

CHANNELS





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Asia-Pacific**

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Cover
 New Year Celebration in Dhaka
 Performers: Tabassum Ahmed and troupe
 Photo: Syed Touhid Hassan

Executive reports

The Executive Board of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific (WDAAP) is elected by the membership every three 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.

Roles of Executive Board members

The President guides the organisation to achieve its aims by formulating policy and communicating regularly with Executive Board members, whose activities are vital to the growth and development of the WDAAP. The President represents the organisation and actively participates, by invitation, in Chapter meetings, workshops and celebrations, and communicates twice a year to the general membership through *Asia-Pacific Channels*. The President presides at all Executive Board and Annual General Meetings, and participates in the annual World Dance Alliance Presidents' meeting.

The Vice President represents the organisation and deputises for the President as required, also providing advice on matters of policy and procedure. The Vice President attends all WDAAP Executive Board and Annual General Meetings, communicates regularly with the President and other Board members, and provides two reports annually for *Asia-Pacific Channels*.

The Treasurer is responsible for the funds of the WDAAP, invoicing and collecting Chapter subscriptions and lodging funds in a bank approved by the Executive Board to a WDAAP account. The Treasurer closes the accounts on 31 March each year, and submits them to the AGM with a financial statement after audit.

The Secretary oversees the WDAAP's election processes, corresponds regularly with the Executive Board, provides it with advice on policies and procedures, and maintains the organisation's records. The Secretary minutes the Annual General Meeting and disseminates them to Chapter Heads and Board members, and provides a summary of AGM outcomes and other procedural information for *Asia-Pacific Channels*.

The Area Vice Presidents represent their regions' interests on the Executive Board and ensure that Chapters in their areas of responsibility are properly represented and supported. They endeavour to establish new country Chapters with advice and support about WDAAP structures, and are required to provide two reports each year for *Asia-Pacific Channels* about activities of their regions. See p.10 for a list of the countries in each of these regions. The General Secretary works with the three Area Presidents — Asia Pacific, The Americas and Europe. See p.4 for roles and responsibilities.

President's report

Professor Mohd Anis Nor

Greetings and salutations to all. By the time this edition is published, we will have met in New Delhi for the 2009 Annual General Meeting.

As I write this report, I feel that our AGM in New Delhi is a fulfilment of a long-desired hope of bringing the WDAAP community to India. The reason is quite simple. When the idea of forming the WDA or its predecessor, the Asia Pacific Dance Academies (APDA) was suggested, Carl Wolz went to India to meet with Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, a long time friend and a respected colleague to ask for support to build this organisation. Since then, WDA India has become an impressive organisation with three local chapters, WDA West Bengal, WDA Maharashtra and WDA Karnataka. This would not have happened without the work of Dr Sunil Kothari and Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsri.

During his time as Vice President South Asia, Dr Kothari visited many places in India and South Asia to seek support for the formation of new chapters. He was instrumental in the formation of WDA Maharashtra and WDA Karnataka, formed in India shortly after the formation of WDA West Bengal by Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsri.

Urmimala, in her capacity as the Co-chair of the Research and Documentation Network, worked very hard to encourage friends and colleagues in Kolkata to form the West Bengal Chapter, a first in India. Soon after, she was elected to replace Dr Sunil Kothari whose maximum tenure had ended. They continued to work together to revitalise WDA India.

The WDAAP is honoured to hold its Annual General Meeting in New Delhi, the seat of Indian government and democracy and the site where Carl Wolz started his initiative to form WDA India with Dr Kapila Vatsyayan. It is truly auspicious and remarkable that WDAAP and WDA India have come together to realise the collaborative initiatives of organising the WDAAP AGM for 2009. With all these achievements, we salute one of the most senior pioneers of WDA in India, Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, who is our greatest supporter and organisational mentor.

The energy of WDA activities in India eventually spilled over to its most immediate and important neighbour, Bangladesh. After lengthy preparations and many email discussions over several years, WDA Bangladesh was founded in August 2009. With its close affinity and socio-cultural relationship with West Bengal in India, WDA Bangladesh has heralded an achievement of cultural symbiosis. Through WDA West Bengal and WDA Bangladesh, the former representing a chapter within a nation-state and the latter being a chapter from a nation-state, WDA has united the people of Bengal, or Bengalis, from two nations. Congratulations to all our initiators,



Photos from the Annual General Meeting in New Delhi

Top: Professor Mohd Anis Nor with Dr Kapila Vatsyayan

Middle: Dr Sunil Kothari

Bottom: Dr Kapila Vatsyayan with Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsri

Photos: Julie Dyson



WDA India volunteers
From left: Benil Bismas, Anisban Ghosh, Priyanka Basu, Vikhuti Sharma, Rashika Ojha, Shrinkhla Sahai, Tyothi Jayaprakash

moderators and champions from WDA West Bengal and WDA Bangladesh.

I have also been emailing Ms Naomi Faik Simet from the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies in Boroko, Papua New Guinea, to talk about the possibility of forming a new WDA Papua New Guinea Chapter in the Pacific region in 2010. It would indeed be an achievement for WDAAP to link Australasia, Austronesia, Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia in the greater Pacific region with members from Continental and Insular Asia.

On another high note, WDA did very well at the World Alliance for Arts Education Summit (WAAE Summit) in Newcastle from 31 October to 2 November 2009. Led by Ralph Buck, we were represented by Julie Dyson, Jeff Meiners, Naomi Faik-Simet, Nicholas Rowe, Anna C.Y. Chan, Yang Sook Cho, Lucia Matos, Sherry Shapiro, Ann Kipling Brown, Eeva Antilla, Maria Speth, Ken Bartlett, Linda Rolfe, Tim Rubidge and Tamara Ashley.

Advocating for dance education, the delegation was joined by the three other WAAE members: International Drama/Theatre and Education Association (IDEA), International Society for Music Education (ISME), and International Society for Education through Art (InSEA). There were approximately 120 educators, artists and academics from 60 nationalities.

After the Summit, Dr Ralph Buck, WDA representative for WAAE, joined Dan Baron Cohen (President of IDEA) and Rita Irwin (President of InSEA) in Paris to meet with Georges Poussin (Director, Division of Arts and Cultural Enterprise UNESCO) and Doyun Lee (Assistant programme specialist and project coordinator UNESCO).

We hope that formalising the relationship between UNESCO and WAAE will position WDA as an advocator of dance education within the WAAE.

As 2009 ends, we hope to achieve more in 2010 because we anticipate better communication and advocacy for dance in the WDA. Finally, I hope to see many of you at the WDA Global Event in New York City from 12–18 July 2010.

Vice President

Professor Yunyu Wang

This was a special year for the WDA Asia Pacific (WDAAP). Although the economic crisis affected many, our dance performances, conferences and meetings continued as usual. It is our energy that makes the dance world go on. Those who work in the arts, especially dance, live with limited funding support, but the economic crisis has only made us stronger than ever.

Several important activities occurred not only in the WDAAP but also in America and Europe. Of special significance was the meeting in Wisconsin USA that brought the three presidents together, Mohd Anis Md Nor, Jin-wen Yu and Joseph Fontano as well as newly-elected Secretary General, Cheryl Stock. I also attended the meeting, along with two past presidents of WDA Americas (Grant Strate and Adrienne Kaeppler) and WDA Legal Advisor, Madeleine Nichols. The meeting was successful in uniting the management of our three regions.

WDA activities next year include the Global Assembly in New York City and the AGM in Hong Kong. I have also been approached by daCi (dance and the Child international) to sponsor the daCi/WDA Global Assembly in 2012, to be held at Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA), Taiwan. Ralph Buck (Co-chair WDAAP Education & Training network) and Chung-shiuan Chang (the Vice President and former dance dean at TNUA) joined me at the daCi 2009 conference in Jamaica. The presentation was warmly welcomed and the proposal of sponsoring was accepted. In the summer of 2010, planning committee members from daCi and WDAAP will meet at TNUA to prepare the program for 2012.

