dignity in any classical dance before. Another delectable dance-drama was *Shyama* from Kalamandalam of Kolkata, choreographed by Thanakamani Kutty. It was another poignant story—composed by Tagore in 1938—of spurned love: with the lustful royal courtesan Shyama falling for Vajrasen, the wrongly-arrested foreigner, and seeking his freedom by sacrificing Uttiyo, an innocent lovelorn youth.

Vajrasen never forgives her. It was a colorful play, ably supported by some of Bengal's singing and reciting voices.

There were two *Chandalikas* witnessed in the year. The play, adapted by Tagore from a Buddhist parable in 1939, depicts the untouchable girl Prakriti, rejected by her village-mates and the rest of society, finding redemption in the simple act of offering well-water to a thirsty Buddhist monk. She falls for him and tries to win him over with her mother's witchcraft, later regretting it and becoming the monk's disciple. The first version was from the Northeast, presented by the Sattriya Kendra of Assam, with choreography by Jatin Goswami. The Sattriya style was well-honed to the theme, and the attempt of venturing into a secular dance-drama—outside the traditional ambit of a *sattr* (monastery)—was entirely praiseworthy. The second version was presented by Kuchipudi Art Academy from Chennai, with choreography by the doyen of Kuchipudi, Vempati Chinna Satyam. The dance-drama—though performed a few hundred times in India and abroad—seemed too high-pitched for the spectator's comfort. Armed with quality dancing and good stage-effects, the play had hardly any need for the occasional foray melodrama in the *lokadharmi* (playing to the gallery) mode.

The capital's Kathak Kendra Repertory's offering of *Chitrangada* under Geetanjali Lal was a refreshing take on this 1936 dance-drama by the Poet. The well-known Mahabharata story of the Manipuri princess who, brought up with male values, adorns herself as a beautiful woman to seek the love of Arjuna, but who finally redeems her ability to be as empowered as a man, came through very well in well-etched choreography. Sailaja and Vidha Lal danced with élan in the two contrasting roles of Chitrangada. The *crème de la crème* of the Tagoreana was, however, taken by Bangladesh in two presentations by Shadhona under Lubna Mariam. Their *Tasher Desh*, created by Tagore in 1933, had two sets of characters: the prince and his companion on the side of total freedom, and the minions of the Card kingdom on the side of regimented living, hide-bound by rules. How the barriers break—significantly led by the Card women—leading to exhilarating liberation was well-depicted, using masks of Purulia Chhau to show social stagnation with telling effect. The other dance-drama, *Hey Ananta Punya*, was a virtual tour de force. Transforming Tagore's pioneering play *Natir Puja* of 1926, it depicts the single votive dance of an ostracized courtesan at the banned worship-site of the Buddha-stupa which causes her to be finally killed by the guards, bringing a complete change of mind-set to the royal household. Warda Rihab—as the choreographer for both works and especially as the courtesan for the second play—carried the day.

The rest of the Tagorean season was also marked by many worthwhile solos mainly by the classical danseuses, using—as their *Sahitya* (support literature)—the very large corpus of Tagore-songs from *Puja* (worship), *Prem* (love), *Prakriti* (seasons), *Swadesh* (patriotism), *Vichitra* (variety) and *Anushthanik* (ceremonial), besides his theatre-songs. Efforts were made in many instances to derive new interpretations from the work; Kiran Sehgal's *Doors*, reading new meaning in poems and songs dealing with an opening—in or out, was a case in point.

Taiwan chapter

by Su-Ling Chou

In the second half of 2011, members of WDA-AP Taiwan remained extremely active and there were plenty of activities to go around, especially performances. Thanks to the success of the events from the first half of the year, our member events such as Dance Works are continually being invited to participate in international dance festivals and occasions, including the 2011 LA Tap Festival, 2011 Hong Kong Tap Festival, and 2011 Nanking Trade Fair.

This year's International Young Choreographer Project received more talented young applicants from the WDA regions and local dancers than ever, and concluded successfully with two extraordinary performances which met with rapturous applause from the audience and a question and answer forum between the choreographers and audience at Tsoying Dance Theater on 23 and 24 July. The

programs highlighted the diversities in both styles and cultures, and how local and international choreographers perceive their daily lives and the world.

The selected choreographers of 2011 IYCP were Chien-Chih Chang, Eddie Chun-Hui Lin and Kuan-Ling Tsai (Taiwan), Claude Aymon (France, WDA Europe), Angela Blumberg (Germany, WDA Americas), Julia Milsom (New Zealand, WDA Asia Pacific), Zaimon Vilmanis (Australia, WDA Asia Pacific), and Naim Syahrazad (Malaysia, WDA Asia Pacific).

WDA-AP Taiwan continues its expansion and the members mainly consist of university and graduate dance students, dance instructors, and professional dancers. We now have more than 140 members and are looking forward to welcoming more to join.

WDA Taiwan members activities July to December 2011

Performances

Dance Forum

- *Eastern Tale*, 2-3 September at Zhongshan Hall in Taipei; 9-10 September at RAI Theater in Amsterdam, Netherlands; 7 October at Jungli Arts Hall in Taoyuan; 12 October at Sun Yat-Sen Hall at National Sun Yat-Sen University in Kaohsiung

Dance Works

- *Beat Me Tap 3: 2011 Hong Kong Tap Festival*, 8-10 July at ShaTin Town Hall, Cultural Activities Hall in Hong Kong
- *Culture Lies in Alley: TAP WALKMAN*, 23 July in the space opposite 666, Minzu E. Road, Songshan District, Taipei
- *Tap Dancng with Hands*, 30 July at Wei Wu Ying Center for the Arts
- *2011 LA Tap Festival*, 13 August at UCLA
- *Tap Show: 2011 Taipei Tap Festival*, 27 August at Taipei Family Theater
- *Yueh-Ji*, 14-17 September at 2011 Nanking Trade Fair
- *Underground Tapping*, 19 October at Somebody's Café in Taipei

Jade & Artists Dance Troupe

- *Lively Night Market*, 6-9 October at Experimental Theater of National Theater, 16 October at Wei Wu Ying Center for the Arts

Kaohsiung Kids Dance and Kaohsiung City Ballet

- *Snow White*, 2-3 December at Jihde Hall of Kaohsiung Cultural Center

Modern Arts Dance Theater

- *Little Green Man*, 8 July at Experimental Theater of National Theater
- *Handle with Care*, 25-26 November at Chung Shan Hall in Taichung, 3 December at Concert Hall of Cultural Affairs Bureau of Nantou County

Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company

- *2011 Step In Anping Tree House — Site-Specific Dance Performance*, 16-18 September at Anping Tree House in Tainan
- *Intervention*, 4-6 November at Performance Hall of Tainan Municipal Cultural Center, 25-27 November at Experimental Theater of National Theater

Sun-Shier Dance Theatre

- *Proclaiming of Skin Surface*, 15-16 October at Tsoying Dance Theater, 21-23 October at Experimental Theater of National Theater

Tso's Dance Association

- *2011 International Young Choreographer Project*, 23-24 July at Tsoying Dance Theater

Tsoying Dance Group, Tsoying Senior High School

- *2011 Dance Collection of Senior High Schools' Dance Divisions*, 3-4 December at National Taiwan Arts Education Center
- *2011 Tsoying Dance Troupe Performance*, 9-15 December at Tsoying Dance Theater, 21 December at Pingtung County Art Center, 23 December at Tainan Music Hall of Tainan Municipal Tainan Cultural Center
- *Dance Connection: The Cooperative Performance Danced by Cheng Ballet Academy and Tsoying High School*, 16-17 December at Tsoying Dance Theater

Conference

- *Looking Back to Look Forward—Taiwan's Centennial Development of Dance: DRST Annual Conference*, 22-23 October at Taipei Physical Education College, Taiwan

Workshop

- *2011 Taipei Tap Festival Workshop*, 19-24 August at Taipei / Huashan1914 by Dance Works



Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company performing *Intervention* by Wen-jinn Luo, at the Native Theater of International Conference Hall at Tainan Culture Center, Taiwan, 4 November 2011.
Photo: Fredrick Liu



Thailand chapter

by Pornrat Damrhung

Gamboling through Floods and Festivities: Glimpses of Thai Dance in Recent Weeks

Thailand's report on dance during the last month must center on the Big Flood and the celebrations of the seventh 12-year cycle completed by His Majesty King Bhumibol. Both started in September, but really got going from late October.

The floods disrupted production and transportation, not to mention lives and activities, and led to a great exodus from Central Thailand to northern cities like Chiangmai, Chiangdao and Chiangrai, and to Chonburi and Hua Hin in the south. Meanwhile, all eyes were on Bangkok to see His Majesty celebrate the start of his 85th year of life. During this intense time from late October to early December, Thailand continued to dance, even though the main Thai theatre festival (which also includes much dance) shifted from November to February, as did many other events scheduled for that month.

The classical dance scene included extended performances of the elaborate and gorgeous masked dance version of *The Battle of Maiyarab* which was produced by Her Majesty the Queen Khon Foundation to celebrate the king. It was the talk of the country and widely promoted by schools, with special performances for three weeks (both on weekends and weekdays) to serve the Thai community and school children. The Maiyarab episode has long been famous and well-loved by Thai audiences because it has so many magical scenes in it and it emphasizes the love between father and son, while also stressing the importance of doing one's duty as best one can.

Pichet Klunchun, moving on the cusp between classical and contemporary dance, performed his reworked piece *Nijinsky Siam* at the Sodsai Drama Center of the Faculty of Arts at Chulalongkorn University. The performance reacted to and reinterpreted Vaslav Nijinsky's 1910 *dance siamoise*, giving contemporary audiences in Thailand a first chance to see a compelling artist struggling to enter into a dialogue of dance with an artist who lived a century ago and half a world away. The performance led to exciting conversations after the shows and the predominantly younger audiences commented on what they saw, but nothing beat the wonderful interaction with the classical scholar and WDA Thailand chapter head, Prof. Dr. Surapon Wirunrak, who was the Dean of Chulalongkorn University's School of Fine Arts when Pichet graduated from there.