Suling Chou, head of WDA Taiwan reported on the success of the 2009 International Young Choreographer Project. After seven years it is continuing to recruit 'young blood' to carry forward the WDA's mission—to establish a centre of information and communication for dance organisations and individuals, a forum for the exchange of information, ideas, expertise and resources in all areas of dance...'

Through our shared projects, events and conferences, our mission will continue.

Pacific Area

Dr Ralph Buck

Naomi Faik-Simit, Dance Researcher, Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, Papua New Guinea, has joined the WDA Asia Pacific (WDAAP) family. Naomi joined the WDA delegation at the WAAE Summit, Newcastle, and has agreed to maintain contact with the WDAAP. We also met with Sachiko Miller from WDA Fiji to discuss broad regional issues informing Pacific Island Dance.

In Auckland, New Zealand, two major forums focused on Pacific Island dance and Maori contemporary dance respectively. The Pacific Island Fono, 13–14 November 2009 organised by Sefa Enari, DANZ Tamaki, focused on the traditional dances of Pacific Island cultures and the contemporary dance produced by people from those cultures. The Fono included forums, workshops and a choreographic lab.

The Aitanga: Descendance Summit, 16–18 October 2009 at The University of Auckland brought together Maori contemporary dance practitioners who met for three days of discussions and forums. The summit focused on contemporary dance artists and their relationship with traditions.

For more details and information about these two events go to www.danz.org.nz

I also met with Soufiane Karim, a young dance artist from New Caledonia and we have begun to foster this network.

We in the Pacific region are ever mindful of our environment. The earthquakes and tsunamis that have shaken Tongan and Samoan communities have had a very real impact around the region. Our thoughts go to all those who are affected and those who are helping rebuild communities.



East Asia

Anna CY Chan

The Taiwan chapter provided opportunities for WDA members to participate in the annual International Asia Young Choreographer Project and TAIPEIDEA in Taiwan. As well as benefiting young choreographers and dancers from the Asia–Pacific region, these activities also affirm the WDA mission.

The Hong Kong chapter collaborated with the Guangdong Modern Dance Festival www.gdfestival.cn (GDMDF) to present its first Dance Symposium, Dance In Community from 24–25 July 2009. GDMDF is an annual event presented by the Guangdong Modern Dance Company. It attracts hundreds of young Chinese choreographers and dancers from many regions in China as well as international artists. Talks about possible future collaboration have begun with potential WDA members in China.

Early in the year, WDA Asia Pacific (WDAAP) was exploring the possibility of 'piggybacking' the 2010 WDAAP event in Korea with the UNESCO World Conference in Arts Education in Seoul. Unfortunately it was not possible for the WDA Korea Chapter to make a proposal to the executive board before this year's AGM. Therefore, the Hong Kong Chapter will integrate the 2010 WDAAP Annual Meeting with the upcoming International Dance Symposium.

The Symposium, part of the 2010 Hong Kong Dance Festival, was commissioned by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. It will run from 25–28 November 2010 at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. It will consist of four parts: Dance Conference, the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific Meeting, Dance Workshops, and Dance Performance.

The Symposium will focus on sharing and exchange of ideas and concerns; facilitated exchange of skills and techniques and promote exchange in creative ideas, and aesthetic and artistic views. See the events section for more information on the Symposium and visit www.hkdanceall.org for the open call for papers and performance.



Dance workshop in Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Photo: Marzana Moon Moon.

South Asia

Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsî

Time has flown since writing the last report; it has been stressful, frustrating and tiring while at the same time exciting, happy and immensely rewarding. These past few months have been a process of re-learning how to look at the dance world in our country as well as the whole region of South Asia. In the process, we have been able to launch a thriving and exciting Bangladesh chapter, with the support and participation of their huge and vibrant dance community.

Launching of the Bangladesh chapter

In my last two reports, I mentioned the plans for a formal launch of the Bangladesh Chapter. In spite of great enthusiasm from the Bangladesh dance community, unavoidable situations made it impossible for us to go ahead — much to our disappointment.

Finally in August, I went to Bangladesh with WDA Asia Pacific President, Professor Anis Nor, for a meeting with the Bangladesh dance community, and a formal launch of the Bangladesh Chapter. Prior to the meeting I conducted a seven-day workshop for 30 young dancers from different dance institutions. It was facilitated by Shadhona and held in Bangladesh Shilpa Kala Parishad, Dhaka.

The dancers were from different specialisations, had learnt from wonderful teachers and were aged 14–33. On the last day of the workshop a half-hour presentation was made by participants.

The day-long meeting on 8 August was organised by the Bangladesh Nritya Shilpi Sangstha to officially launch WDA Bangladesh and was presented in one of Shilpa Kala Parishad's seminar rooms. Without going into details of the meeting, I would like to mention that it was a well structured process of exchange. Professor Anis Nor gave a Powerpoint presentation about the WDA as an organisation, its

aims, the member countries and also the way that it has grown over the years. I presented a Powerpoint about how we have worked to make the India chapter more lively and vigorous — presenting it as an example of how future work might be planned in new chapters.

The members of the Bangladesh Nritya Shilpi Sangstha also gave informative and detailed presentations, making it possible for WDAAP members to understand the richness and history of the existing dance culture. The meeting was attended by important members of the dance community in Bangladesh — dancers, choreographers, teachers, organisers, critics and scholars. We were overwhelmed!

That evening we attended a program showcasing many of the important dance organisations and individuals in Bangladesh. We were humbled at the thought and effort that went into making this program.

I take this opportunity to welcome our new country chapter, its adhoc committee and President Mrs Lubna Marium, to our organisation. We look forward to a wonderful and vibrant member country, with us in all our future projects. This began with the 19-member Bangladesh team joining us for the WDA India event in New Delhi. We were able to support six young members of the team to participate in the conference, master classes, and all evening performances. I hope this will be the beginning of a long and fruitful association.

2009 India event

By the time you read this I will be reporting on the success of the event, but let me tell you a little about the planning. Every day there is a seemingly unsolvable hitch, and then we solve it. This is the story of all teams that have worked to make each of the past events a huge success. I have a new appreciation of the work that has gone into all those events that I have been a part of since 1997.

Here in Delhi, our plans have become crystallised, and even with all the hiccups everything seems to be falling into place. We have been blessed in many ways with experienced seniors, wonderful colleagues and co-operative and hardworking juniors to help us plan, and because of their work we are finally going to be able to see you all in Delhi!

It has been difficult working on an event in a country as big as India, with all its languages, states and distances. Even so, we have tried to have fair representation from the states that have active WDA chapters and to create an event where we can bring the whole dance community together under one umbrella. As the Vice President of South Asia, I have also been interested in representation from our neighbouring countries such as the 19-member delegation from Bangladesh and the choreographer/kathak dancer Nahid Siddiqui from Pakistan.

WDA Secretary General

Dr Cheryl Stock

What Moves Us

From the 28–31 May 2009, the University of Wisconsin-Madison Dance Program hosted What Moves Us, the 2009 World Dance Alliance Americas General Assembly. I was very fortunate to attend this event not only in my new position as Secretary General since the Presidents' meeting was held at the same time, but also as paper presenter and a member of feedback panels for the performances.

It was a wonderful gathering in which I was able to meet up again with many of the Canadians and North Americans who travelled to be part of the 2008 WDA Global Summit in Brisbane. World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific was also well represented by Yunyu Wang and a large contingent from Taiwan as well as participants from Singapore, Thailand and India.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has the oldest dance course in the United States and was a perfect venue with its sense of history combined with a youthful future-focussed exuberance. Over 250 scholars and artists representing 19 countries (including Kenya and the West Indies) assembled; participating in a dizzying choice of events including master classes ranging from Salsa to African dance and from 'ballet pop' to a range of somatic approaches. In addition, there were intensive workshops, lecture demonstrations, 7 choreographic projects, 35 scholarly papers/panels, and 7 concerts featuring performances by an amazing 45 groups and individual artists, as well as two public performances in large downtown venues.