Pichet has also been busy finalizing and then performing his innovative *Black and White Khon* piece at the Esplanade in Singapore, demonstrating his continued search for new ways to combine khon techniques, stories and forms with those from outside that tradition as his gifts to

the world of global dance. In both its look and feel, *Black and White Khon* is a less clearly identifiable work of masked dance, blending Pichet's familiar khon techniques with new costumes, sound, lighting and a new dance vocabulary reminiscent of contact improvisation. The performance received both good reviews and good questions. It was interesting to see how the quality of the dancers has improved over the last two years, due to their dedication to disciplined movement and attention to detail during their rehearsals, allowing them to use their bodies and minds in new ways, so that they are better able to balance their movements in and out of traditional poses in complex ways.

The floods in Central Thailand affected some but not all of the houses of local dancers and musicians. Since more than 1 million people were displaced and forced to live as evacuees together in public places, many of the performers—both those flooded and those not flooded—arranged to perform works of entertainment for the evacuees. For instance, the College of Dance and Music in Nakorn Pathom south of Bangkok was flooded and it included many dancers and students at its large relief center. From baggy-pants wearing free-stylin' rap dancers to masked dancers, Likay performers, and classical dancers, many young dancers formed teams and performed for the audiences in various relief centers in Central Thailand.

Events for His Majesty King Bhumibol's birthday were slowly ramping up as the flood waters started to recede in late November, and reached a peak in the last few days of the month. Everyone in Thailand was cleaning and beautifying their public spaces whether because of the flood or the celebration. More formal and traditional dances became the norm for audiences in tuxedos and gowns. The dances were smaller than they could have been since His Majesty asked that the government spend less money on him and more on the flood victims so they could return to their homes and normal way of life as soon as possible. At the major large-scale masked dance celebrations for the king, performers celebrated the beloved king both at the outdoor open ground space and also at the government house to toast his long life and his love of the Thai people.



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1 & 2] *Black and White Khon*, choreographed by Pichet Klunchun, in rehearsal.
3] The masked dance version of *The Battle of Maiyarab*, produced by Her Majesty the Queen Khon Foundation to celebrate the king's birthday.
4] Dances at Rattanakosin Wat Phra Kaew in celebration of His Majesty King Bhumibol on 5 December 2011.
Photo: Dekchanggron
5] Thai dancers performing at relief centers during the flood.



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2011 International Young Choreographer Project Participants' Report

About the International Young Choreographer Project

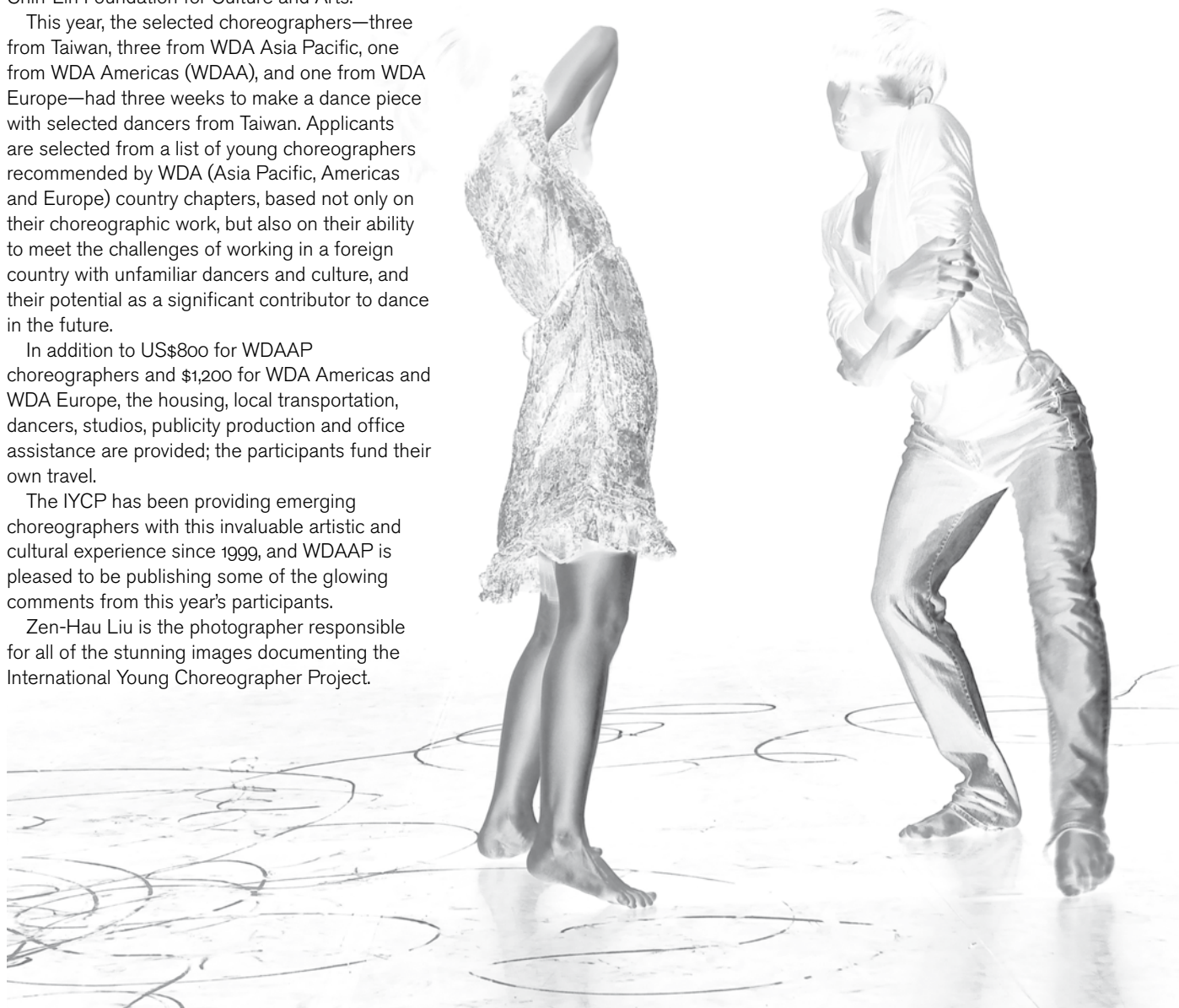
Each year a total of eight choreographers are chosen by WDA Asia Pacific (WDAAP) to attend the Asia Young Choreographer Project (AYCP) in Taiwan. In 2009, the Asia Young Choreographer Project was expanded into the International Young Choreographer Project (IYCP). It is organized and hosted by the Chin-Lin Foundation for Culture and Arts, and Tso's Dance Association. The funding for AYCP is provided by the National Culture and Arts Foundation, the Bureau of Cultural Affairs of Kaohsiung City Government in Taiwan as well as Chin-Lin Foundation for Culture and Arts.