The conference themes were as diverse and wide-ranging as the performances and classes. Papers and panels coalesced around dance in community environments, dance and health issues, effective uses of technology in dance, a range of movement practices including martial arts, issues of physical sensitivity and choreographic/improvisational practices in various contexts, pedagogical issues across cultures and age-ranges, the contemporary landscape of dance theory and analysis and models of collaboration.



Presidents' Meeting in Madison, 1 June 2009. From left to right: Yunyu Wang, Anis Nor, Madeleine Nicholls, Grant Strate, Joseph Fontano, Adrienne Kaeppler, Jin-Wen Yu, Cheryl Stock. Photo: Ereck Jarvis.

Presidents' Meeting

The World Dance Alliance Presidents' annual meeting immediately followed this event. The committee members travelled from Taiwan, Malaysia, Canada, Australia and Italy to discuss the future of the global organisation and how to strengthen communication and collaboration among the three primary networks — WDA Americas (WDAA), WDA Asia Pacific (WDAAP), and WDA Europe (WDAE). Anis Nor, President of WDAAP and Joseph Fontano, President of WDAE, flew in especially to join the rest of the team who were already present, having participated in What Moves Us and the WDAA Board meeting that preceded the global meeting. In addition to Anis and Joseph was our host and newly-elected WDAA President Jin-Wen Yu, supported by past presidents Grant Strate and Adrienne Kaeppler, Vice-President of WDAAP Yunyu Wang, Madeleine Nicholls who generously agreed to serve as our Legal Advisor and Ereck Jarvis who took the minutes and organised the meeting, plus myself.

The agenda was ambitious, taking place over one full day and an evening. The three Presidents gave regional reports and the range of activities taking place was impressive. The mission statement, policy and procedures were reviewed and updated. While commonalities were reinforced, the diversity of regional situations was also recognised as important to maintain. We agreed that electronic communication tools have become more essential. Subsequently, a sub-committee was set up comprising myself, Yunyu and her colleague Jeff Hsieh

to develop a global WDA portal to easily access all three regional websites. This will provide a central place for our members and interested public to find us. Thanks to the efforts of Yunyu and Jeff, you will find the portal at www.worlddancealliance.net

We agreed that membership of one region ensured membership globally across all regions. In an increasingly 'borderless' world, members may not necessarily be associated with a particular region but participate across regions.

To help WDA expand its profile and presence, we decided to develop more partnerships with other relevant global organisations. We also discussed the recent partnerships with WAAE (World Alliance for Arts Educators) and daCi (dance and the Child international), in particular the planning of the shared global event with daCi in 2012 in Taiwan, as well as ongoing meetings with WAAE.

At the meeting, Jin-Wen also announced plans for the 2010 global event to be held in New York City, 12–17 July (details on WDAA website). We also discussed the importance of active networks in each region and the protocols for approval if an event wished to use the WDA name. Updating office holders and membership lists and contacts was seen as an ongoing priority to ensure cross communication among the three regions at all levels.

The meeting was very productive and has resulted in ongoing email between members of the global executive to develop the recommendations of the meeting. I look forward to the next gathering of the presidents in New York in July.



Network reports

The World Dance Alliance works through five 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 Management & Promotion Network focuses on the programming, dissemination, advocacy and administrative aspects of the dance community.

The Research & Documentation Network promotes dialogue and identifies, supports and initiates projects that preserve dance's heritage through conferences, print and online publications.

The Status & Welfare Network identifies and advocates the interests of dance professionals and their legal, economic, health and societal status.

Research & Documentation

Co-chairs Dr Stephanie Burridge and Dr Urmimala Sarkar

The first book of the Routledge 'Celebrating Dance in Asia and the Pacific' series *Beyond the Apsara: Celebrating Dance in Cambodia* was launched by Dr Karan Singh on 28 November 2009, at the International Conference on Dance Research—Researching Dance and the Annual General Meeting of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific.

The School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi and the Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata, along with Max Muller Bhavan, Delhi, Sanskriti Foundation, Sangeet Natak Akademi, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and the Gati Foundation, are associated with this event, which is the first of its kind in India.

Other books in the series are already in process and below is the list of titles by country with editors and proposed publication dates:

- *Beyond the Apsara: Celebrating Dance in Cambodia* (Stephanie Burridge and Fred Frumberg, November 2009)
- *Celebrating Dance in Malaysia* (Mohd Anis Md Nor, November 2010)
- *Celebrating Dance in India* (Urmimala Sarkar Munsri, November 2010)
- *Celebrating Dance in Australia* (Julie Dyson, June 2011)
- *Celebrating Dance in New Zealand* (Tanya Kopytko, June 2011)
- *Celebrating Dance in Taiwan* (Yunyu Wang, June 2012)
- *Celebrating Dance in The Pacific* (Adrienne Kaepler, June 2012)
- *Celebrating Dance in Vietnam* (Cheryl Stock, June 2013)

WDA journal

Our recent efforts to start a WDA journal are on hold in light of negotiating and securing the Routledge book series and the huge task of preparing for the Delhi conference. We would like to congratulate Cheryl Stock and her team for their tireless work editing, preparing and publishing the conference papers from the 2008 WDA Global Summit.

Education & Training

Co-chairs Dr Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners

Contributing to the international arts education agenda has dominated the work of the WDAAP Education and Training Network (ETN). Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners (Co-Chairs of the ETN) assisted planning of the World Alliance of Arts Educators (WAAE) summit, Newcastle, UK 30 October–2 November 2009, where key international dance educators met with drama, music, media and visual arts educators and drafted policies and action plans under the themes of Research, Advocacy and Networking.

The WAAE is a cross-arts organisation drawing together international energy with a view to inform institutions such as UNESCO and develop policy and support for arts educators. Details of WAAE and the Newcastle summit may be found at www.worldcreativitysummit.org on page 27.

Related to the summit, though specific to the Asia-Pacific region, Jeff Meiners has initiated an Asia-Pacific region web-based online forum (14–22 December) for arts education, hosted by the University of South Australia, to provide two weeks of consultation and discussion. This forum will focus on outcomes of the Summit and the UNESCO 2006 Road Map for Arts Education.

Ralph also represented WDA in an Arts Education summit in Bogota, Colombia, where again arts educators' needs, concerns and aspirations drove discussion.

All of the above forums are leading towards the Second UNESCO Global Arts Education Summit, to be held in Seoul, Korea, 25–28 May 2010. The WDA, and in particular the WDAAP, will play a key role in establishing the dance agenda.

Another major dance education event is the WDA and daCi (dance and the Child international) conference being hosted by Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan, 2012. WDAAP and daCi executives will meet in Taipei August 2010, setting up committees, agendas and time frames. This collaboration is exciting as this is the first time that daCi has collaborated with another organisation and the first time the conference has been situated in Asia.

Management & Promotion

Co-chairs Fred Frumberg and Marcus Hughes

Marcus Hughes, Executive Director of Ausdance Queensland, is delighted to be working with Fred as part of this important network and to share the load as Fred continues to secure the future of Amrita Performing Arts in Cambodia. We hope that this shared-approach will lead to some very positive outcomes.

We are continuing to work on the proposed fund raising workshop and Marcus brings a fresh and crucial perspective to this network as he states: 'During these times of financial crisis, the strength of our advocacy programs becomes critical and our collective and individual roles as dance advocates and cultural leaders are vital, as we speak to the decision makers who allocate our resources and determine the environments in which we work to support the future of dance.'

We have spoken at previous meetings about the development of a generic WDA promotional/information tool—a postcard or brochure that provides a brief overview of the alliance and a summary contact directory—this too will be further explored at the regional assembly.

At the Brisbane Summit in 2008, *Dance Plan 2012* was launched; a document developed as an advocacy tool by Ausdance and the Australia Council for the Arts, it has since had significant impact on dance in Australia. The action plan was stimulated by the release of the British Dance Manifesto, and similar documents have since been developed by other dance advocacy agencies, including DANZ in NZ. WDAAP Secretary, Julie Dyson, has presented the Australian Dance Plan at a symposium of advocacy agencies in Europe on her way to our meetings in Delhi. These present a vision for the future of dance within the cultural contexts of the art form, the practice and the profession; as well as the social impacts of dance in education and community contexts, with a strong emphasis on participation.

At the network meeting in Delhi, we will look at ways the plan can apply to our larger objectives and become a primary advocacy tool within the Asia-Pacific region.

Status & Welfare

Co-chairs Dr Tania Kopytko and Sohini Chakraborty

There has been little progress since the previous *Channels* Status and Welfare report which outlined the aims of the group and a three-stage strategy.

Good resources relating to the status and welfare of dance already exist on websites. For this information to be linked to the WDAAP website, we need to develop the website. The capacity and resourcing to do this development is a discussion for the next WDAAP meeting; however, the website has the potential to be a great communication gateway for the region.

The first three stages of the Status and Welfare strategy are: 1) Scope the information that already exists on existing international web sites; 2) Research international rates of pay, career pathways, cultural protocols and welfare issues; 3) Investigate how this information can be presented; for example a portal (links) site on the WDAAP web site.

For information to be widely useful, it would be good to include material from a variety of cultural, social and economic environments. Could WDAAP members forward to Tania any links to current on-line documents that would provide information on the following

- Legal—insurance, copyright, contracts, dispute resolution
- Economic—salary, international rates of pay, career pathways
- Health—safe dance practice, nutrition, physiotherapists
- Social status—equity, social position/cultural difference, cultural protocols, codes of practice, dance business ethics
- Community dance—status of dance in community work, status of dance in societies, examples of projects where dance is used for community development, community dance philosophy
- Research which supports dance development, strategies for development.



Teoh Wen Xin performing
in *Red*, at the Rooftop
MyDance, 15 October
2009. Choreographed by
Mew Chang Tsing with
Teoh Wen Xin.

Photo: Kelab Shashin
Fotografi Kuala Lumpur

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 WDA Asia Pacific countries (chapters) in each region are:

- **East Asia:** Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong
- **South-East Asia:** Malaysia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Brunei, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Singapore, Philippines, Vietnam
- **South Asia:** India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives
- **Pacific:** Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, Hawaii, Samoa, French Polynesia, Palau, New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands

Aotearoa, New Zealand chapter

by Tania Kopytko

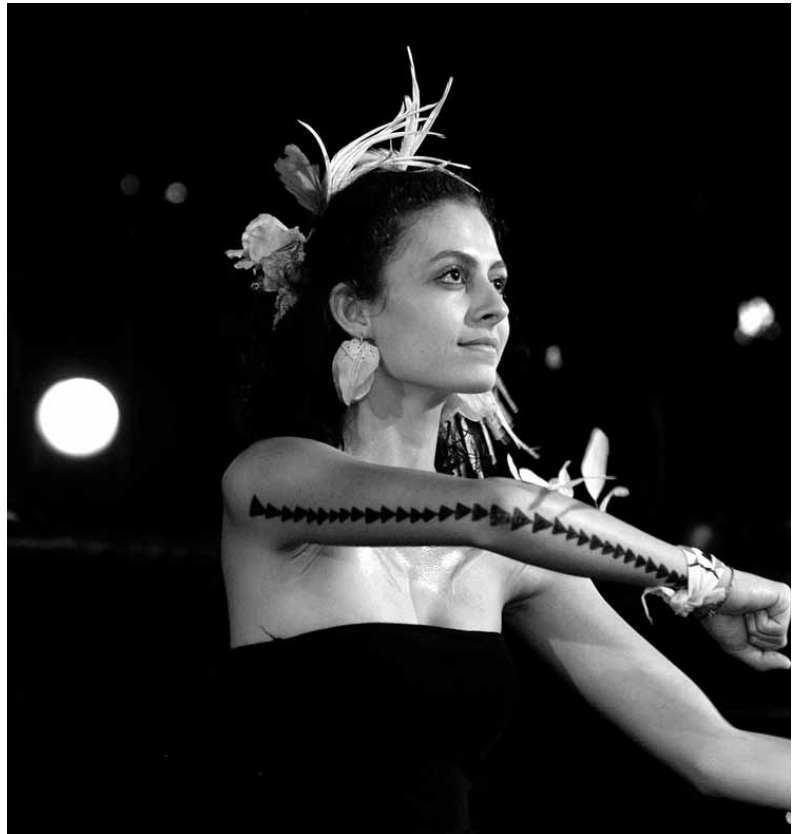
Warmest greetings from New Zealand as we head towards the end of another busy year in dance

September and October saw the three dance festivals show works that typified the diversity and innovation of dance in New Zealand. Auckland-based TEMPO's Freshcuts and Primecuts program presented collections of work by emerging and established choreographers. The Christchurch Body Festival had a strong presence of dance for disabled people with *Retrospective* by Jolt Dance Company and *The Poor Dears* by A Different Light Company. The mature dancers' project Rebound also provided the opportunity to reflect on who dances. Southern Lights was the premiere of a new Christchurch-based contemporary dance company featuring three new works by NZ choreographers, Shona McCullagh, Fleur de Their and American Zoe Scofield. Dance Your Socks Off in Wellington was coordinated for the last time by the Wellington City Council events team. The festival now re-brands itself to strategically link the growing professional and contemporary sector with the local community dance sector. Information on these and other NZ festivals and dance events can be found on the DANZ website.

Strategic development continues on the Dance Industry Strategy. DANZ is working on the *Blueprint for Action* which details the work, partners and priorities, under each of the five strategy headings — connections, spaces, viability, visibility and skill. *The Toolkit for Development and Advocacy* is being developed to encourage wider participation of dance sectors and regions, and in development at all levels. The underlying premise is that many voices are needed for the development of dance in order that dance interacts with wider society and thus builds capacity. Celia Jenkins from DANZ attended the Dance Plan Congress in Germany and we look forward to her sharing the collected knowledge of other dance strategies to support the developments here in New Zealand.

Other 2009 strategic sector developments are aitanga: descendance, the Maori Contemporary Dance Summit, 16–18 October and the Pacific Islands Dance Forum and Dance Fono.

aitanga: descendance attracted cutting edge contemporary Maori choreographers and artists. It was rich in discussion and sharing, covering choreographic process, career highlights and development, screenings of work and a focus on future needs. The idea of a Maori Contemporary Dance Festival was raised, to give focus, visibility and a platform for work. The momentum for this continues and we hope to have the first festival at Matariki (the Maori New Year), late June 2010 in Wellington.



The Pacific Islands Dance Fono in June 2009 built on the two previous DANZ-supported Pacific Dance Fonos that identified the need to have a representative steering group to spearhead sector development. The focus is on ensuring Pacific Island dance practitioners have access to training and resources and to unleash potential support from business, health and fitness sectors for grass roots dance development.

The third Pacific Dance Fono was held in Mangere, South Auckland. For the first time it had a two-week-long choreographic lab for four choreographers who worked with groups of dancers, supported by mentors. A presentation of their works in progress was held on 14 November. Guest mentor was Julia Gray (Australia/Papua New Guinea) supported by Moss Patterson, Ngati Tuwharetoa (Maori) and Sene Falakoa of Niuean descent. It culminated in a two-day skills development workshop program.

Dancer from IMoves — Weaving Our Map. Photo by Anne Brandt, courtesy of Julia Gray, Director, Sunameke Productions, Darwin, Australia.

Australia chapter

by Julie Dyson

As 2009 draws to a close, we reflect on a range of integrated programs and activities concerned with career development and dance education currently being undertaken by Ausdance and other organisations in Australia. It is exciting to see these activities grouped together under the banner of 'education', here presented in its broadest context.