This year, the selected choreographers—three from Taiwan, three from WDA Asia Pacific, one from WDA Americas (WDAA), and one from WDA Europe—had three weeks to make a dance piece with selected dancers from Taiwan. Applicants are selected from a list of young choreographers recommended by WDA (Asia Pacific, Americas and Europe) country chapters, based not only on their choreographic work, but also on their ability to meet the challenges of working in a foreign country with unfamiliar dancers and culture, and their potential as a significant contributor to dance in the future.

In addition to US\$800 for WDAAP choreographers and \$1,200 for WDA Americas and WDA Europe, the housing, local transportation, dancers, studios, publicity production and office assistance are provided; the participants fund their own travel.

The IYCP has been providing emerging choreographers with this invaluable artistic and cultural experience since 1999, and WDAAP is pleased to be publishing some of the glowing comments from this year's participants.

Zen-Hau Liu is the photographer responsible for all of the stunning images documenting the International Young Choreographer Project.





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1] *03:23*, choreographed by Eddie Chun-Hui Lin, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 2] *Endless*, choreographed by Kuan-Ling Tsai, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 3] *between*, choreographed by Chien-Chih Chang, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 4] *And always this heat smell from after the storm...*, choreographed by Claude Aymon, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 5] *Human Atoms*, choreographed by Angela Blumberg, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 6] *Nature of the Beast*, choreographed by Julia Milsom, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 7] *The Absence of ToM*, choreographed by Zaimon Vilmanis, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.
 8] *Genuine 2*, choreographed by Naim Syahrazad, 23-24 July 2011 at Tsoying Dance Theater.



Claude Aymon (WDA Europe)

IYCP was a wonderful experience that I did not expect to be so rich and pleasant in all its aspects.

We worked in modern functional studios, which helped a lot to work peacefully for three weeks. The dancers were open-minded, with a very high technical level and a huge artistic sensitivity. They were eager to learn, try, and experience new things, which was extremely pleasant. I gave a lot of workshops this year and have been involved in many projects with young dancers of this age, and it was the first time I felt this way.

Before we even arrived in Taiwan, the high school team was available to answer all our questions and did its best to satisfy our needs. They never said no to our requests; from the moment we arrived at the airport until the time we left the country, they always found a solution.

IYCP was also an amazing opportunity to meet a country, a culture, and a people. It was a perfect way to discover a different way of life, new food, new flavors, and to live at another rhythm.

To the next lucky participants of IYCP, be aware that the dancers participating are young; some are already dancers in their body and their head, but some are still 'students'. Sometimes the choreographer must also be the teacher. Some dancers may have technical problems that choreographers should not have to resolve, but which teachers do. The age of the students is also something to consider when preparing the project, in terms of choosing the subject of the choreography and organizing how you work.

Another thing that some contemporary dance choreographers who work more with concepts or ideas than with showing with their body have to keep in mind: not all the dancers speak English fluently and even if there is a translator (a dancer or someone from the staff), the group organization and the relationship created with the group of dancers can be different, as this style of communication is not as direct as it could be.

Other than that, be prepared to be amazed by what you are going to experience. It is definitively a project like no other!



Angela Blumberg (WDA Americas)

I would like to thank IYCP for an exquisite experience that provided me with both artistic and personal growth. Working with Tsoying's technically skilled and dedicated dancers was a privilege in that it reflected me as a choreographer allowing me to see my strengths as well as weaknesses, and thus helped me develop my craft. Sharing the experience of being in Kaohsiung with other choreographers and seeing how they approach choreographing and working with young dancers were the most inspiring and mind opening experiences.

Thank you once again for this truly amazing experience. I will miss all of you and hope to come back!



Chien-Chih Chang (Taiwan)

I was selected as a representative of Taiwan in IYCP. From the first notifications several months ago to the formal greeting in Kaohsiung on the first day of the activity, I felt I was highly respected and well treated. This helped to remind me to do my best for Taiwan internationally.

During the preparation for my piece, I had an opportunity to define what 'culture' means to me. In a diverse society like Taiwan, we learn from both the East and West. It seems that we know everything, but actually what we know is only the surface. How can we compete with the world? We still need to search for the uniqueness which comprises Taiwan. Since Taiwan is a multicultural society, there is no need to limit the genre of a piece into either modern dance or ballet. Therefore I combined the 'qi' from Chinese martial arts and the rich body language from Western dance to create a brand new dance work.

The whole process of working with Tso's Dance Association, the other choreographers, dancers, and even the light designer was pleasant. Thank you!



Eddie Chun-Hui Lin (Taiwan)

I still remember vividly the passion and beauty of IYCP.

The three-week creation and rehearsal—though short—was very rewarding to me as a choreographer and also, I believe, to the hard-working dancers. The dancers come from all around Taiwan. On the day of the choreographers' arrival, the dancers were intensively examined and selected. Just by watching them trying hard to show their abilities, one can know that they love and enjoy dancing wholeheartedly. From that day on, they devoted themselves to the rehearsals without complaining. They stayed and practiced the movements again and again, digested what they had learned, and thought about the body languages embedded in the movements. This shows what young dancers in Taiwan have: a professional working attitude.

Time flies and the three weeks passed by in a blink of an eye. Everyone was eager to share what they had given for the past three weeks. The eight pieces were very different from each other, and one could see not only the performances of the dancers, but also the creativity of the choreographers. My work, 03:23, described a sleepless night which anyone might have, inspired by and pieced together from the dancers' daily lives. Besides making fast and accurate movements, the dancers needed to show the drama in the movements, which could be a big challenge to young dancers. However, during the three-week rehearsal, I saw improvement and hard work. I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation of their efforts.

I also thank IYCP not only for providing us with an opportunity to present our creation, but also for broadening my international horizons. Also, I thank Miss Su-Ling Chou and Ya-Chin Chuang for their attentive care, which made Kaohsiung a home away from home for all of us. Thank you for giving me a very impressive summer memory.



Julia Milsom (New Zealand, WDA Asia Pacific)

What a privilege it has been to take part in this program. It has been a fantastic opportunity for me to experience a cultural and artistic exchange in a supportive environment. It has come at a formative time in my choreographic career and I learnt a great deal from the experience. I also hope that my presence on the program has been of some value and that I have managed to represent my country and its artistic practice in a positive light.

I was truly impressed with the standard of my dancers. Even though my aesthetic and style was unfamiliar to them they were all so open to fulfilling my hopes for the work.

I made connections with seven other choreographers all at the same stage as me. There is something very affirming about meeting and discussing our work with one another. I am very confident that I will continue to be in touch with a number of these artists.

I got an insight into dance training in Taiwan and the sort of work that is happening there. I certainly felt that my work was not suited to a Taiwan audience. This in itself was a really interesting thing to experience—to find a way to articulate why that is, and what it is that I am doing that means this is the case. It makes me ask: do I therefore change because of the cultural difference or do I endeavor to pursue what I value anyway? I am still not sure about the answer to this question but it has definitely provoked this line of questioning for me.

I really admired the discipline that the Taiwanese have, and I have been re-inspired to maintain discipline in my own practice.

I cannot thank Ya-Chin and Miss Chou enough for their great organizational skills and hospitality. This meant that there really was no drama to mention. I felt totally supported in my process. I never felt unwelcome or unsupported. I would recommend this program to other burgeoning young choreographers as a great way to continue to develop.



Kuan-Ling Tsai (Taiwan)

At the beginning of IYCP, my dancers were strangers to me. However, these dancers and I both grew up in southern Taiwan; we shared similar experiences in our educational background. I saw a younger me in these dancers. After ten years' abroad, I had come back home, this time as a choreographer.

We were required to finish a ten-minute piece in three weeks by working three hours a day, five days a week. To me, it was a big challenge; it was even more challenging to the dancers. The whole activity was not only about choreography, but also about time management and mutual communication. I spent a lot of time talking with my dancers. The process did not always go smoothly and ideally, but this was what the project was about—to face difficulties and to create a piece under limited conditions. At least there was no language barrier between the dancers and me.

My dancers displayed complete trust and openness towards me from the very beginning, but this did not mean that they followed me blindly. I gave them space to think, and they asked questions about my piece and the purpose of each instruction. I then gave them new instructions, and they let me know their limitations. Before the dress run, I gathered them to remind them of problems and what to notice, and as I was about to leave, I noticed that they were preparing to go through the parts again. "Do you need me?" I asked, and they told me no. The dress run turned out perfectly. At that particular moment, I realized that I had got the eight most wonderful and mature dancers of IYCP 2011.

During one of the forums after the performance, an audience member asked, "What are the differences between the Taiwanese dancers and dancers abroad? Are Taiwanese dancers too obedient and too shy to express themselves?" My response was, "These dancers are freer, more open, and have more of their own ideas than my generation. Although sometimes they were indeed too shy to express themselves, this did not mean that they had no abilities to think or express. After some instructions they could present their unique and interesting thoughts."