Dance Plan 2012: International dance plans were compared and strategies for advocacy shared at Tanzkongress 2009 in Hamburg in November by several countries that have produced dance plans. Many focused particularly on dance education and advocacy, but training, choreographic development, marketing, performance and music for dance were also high on the agenda. Dance Plan countries participating included Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Denmark, The Netherlands, Finland, Belgium, Canada and the UK.

World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE): After many months of detailed planning, a conference of the WAAE was held in Newcastle UK early in November, which focused on preparing for the UNESCO meeting on arts education in Seoul in May next year. A great deal of preparatory work had occurred prior to this meeting. Ralph Buck represented WDA and worked closely with other dance educators in the World Dance Alliance network. Several Australian dance people were invited to participate in the WAAE meeting, an exciting opportunity to share issues and advocacy strategies with dance educators from across the world.

Performing Arts Training Package: Innovation & Business Skills Australia (IBSA) is now developing nationally recognised qualifications and skill sets in Performing Arts (Dance). The purpose of the project will be to develop units of competency, qualifications and skill sets in performance, teaching, community dance and management. This development represents tremendous progress for dance—the industry has worked hard over the last decade to develop codes of ethical and professional behaviour and to emphasise the importance of Safe Dance practice and teaching methodology, bringing a whole new set of resources and funding to the sector.

Ausdance skill set for Teaching Dance:

This new short course will provide dancers with the skills to successfully teach dance in schools (with supervision), in the community and for recreation and enjoyment. The course focuses on three areas of learning: Dance Teaching Methods; Safe Dance and Ethical and Legal issues, and will be linked to the Performing Arts Training Package. All State and Territory Ausdance offices are committed to delivering the Skill Set in the next 12 months.

Australian Guidelines for Teaching

Dance: The 1998 Guidelines have now been revised and will shortly be published online. Ausdance National is also preparing fact sheets to be published with the Guidelines. They will include topics such as dance floors, nutrition, occupational health and safety issues, assessment, copyright, etc.

National Advocates for Arts Education

(NAAE): With the arts now firmly embedded in the new National Curriculum, it will soon be possible for every child to have access to arts education in their schools, wherever they are in Australia. The NAAE has been working with the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority (ACARA) to find a way forward in the implementation phase, given that there are five artforms vying for space in school timetables. NAAE has developed a position and advocacy strategy and has participated in the reference group meetings, with dance well represented by three WDA members on the reference group, Jeff Meiners, Nanette Hassall and Julie Dyson.

Treading the Pathways: Treading the Pathways has recently been awarded Key Organisation status by the Australia Council and will become independent of Ausdance in 2010.

In the meantime, the National Indigenous Dance Coordinator, Marilyn Miller, continues to work with Torres Strait Island elder Denis Newie to complete the Torres Strait Islander Playdance kit for schools, in consultation with dance curriculum expert, Lesley Graham. The kit will be reviewed by a national reference group before being piloted next year.

In a new partnership with Reeldance, Treading artists are participating in a dance film project involving 18 Indigenous artists—6 dance makers, 6 editors and 6 composers. All the artists are working

around the same theme or concept, and once completed, the short dance films will be screened at the Reeldance International festival in Sydney in May 2010.

SCOPE for Artists: The new SCOPE (Securing Career Opportunities and Professional Employment) board is now well established, and with General Manager Jo Kulcher, is guiding the organisation through the transition process to an independent body (from the Australian Sports Commission). The board is particularly involved with trying to secure new funding for the program beyond June 2010, when the current Australia Council funding agreement expires.

Tertiary Dance Council of Australia (TDCA): A meeting of TDCA members based in Sydney was held in August to establish communication and to consider ways that this group of five institutions might work more closely together to raise the profile of dance in New South Wales. Hosted by Ausdance NSW Chair, Professor Elizabeth More and Director Cathy Murdoch, the meeting was attended by Ausdance National Director, Julie Dyson, and representatives of the National Aboriginal Islander Skills Development Association (NAISDA College), Macquarie University, the University of NSW, the Australian College of Physical Education and the Wesley Institute. Issues discussed included political advocacy for dance in NSW, shared resources, the need for more community dance practitioners, and closer collaboration with local artists. The group agreed to continue dialogue and to meet regularly.

Dance Compass 2009: Dance Compass was initiated as a pilot project in 2008, and such was its success that it was held again in Sydney in November. Dance Compass is a career transition program that aims to provide development, performance and promotional opportunities for up to 45 talented young choreographers and performers who are graduating from tertiary studies into the professional dance world.

Bangladesh chapter

by Lubna Marium



Dancers in Bangladesh are looking forward to being part of the global community of performers through the WDAAP. Though only an interim committee has been formed, we hope to establish a full-fledged Chapter after returning from the World Dance Alliance event in Delhi.

Little is known about dance in Bangladesh, where, in spite of being a Muslim majority country, dance and dancers are flourishing. Dance in rural Bangladesh is mostly performed as part of narrative theatre. Of course, the dancers are all men dressed up as women and are known as 'chokras' or 'young lads'. Dance is also part of many genres of folk music, where singers break into dance movements to emphasise the rhythm. An exciting form of dance is 'lathikhela' or 'stick dance' which is a popular Bangladesh martial art.

The classical dances follow the traditions of South Asian forms—Kathak, Manipuri, Bharatanatyam, Odissi and others. From the early 1970s, Bangladeshi dancers have trained with India's best dance maestros—Pt. Birju Maharaj, Guru Bipin Singh,

Guru Chandrashekhar and Padmashri Leela Samson, among others. All have since returned to Bangladesh and have worked hard to train students in the various forms of dance. Bangladesh now has a large number of dancers who perform these classical dances. There are still many obstacles, like getting accompanists to perform with them. This is a challenge that we are trying to resolve.

The most popular form of dance in Bangladesh is a fusion of styles developed by the Bengali Poet Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and Pt. Uday Shankar, the maestro of creative dance. Fusion naturally leads to a variety of styles used for choreographing Tagore's dance dramas or for depicting dances with themes as varying as rural life, patriotic sentiments and the cycle of seasons.

If by contemporary we mean a more global style of dance with 'freestyle' creative movements, this is still emerging in Bangladesh. We hope that being part of the WDAAP will give Bangladeshi dancers the opportunity to familiarise themselves with international contemporary dance styles.

Folk dancers performing Lathikhela or 'bamboo stick dance' in Netrokona, Bangladesh.

Photo: Lubna Marium

Cambodia chapter

by Fred Frumberg

October marked the Asian premiere of *Transmission of the Invisible* by Peter Chin of Toronto-based Tribal Crackling Wind. An intricately woven and profound work, this new contemporary dance explores the 'unseen' elements of the precarious process of revival and preservation. The work, which has been in development for a number of years, featured two Cambodian dancers alongside three Canadians. Having premiered in Toronto in February 2008, it was a great source of pride for all of us to present the Asian premiere in Phnom Penh on 24 October, prior to two performances at the Esplanade Studio Theater in Singapore on 31 October and 1 November.

October also saw the premiere of two new works by our own Cambodian choreographers, that were presented in Phnom Penh in collaboration with the French Cultural Center's Dansez/Roam Festival. Chey Chankethya presented a highly ambitious and moving story about the plight of Cambodian women entitled *Teav* based on the Cambodian legend Tum Teav (Cambodia's version of Romeo and Juliet) while Phon Sopheap created his own work that examines the connection between body and soul, rooted in his classical monkey training called *Body and Spirit*.

Our new work of Cambodian contemporary dance, *Khmeropédies* by Khmer/French choreographer Emmanuèle Phuon, was seen for the first time outside Cambodia at the WDA conference in New Delhi. Confirmed subsequent international performances of the same work in 2010 include the Hong Kong contemporary dance platform in March, the ConversAsians conference in Singapore in May, a two-venue tour to the United States in June and the Esplanade Studio Theater in Singapore in August.