Zaimon Vilmanis (Australia, WDA Asia Pacific)

My dancers in Taiwan were used to a more 'directorial' approach to choreography. I was constantly looking for ways to challenge the dancers and to show them I wanted to work collaboratively. Then I realized I could not expect them to understand my process in just three weeks. I had to make adjustments to accommodate their needs. My choreographic process with them changed dramatically. I had to take time to develop formulas which would help them to understand how I worked and feel safe in knowing that mistakes and failure were okay. Having taken more time to lead them through some of my choreographic processes, the students became more confident to ask questions and were willing to take more risks.

I have discovered that I have two choreographic processes. The first one was developed in a collective situation, where the collaborative input is evenly shared; the outcome is less of a concern. The second process is where I use more familiar formulas and choreographic tools that I can impose on the dancers and which relies on a clear concept that I can articulate to the dancers from the beginning.

Understanding this difference has strengthened my choreographic methods enabling me to adjust to new circumstances and foreign environments, to work under short time frames and with constraints. I now feel confident that I can successfully work outside my comfort zone and still enjoy myself at the same time!

Feedback from one of my dancers, Ming-Hsuan Liu, demonstrates the value of this cultural exchange: "At the beginning of rehearsals, I had no idea of what Zaimon wanted. I concentrated very hard on the movements he taught. It never occurred to me that what he did was to make us used to his style first, and then let us rearrange the movements. This was my first experience of this choreographic method. Usually, the order of the movements, rhythm, and route are set by the choreographer.

"Since the work was not completely set, there was always excitement, spontaneity, and things beyond expectation each time we rehearsed. The rehearsals became more than repeating the same practice. I learned that dancing was more than a visual presentation for the audience. We could also learn from it."

Naim Syhrazad (Malaysia, WDA Asia Pacific)

IYCP was really good and should continue to be held every year. As a young artist, the opportunity to expand my work and think about dance with other choreographers and dancers from other parts of the world is precious and necessary. I would like to see more and more young artists selected to take part in IYCP.

I do not have any issues with the way the project was run. I really enjoyed working with the dancers. I think they were all very talented and very committed to what they do. I also enjoyed the hospitality received in Kaohsiung and everything made me really happy. I am really glad to have got to know Ya-Chin and Miss Chou, both of whom really helped me a lot and I would love to thank them both from the bottom of my heart.

WDA Annual General Meeting

Kuala Lumpur,
25 September 2011
by Julie Dyson

New WDAAP board

Several board members' terms expired in 2011, so at the AGM in 2010 it was decided to implement a transition plan to prevent loss of corporate memory and experience, at the same time encouraging new people who would contribute different ideas and skills.

The newly elected WDAAP

Executive Board is:

- President: Yunyu Wang (Taiwan)
- Vice President: Urmimala Sarkar Munsri (India)
- Vice President South Asia: Lubna Marium (Bangladesh)
- Vice President Pacific: Christina Hong (Australia/New Zealand)
- Vice President South East Asia: Joseph Gonzales (Malaysia)
- Vice President East Asia: Anna Chan (Hong Kong, continuing)
- Treasurer: Jeff Hsieh (Taiwan)
- Secretary: Julie Dyson (Australia, continuing)

There were many tributes to outgoing President Dr Mohd Anis Md Nor, who had provided great leadership throughout his nine years in the post. He was presented with a photographic record of the many events he had initiated or attended over the years, and several speakers contributed stories and memories of their work with Anis.

There were also tributes to outgoing Treasurer Mew Chang Tsing and co-chair of the Research & Documentation Network Dr Stephanie Burridge for her inspirational work with the network, and her work with Routledge in producing the 'Celebrating Dance' series for the Asia-Pacific region.

Networks

The Research & Documentation network saw Stephanie Burridge step down as co-chair to concentrate on producing more in the Routledge series, with plans for new books on dance in Taiwan and New Zealand to be launched next year, and others in the planning stages. Her co-chair, Urmimala Sarkar, will continue for another year to assist and mentor several younger WDAAP members who are keen to be actively involved in this network.

The Education & Training network continues under the leadership of Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners, as they plan next year's Global Summit 'Dance, Young People and Change' with daCi. They have also had significant success in ensuring WDA's representation on the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE), which Ralph now chairs.

The Creation & Presentation Network (currently chaired by Nanette Hassall in Australia) will continue, especially as it provides many countries in the region with opportunities to develop artists and networks through events and cultural exchanges.

A new network, Support & Development, will replace the two former WDAAP networks, Management & Promotion and Welfare & Status, which have not functioned effectively for some time in the Asia-Pacific region. It is hoped that the broader title of Support & Development will encompass the interests formerly covered by the other two. Expressions of interest in this network are welcome; contact the Secretary, Julie Dyson (juliedyson@ausdance.org.au).



1] Outgoing WDAAP President Prof Mohd Anis Md Nor at the Annual General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 25 September 2011. Photo: Urmimala Sarkar
2] Joseph Gonzales and Ralph Buck at the Annual General Meeting in Kuala Lumpur on 25 September 2011. Photo: Julie Dyson

Recollections of the Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference, 22-25 September 2011

by Annalouise Paul

Hybridity has been an ongoing enquiry in my dance practice for over twenty years. Earlier this year I investigated some new research questions at Critical Path, a choreographic research and development center for dance artists in Australia, where I posed some anthropological perspectives: can we create a hybrid form in a laboratory situation? If so, what are our reasons to come together in a safe 'multicultural' society? How do notions of celebration of diversity shape our works, and are they enough?

It was serendipitous that I managed to attend the Asia-Pacific International Dance Conference 2011 in September, hosted by the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. It was four fantastic days of networking with dance researchers, scholars, dance producers and artists keen to listen and share their fieldwork and perspectives on hybridity in dance, a timely contribution to my own choreographic research.

Hybridity was presented as being 'the offspring of two parents' and contested that it not be used to describe an existing dance form but rather 'a process of something on the way to something new'. It was discussed as the 'slow evolution of localised forms' and 'the changing or coming together of two things because of socio-political circumstances in a particular community or region' and it was pointed out that this process was not the same as artistic practise which must be clearly defined as just that, or as 'hybridism in process'.

Not being an academic, I always find it challenging to link academic or reflexive practice with artistic practice, but the experience of the conference was completely engrossing. Dance anthropologists, ethno-choreologists and musicologists investigated a wide variety of themes, from traditional dances performed as daily practice by ancient cultures, to the hybrid dances-for-dance's-sake created in the high arts.

Presentation papers at APIDC ranged from movement dialogues or 'shifts' in Hawaiian dance history, to discussions of the Norwegian Halling dance, multimedia in contemporary Indian dance productions, the trance dances of the Temiar aboriginal peoples of Malaysia, the minority cultures of Laos, trans-global Salsa dance, and the hypergendering of male and female forms in Bollywood items. Examples were drawn from the works of young choreographers on the British South Asian scene, such as Sonia Sabri and Shane Shambu, and Malaysian artists such as Umesh Shetty. Two papers by practicing artists were given. One was by keynote speaker Jonathan Hollander, New York choreographer, who told of his influences from Indian Carnatic music, and his exchanges with Samir and Sanghamitra Chatterjee and choreographer Ramli Ibrahim. "Who is the judge of authenticity?" he asked. Hollander also contested that hybridity is only accepted when the artist is 'too big to fail', and discussed the 'mediocritizing' of new exploration by use of the term 'fusion'.

Attendees of the conference were mainly from the Asia-Pacific region and some came from as far away as Norway, Ireland and New York, but artists and researchers alike were

asking the same questions and questioning the same politics on the validity of multiculturalism. Dato' Norliza Rofli, the Director General of Malaysia's National Department of Culture and Arts, offered the 'Realising iMalaysia' policy in her keynote speech as the credo of contemporary life in Malaysia. We were asked to 'forget the politics' and to celebrate the country's unique multiculturalism.

Cross-pollination, melding, braiding, weaving and fusion of cultural dance and music have been going on for eons. They express our need as human beings to exchange, share, trade with, or befriend another culture or people. The downside to globalisation, and the further hybridisation of dances such as Salsa, Hip Hop or Bollywood, means there is a serious disinterest in older cultural heritage. The social and folk dances of the past are becoming endangered species. Even here at APIDC, the art works examined in the presentations focused more on classical ballet and contemporary dance 'fusion inspired' works, rather than those that actually utilised and examined cultural content at an intrinsic level.

I found it exciting to discover theories that had a connection to practice, particularly from those researchers who had embodied their fieldwork in some way. There were many non-academics with strong ideas to contribute who felt there was not enough real discourse on the exploration of hybridity in dance practice, and on how the politic of multiculturalism does not work. Vibrant conversations were had in the hotel lobby or crammed in the back of a small Toyota in Friday night traffic.

I feel honoured to have met so many passionate and very real pioneers in our local region, particularly from Papua New Guinea, Cambodia, and East Timor, where singular individuals are forging pathways for dance to exist as a valid career, art form and research subject. Some are even campaigning for a National Dance Repertoire to protect and nurture awareness of their cultural heritage within the local youth and communities.

My hat goes off to the many organiser-professors who hosted this rich and diverse program and their students who helped to see its success. We received a CD of the more than 30 presentation papers and keynote speeches featured in the conference. The event also included a show every night by local and international artists as part of the biennial MyDance Festival, and Jonathon Hollander's Battery Dance Company in collaboration with Malaysia's Sutra Dance Theatre. This years' conference also launched several dance books on contemporary dance practice in Malaysia and Australia.

Being amongst such an array of like-minded people was thrilling. The aporia of hybridity continues globally, and we continue to struggle with alternative definitions of hybridity as a catchall word for 'neo-ethnic' dance or as a term for understanding process. However, it was clear for everyone at the conference that what is important is not how cleverly we might put dances together in art making, but the quality of the exchange, and the respect for the culture we choose to share, or which we already hold in common.

Annalouise Paul is an independent choreographer. She has been creating works around identity and transformation using traditional and contemporary dance and live music for twenty five years in Sydney and London. APIDC 2011 was an opportunity to deepen her choreographic research and develop networks for her intercultural company, Theatre of Rhythm and Dance.

Upcoming WDA Events

Dance, Young People and Change

14-20 July 2012, Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan

Registrations are now open for the daCI/WDA Global Dance Summit hosted by TNUA in Taipei, 14-20 July 2012. This will be 2012's biggest meeting of dance educators and artists. With the focus on Dance, Young People and Change, youthful energy from primary/elementary to tertiary-aged students will drive this dynamic event.