In January 2010, Amrita Performing Arts will host the Flying Circus Project produced by Theaterworks of Singapore. The project will bring together 30 artists from around the world in workshop with 15 of Cambodia's strongest contemporary dancers to explore new modes of engagement and creativity. This project will mark an important transition in our efforts to enable Cambodian artists to realise their ability to create and master their own vocabulary of contemporary dance.

Khmeropédies
choreographed by
Emmanuèle Phuon,
March 2009. Performers:
Chumvan Sodhachiv, Sam Sathya, Phon Sopheap, Chey Chankethya.

Photo: Marina Cox





Cama performing *Tari Piring*, the Minangkabau plate dance.
Photo: Monique Macginnity

Fiji chapter

by Sachiko Miller

WDA Fiji has recently been working on a number of projects including 'dancing for climate change', international collaborations and hosting workshops to help career development within the local dance industry.

The Ministry of Environment recently launched a creative dance competition to help educate and spread knowledge of climate change and ozone depletion among Fiji's youth, which is of serious consequence to many of the people coming from the low-lying coral atoll islands in our country. Youth dance groups choreographed ten-minute pieces on the theme of climate change and ozone depletion and the competition was performed to a packed audience of extremely enthusiastic primary school students. WDA Fiji worked closely with the Ministry of Environment to help facilitate this premiere two-day event, which we hope will be continued in the future, as it was well attended and had a very successful outcome in terms of education and awareness.

WDA Fiji, in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia, was very grateful to host Indonesian choreographer Susasrita Lora Vianti of Padangpanjang, West Sumatra. Lora led a two-week workshop, teaching local Fijian dancers traditional dances from different parts of Indonesia such as Tari Indang, Tari Saman and the exciting and thrilling Tari Piring—the Minangkabau plate dance (the Indonesian Embassy had a budget for the plates as there were many smashed in practice, although

luckily none in the final performances). Lora became a close friend to all the dancers here in Fiji and when she departed, all of her students bid her a tearful farewell.

This month Fiji is hosting the Miss South Pacific Pageant, which will coincide with the Wasawasa Festival, Fiji's annual arts festival. Wasawasa, facilitated by the Fiji Arts Council will bring to the stage dances, music, poetry, traditional crafts, art, carving and story telling from around Fiji and the Pacific region. WDA Fiji will be facilitating the dance component of the festival with performances by local Fiji dance groups and company Sunameke. Julia Grey, Australian-based choreographer of Papua New Guinean descent and director of Sunameke, will be leading dance workshops and performing with members of her company.

Another project planned for the Wasawasa event is the Professional Pathways seminar. The Fiji Arts Council initiated the Professional Pathways program and WDA Fiji will be collaborating with them by helping facilitate the dance component of the program. WDA Fiji is inviting the leaders of the various dance groups to a workshop/seminar on how to make a career out of dance in Fiji. Basic skills such as finances, management and planning will be taught to help to establish dance as a career in Fiji.

This year has been an exciting time for dance in Fiji and we look forward to an even more eventful and expansive 2010.



**Blue Coat, choreographed
by Jia Donglin.**
Photo: Cody Choi

Hong Kong chapter

by Anna CY Chan

Black Box Showing — *Sweep* by Chen Kai

This project was initiated artist Chen Kai who had just returned from an Asian Cultural Council-sponsored trip to the United States to do research on modern dance. *Sweep* was presented on 20 June 2009 at Dance Studio 6, The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. During the 40-minute work, with live Guzheng music composed for the piece by Charlotte Chiu and played by Wan Xing, Chen Kai rolled, turned, slid, spun, twisted, whirled, propelled, thrust and crept, with his whole body never leaving the studio floor. It was an interesting experiment of floor movement, and the capacity audience enjoyed the performance of dance and live music.

Emerging Choreographers Series: Dance X Men

Building on the phenomenal success of last year's Emerging Choreographers Series and to promote artistic exchange in dance, the Hong Kong Dance Alliance brought to the dance community and dance enthusiasts the Dance X Men.

The project aimed to encourage collaboration between dance artists, dance groups and other art forms in pursuit of creative synergies. Proposals from dance artists and dance groups were subjected to a meticulous selection process and four collaborative combinations were eventually chosen to create and present a dance piece of less than 20 minutes each.

The Production of Dance X Men was presented at the Sheng Wan Civic Centre in September. It included four new works: *Fake*, a collaboration by choreographer Sarah Lo Sze-long and sound artist/musician Law Kin-pong; *Concealed Darkness*, choreographed by Rebecca Wong in collaboration with scenographer Albert Wong Yue-hang; *Blue Coat*, choreographed by Jia Donglin in collaboration with digital interactive projection artists Koala Yip and James Kong and; *Venusian Oh! Venusian*, jointly choreographed by three choreographers Max Lee, Chris Chan and Bruce Wong.

Three established choreographers were invited to be the mentors: Daniel Yeung, who was also the Artistic Director of the project, and Mui Cheuk Yin and Yuri Ng. They offered invaluable advice and guidance to this new generation of emerging choreographers over the course of their creative process. The Alliance provided important resources, including funding for choreography, performers and production expenses, performance venue, 500 hours of studio time and promotional support.

Japan chapter

by Yukihiro Yoshida

In October, I attended Japanese choreographer Jo Kanamori's recent work *NINA*, at Taiwan's National Theater. With sharp movements, high tension, and bodies and material spreading across the stage, the Taiwanese audience praised the performance with cheers. Kanamori and his company Noism, was a leading talent of Japanese contemporary dance.

The beginnings of ballet and contemporary dance in Japan

In 1871, the Iwakura Embassy (the leaders of modern Japan), travelled on a diplomatic journey around the world. They experienced opera and wanted to hold this type of theatre in Japan. With the opening of the Imperial Theatre in 1911, the history of Japanese ballet began.

In 1912, Giovanni Rosi arrived in Japan to teach ballet to the Japanese. He taught ballet in the Opera Division, and Baku Ishii and Michio Ito were two of his students. These are the origins of Japanese modern dance. After Rossi left Japan, the tradition of ballet and ballet education stopped for many years.

The first ballet dancers to dance at the Imperial Theatre were Elena Smirnova and Boris Romanov in 1916. Anna Pavlova, who shocked Japanese society, followed them. She even influenced Kabuki and Nihon Buyo artists. At that time, several ballerinas taught in Japan and two of the popular ones were Russians Eliana Pavlova and Oliga Sapphire. As a young ballerina in Russia, Oliga was praised by the great ballet critic Akim Volinsky.

The first Japanese ballerina was Akiko Tachibana. She studied under Eliana Pavlova and later toured as a member of the Eliana Pavlova Ballet Company. She made her first piece, *Impression of Seiban* (Takasago Tribe) that was performed in Taiwan in 1931. Tachibana's husband, Mikio Maki, translated the Agrippina Vaganova method into Japanese and also went to India to learn Tagore Dance by the great Indian poet, Rabindranath Tagore.

In the early Showa period, the second generation of Western dance and dance critics appeared. Michiyoshi Natsuya and Eiryu Ashiwara started to consider both ballet and Nihon Buyo as classical dance in Japan. Ashihara wrote the Nihon Buyo script *Yoshida Palace* for Sumi Hanayagi. This work was influenced by ballet and based on Ballet Rousset's *Thamar*. Ashihara studied abroad in France and introduced his knowledge of ballet to the Japanese. In Taiwan, before the war, people learnt about ballet from Ashiwara's book.

Ballet culture also existed in the colonies. There was a Ballet Russe company in Shanghai and Japanese ballet dancer Masahide Komaki worked



there. Margot Fonteyn's autobiography *A Life*, talks about dance in Shanghai at that time. In 1946, Komaki introduced *Swan Lake* to Japan and that shocked Japanese society.

Before and during the war, traditional Nihon Buyo was more popular than Western dance, ballet and modern dance. Additionally, modern dance was more widely known than ballet. However everything changed. Ballet became more popular than Nihon Buyo and modern dance in the post-war period.

Mitsuyoshi introduced Antony Tudor, Nora Kaye and Sonia Arova and Ashihawa introduced Serge Lifar to the country. One particular tendency of Japanese ballet during and after occupation by the United States was its Americanisation, which included jazz, neo classic and modern ballet. Additionally, influences from England, France, Russia and other European countries were seen. Many ballet companies from all over the world visited Japan. With the support of television, images of ballet were broadcast widely.

Some Japanese dance artists and choreographers started to make original ballets. They were mainly based on Japanese legend, folklore and history. A popular example of this work is *Asuka Story* by Akiko Tachibana. The star dancers were Yoko Morishita and Hideo Fukagawa. In the '90s Miyako Yoshida and Tetsuya Kumakawa flourished and Kumakawa started K-Ballet Company. They worked outside of Japan to gain experience and knowledge.

Ballet now has a tradition of over half century and contemporary dance is now well respected. In 2010, David Bintley will lead the New National Theatre Ballet Company as the Co-Artistic Director with Asami Maki.

A new talented generation is emerging and includes: choreographer Yuuki Mori; star ballerina Shoko Nakamura; and dancers Juri Homura (Homura Tomoi Ballet) and Ayako Ono (New National Theater Ballet). Homura, who is from Western Japan, is one of many excellent performers from this area. Yuuka Takenaka, Sejima Satsuki (Sadamatsu Hamada Ballet) and Takashi Aoki (Osaka Ballet Company) are also very popular.

In 2011, Western dance in Japan will celebrate its 100-year anniversary.

Left: Noism, *NINA* – materialize sacrifice choreographed by Jo Kanamori.

Photo: Kishin Shinoyama

Right: Ms Juri Homura performing Grand Pas De Deux from *Satanella*, at the Ballet Super Gala, Grand Cube Osaka, 2 August 2009.

Photo: Fumio Obana

Malaysia chapter

by Bilqis Hijjas

For MyDance Alliance, the highlight of the last six months has been our production *Rooftop MyDance*, part of a series of shows to launch the new Actors Studio Theatre at Lot 10 shopping centre in the heart of Kuala Lumpur. Presented on 15 October, the performance was free to the general public who were keen to take a look at the new venue and the opportunities it offers for dance. Led by Education & Training network leader Gan Chih Pei, MyDance Alliance presented six short contemporary dance works.

'The show was interesting because it heralded the return to the stage of many established dance artists in Kuala Lumpur who have not been performing for some time. Dancer-choreographer Ming Low returned from overseas to present a work in progress with Choo Tee Kuang. MyDance Alliance president Mew Chang Tsing took to the stage in an improvisational duet with her daughter Teoh Wen Xin. Respected choreographer Judimar Hernandez and I also performed a duet. The theatre was packed, and the audience was extremely responsive. Many of these old faces are now influential teachers, so our students were excited to see us putting our preaching into practice', producer Gan Chih Pei said.

MyDance Alliance has also been active recently in encouraging the emergence of younger choreographers. This June the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre held its first Short + Sweet Dance festival, presenting new 10-minute dance works in a competition format. MyDance Alliance provided subsidised rehearsal space at the MyDance Community Studio to several of the groups in the competition. MyDance Alliance president Mew Chang Tsing also served as a judge for some parts of the competition. It came as no surprise to any that committee member and high-flying young artist Suhaili Micheline Ahmad Kamil scooped the awards, walking away with Best Choreographer, Best Overall Production, and Best Dancer.

Choy Su-Ling, head of the Management & Promotion network at MyDance, has also been moving from strength to strength with her online dance magazine AsiaDanceChannel.com. MyDance has merged the subscribers to its fortnightly e-newsletter with AsiaDanceChannel, to allow the online magazine to reach a greater audience. Su-Ling is now taking AsiaDanceChannel to the next level, producing a printed copy of the magazine in collaboration with book publisher and distributor MPH. Sales of this magazine will contribute to the Emerging Choreographer Fund. MyDance has had the honour of being invited to be the trustee for this fund, and will be responsible for the fair and



transparent collection of funds from donors and sponsors, and for the disbursement of these funds to the recipients. Look out for an interview with president Mew Chang Tsing and the MyDance team in the inaugural print issue of the AsiaDanceChannel magazine, coming out in early 2010.

MyDance Alliance continues to support local dance productions through its Small Grants Fund. In July, MyDance provided a grant to local butoh company Nyoba Kan for its Butoh Festival 2009. In September, MyDance also gave venue support for an informal presentation and public discussion by visiting theatre academics Wendy Rogers from University of California Riverside and Matthew Cohen from Royal Holloway College.

In the current economic climate, gathering sponsorship from corporations is becoming increasingly challenging, while changes in the government are affecting the provision of government grants. MyDance recently co-hosted a community-building meeting of local movers and shakers in dance to brainstorm methods of moving ahead together. Many of the participants were keen to form a united front to lobby for increased government and corporate funding, and it is in this spirit of optimism and enthusiasm that MyDance Alliance looks forward to the new year.

Crossword, by choreographers/performers Choo Tee Kuang and Ming Low at Rooftop MyDance, 15 October 2009.

Photo: Kelab Shashin Fotografi Kuala Lumpur

Philippines chapter

by Basilio Esteban S.Villaruz

This is a significant year for Philippine cultural life. To begin with, it marks the 40th anniversary of the Cultural Centre of the Philippines inauguration. It was one of the major projects of then First Lady Imelda Romualdez Marcos. It was 1969 and the California Governor Ronald Reagan and wife Nancy were invited to attend.

The London Philharmonic Orchestra and Les Grands Ballets de France were among the artists who performed. An operatic drama *Golden Salakot: Isang Dularawan*, based on a contested legend, the coming of the ten datus (chiefs) of Borneo, was also premiered. The libretto was by writer Jose Lardizabal, the composer was Lucrecia Kasilag and the playwright was Rolando Tinio. Kasilag was the first artistic director of the centre and later president.

Several choreographers made dance pieces: Anita Kane, Rosalia Merino Santos and Inday Gaston Manosa.

Eliseo Pajaro composed the inaugural ballet, which was based on a prize-winning story by national poet Jose Garcia Villa. He commissioned Julie Borromoe and Felicitas Radaic to choreograph *Mirinisa* and Dance Theatre Philippines provided Eddie Elejar as artistic director. At the time, it was the most ambitious and spectacular ballet ever staged in Manila. In three acts, the second included an underwater scene. Dance Theatre performers were joined by guests from Cebu, with walk-on parts from members of the Bayanihan Philippine Dance Company and Folklorico Filipino, both folkloric ensembles. Among the stars were Tina Santos (later of Harkness and San Francisco Ballet), and alternates in the title role: the young Mary Anne Garcia and Nini Gener, with rival suitors in Odon Sabarre and Tony Fabella.

This November, Philippine Ballet Theatre revived the ballet with emendations from Ronilo Jaynario, artistic director. Jayanne Tensuan, a graduate of the dance program of the College of Music, University of the Philippines, performed the title role.

Mrs Marcos was honoured at the centre in September with a full program. Those who are still resentful of the Marcos government rallied outside the theatre.

Ballet Philippines made its debut at the centre in 1970 and presented its own program to mark the 40th anniversary. Works by past directors were featured as highlights and included a staging of Vicente Nebrada's *Our Waltzes*, with a new version of an ethnic-based rock opera ballet by first director Alice Reyes, *Tales of the Manuvu*, this time directed by Paul Morales.

In November, the centre also hosted the finals



Mariano Libao, 2007 winner of the ballet division of the National Music Competition for Young Artists.