Workshops and performances from hundreds of children from around the world will entertain you, but also challenge your pedagogy, inspire your curriculum and support your choreography.

Advocates for dance education affirm the role that dance plays in young people's lives. As the world rapidly changes, how do young people see the role of dance in their lives? Are educators proactively critiquing and/or maintaining the relevance of dance within education and community contexts? "Dance, Young People and Change" aims to reflect on these issues.

The conference themes include:

- Dance and Social Justice: How is dance transforming, limiting or defining lives?
- Teaching and Learning Dance: What are the emerging issues and practices shaping teaching and learning; what are the emerging theories, policies, politics shaping and limiting teaching and learning?
- Curriculum and Hegemony: What are the latest developments in curriculum around the world that are shaping the meaning of dance in education?
- Dance in formal and informal learning contexts: What spaces are children and young people using for dance? How does the context shape the style of dance, the dancer, the teacher, the audience? How is access to dance created and denied by the learning context?

Keynote speakers will include:

- Chung-shiuan Chang, Vice President, Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan
- Christopher Scott, Youth Dance England
- Blake Martin, Neuroscience Centre for Vision Research, Canada
- Hui-wen (Kate), Founding Director, Cloud Gate School for Children, Taiwan

The summit program includes opening and closing ceremonies, keynotes, performances by young people and professionals, an international creative program for young delegates, plus a range of over 250 sessions including papers, panels, workshops, lectures, project dialogues, taster classes in a range of styles as well as masterclasses, and Taiwanese cultural experiences. Be there!

For more information about the program and registration, see <http://www.daciwdaintaiwan.org>.

IADMS 22nd Annual Meeting

Dance medicine and science conference, Singapore, 25-28 October 2012

The International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) will be holding its 22nd Annual Meeting in Singapore next year. It will be the first time that the conference has been held in Asia, and represents a milestone in the development of the performing arts scene in Singapore.

IADMS is an association formed in 1990 by an international group of dance educators, physicians and allied health professionals who treat dancers, dance scientists and dancers. The IADMS membership base currently represents 35 countries.

The Annual Meeting provides an interesting mixture of medical symposia on issues affecting dancers, dance and pedagogical research, movement sessions by somatic practitioners and dance instructors, as well as many opportunities for both formal and informal dialogue on various issues affecting dancers and the profession of dance.

While the Singapore government is now placing far greater emphasis on the development of the arts and culture, the area of dance medicine and science is definitely new and in its infancy in Asia as a whole. The time is ripe for raising awareness of the field from the perspective of prevention rather than rehabilitation.

This activity is jointly sponsored by IADMS in collaboration with Paradigm Wellness Pty Ltd, a company that believes that all practitioners should be nurtured and cared for. The company seeks active engagement with and participation from dance groups, faculty and students within dance departments of performing arts schools in Singapore and the region.

For more information email Hollis Johnson, AnnualMeeting@iadms.org or visit www.iadms.org.

About the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific



Our Mission

WDA serves as a primary voice for dance and dancers throughout the world, and encourages the exchange of ideas and the awareness of dance in all its forms.

World Dance Alliance operates via its three regional centres with an overarching Presidents' Committee, and a Secretary General, bringing the three regions together in matters of policy and global projects. The three regional centres are

- WDA Americas
- WDA Asia Pacific
- WDA Europe

WDA also has partnerships with other international organisations such as WAAE (World Alliance for Arts Education), International Dance Committee of International Theater Institute ITI /UNESCO (ITI) UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), and daCi (dance and the Child international).

Our Goals

- To promote the recognition, development and mutual understanding of all forms of dance.
- To facilitate communication and exchange among dance individuals, institutions and organisations interested in dance.
- To provide a forum for discussion of matters relating to dance.
- To encourage and support the research, education, criticism, creation and performance of dance.
- To liaise, co-ordinate and participate in activities with other dance organisations in the world.

Our Founder

Carl Wolz

Our Background

This independent, non-profit, non-political organisation began as the Asia-Pacific Dance Alliance in Hong Kong in 1988. In 1990, the global body, World Dance Alliance (WDA), was founded at the Hong Kong International Dance Conference. In 1993, the name of the Asia-Pacific Center was changed to WDA Asia Pacific to reflect its relationship to the global body.

WDA Asia Pacific is one of three regional centres that make up WDA. The other two are WDA Americas [www.wdaamericas.org] and WDA Europe [www.wda-europe.com]. A fourth regional centre, WDA Africa, is in the process of establishing itself.

Membership

Open to any organisation or individual interested in furthering the objectives of the society.

Membership benefits

- Biannual newsletter *Channels*
- Annual regional assemblies
- Biennial global assemblies
- Participation in the WDA Asia Pacific Networks
- Discounts to certain member events
- Privileged access to WDA Americas and WDA Europe services and activities
- Networking opportunities

Types of membership and annual subscription fees (subject to change)

- Chapter / Organisational US\$ 200
- Associate Organisational (to be advised)
- Associate Individual US\$ 20

To join

Contact your Chapter Head (contact list on back of this issue) for details on how to join the local chapter.

Visit our websites

www.worlddancealliance.net
www.wda-ap.org

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