Photo by Steve Villaruz

of the 6th National Ballet Competition. Prior to this, the pre-finals were held in the regions and this year there were 28 candidates. Among those who won acclaim were sister and brother Abigail and Jared Tan of Philippine Ballet Theatre, Mariano Libao who is now dancing with Hamburg Ballet, and Ronelson Yadao of Ballet Philippines, soon joining Cloud Gate in Taiwan. The National Music Competition for Young Artists (NAMCYA) were also part of the celebrations at the centre.

Other significant events for the year were the celebration of dance in Sayaw Pinoy for the National Arts Month, and the International Dance Exchange in Dumaguete City, both organised by The National Committee on Dance of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. Committee Chair (and secretary and treasurer for World Dance Alliance Philippines) Shirley Halili Cruz, also won awards for her school and company.

The success of dancer and choreographer Rhosam Prudenciado of Airdance was another cause for celebration. He won the grand prix at the last Yokhama contemporary dance competition and earlier won at the WiFi Body Festival of World Dance Alliance. At the last festival in July the winners in choreography were Gerardo Francisco, Zyda Baayo and Johnny Avez Amar. Young choreographer Yasnina Jumalon received the best performer award.

I would like to apologise for the past report that mentioned the events and talents at the Tari 2009 in Kuala Lumpur; due to the flu threat, it was cancelled. By the time this happened, the report could not be rescinded. Joseph Gonzales had worked hard to realise this biannual festival.



Singapore chapter

by WDA Singapore board members

This is the first collective report from the new WDA Singapore (WDAS) team, formed at the AGM in July 2009. A four-member executive committee has now expanded to a nine-member board. Here are a few of their plans and exciting initiatives.

Status & Welfare will review the constitution, with the aim of making it more suitable for the Singapore community/context and more effective for the organisation.

Management & Promotion is planning to expand WDAS in size, popularity and reputation, first by setting up an official website for WDAS and then modifying the membership systems. This will make WDAS more accessible to the public. The details are still being worked on and hopefully the modified membership system and the launch of our official website will happen in January 2010. (Chen Jiafeng, M&P Network)

Creation & Presentation is working towards celebrating International Dance Day 2010 as a weeklong event in conjunction with the Singapore Arts Festival. The celebration of Dance will be called Singapore Dance Week, giving it a sense of local identity. The event will open on 22 May 2010 with Dance Singapore Dance! The proposed venue for

this event is Plaza Singapura. This will be followed by a week of dance happenings in various schools, community centres and parks. Singapore Dance Week will end on 29 May 2010. WDAS is working in close collaboration with the Singapore National Arts Council. (Nirmala Seshadri, C&P Network)

Research & Documentation will begin a project to archive information and materials on dance artists and organisations in Singapore. In 2010 the committee will plan a system for gathering and cataloguing information as well as finding a suitable venue to house the collection. (Caren Carino, R&D Network)

In October, WDAS launched its first e-newsletter. A quarterly publication, the newsletter was put together to keep members informed about the dance community locally and internationally. We hope that the newsletter will both foster strong relationships among our members, as we read about each other, and build support for and participation in the various activities in our community. (James Tan, Treasurer & Gretel Lee, R&D sub-committee)

Professor Mary Jane Warner visits Singapore

In early August WDA Singapore hosted the visit of Professor Mary Jane Warner, Secretary of WDA Americas. During her stay, she observed the NAFA technique class and attended a rehearsal at Bhaskar's Arts Academy for their production, *Chakra*.

WDA Singapore board.

From back left: Chen Jiafeng, Ong Kaiming, Vanda See Toh, Nirmala Seshadri, James Tan. From front left: Teresa Pee, Caren Carino, Siri Ramaswami, Pam Leong. Photo: Naura Ismail

Workshops by Susan Gingrasso and Reiko Morita

Susan Gingrasso, CMA, Language of Dance® Specialist from the US visited Singapore in late August and conducted a Motif Notation workshop for WDA Singapore. Professor Reiko Morita of Kawamura Gakuen Woman's University and a member of WDA Japan, also visited Singapore and, at the invitation of WDA Singapore, gave a dance class on the Isadora Duncan style. From these two workshops we managed to raise funds to support a young member's attendance at the WDA conference in New Delhi, India. (Vanda See Toh, E&T Network, and Ong Kaiming, S&W Network)

Members' events calendar, June to November

In June, Dr Siri Rama (Vice President, WDA Singapore) choreographed and staged a Hindi version of the Ramayana as a dance drama. The production *Rama Katha: The Ramayana of Tulsidas* was staged as part of the 60th anniversary celebrations of the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society (SIFAS). Participating in the dance drama were eight of Dr Siri Rama's senior students from Kanaka Sabha, Mumbai (India), five of her Singaporean students, and some students of Guru Minal Amit Dhamelia of SIFAS. Also participating were artists of Sri Warisan and the Chinese Opera Institute under the guidance of Madam Som Said (former Treasurer, WDA Singapore) and Dr Chua Soo Pong (former President, WDA Singapore) respectively. In an extension of the collaboration, Dr Chua Soo Pong staged a Chinese opera version of the Ramayana and Dr Siri Rama's students from Mumbai and Singapore participated in the staging.

Maya Dance Theatre presented *The Legend; The Journey Begins*, from the 1–2 August 2009 at the University Cultural Centre Theatre; a dance theatre collaboration between Maya Dance Theatre and National Arts Culture and Heritage Academy (ASWARA, Malaysia), Balinese dance artist, I Nyoman Budi Artha (Indonesia), Bharatha Natyam and Odissi dance exponent, Ajith Baskaren Dass (Malaysia), and lighting designer Naomi Shoko Matsumoto (Japan).

Directed by Ms Kavitha Krishnan, creative director of Maya Dance Theatre, the work included Bharatha Natyam (Indian), Baris and Wayang Wong (Balinese) and contemporary forms. A well known art historian, dance artist and author of *Ramayana in the Arts of Asia*, Garrett Kam (Indonesia), provided the dialogues and monologues in partnership with Kavitha. It is the first time the Ramayana epic has been explored and presented through the amalgamation of Asian dance forms.

The Lost World Festival was held in conjunction with the Hunters and Collectors Exhibition at the Asian Civilisation Museum, from 29–30 August 2009. The exhibition showcased six different

collectors from the 19th and 20th century, throughout Southeast Asia. There were Silat performances by the Singapore Silat Federation and music and dance by authentic Dayak performers from East Kalimantan, Komunitas Seni Budaya Seraong.

Era Dance Theatre, a new company incorporated on 13 May 2009 led by Mr Osman Abdul Hamid and Ma Azrin Abdul Rahim, produced a 30-minute performance that showcased the Dayak use of weaponry, ritual dance and chanting. Komunitas Seni Budaya Seraong, East Kalimantan, put on an array of Dayak performances. The Dayak Kenyah and Dayak Benuag were specially highlighted and authentic costumes of the different tribes were used.

The month of August also saw the Singapore National Arts Council, together with Frontier Danceland, present the first edition of SPROUTS: New Works Platform for Dance Choreographers. The event, held from 29 August–3 October 2009, aimed to show the best emerging choreographic talent, and provided a platform to share the originality and creativity of dance concepts. SPROUTS included 15 works. Rizwan Kamis, a dancer with Era Dance Theatre, was among the nine finalists. The most promising was *Duality* by Gianti Giadi and most popular was *The Combination* by Kelvin Koh, both from Maya Dance Theatre.

Outcaste Eternal, a solo performance by dancer, choreographer, writer and Young Artist Award recipient Nirmala Seshadri, was presented in conjunction with the Singapore Writers' Festival on 28 October 2009 at the Chamber, Arts House.

Based on the Malayalam novel *Brushu* by Matampu Kunhukuttan, translated into English by Dr Vasanthi Sankaranarayanan, *Outcaste Eternal* highlighted a significant yet controversial event in Kerala's history. Through dance, theatre, music and video, it depicted the true-life story of the sexual revenge a lone woman, Paptikutty, wreaked on a community that was rigid, oppressive and anti-women.

The Third Space: Contemporary Explorations in Dance by the Department of Dance, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, was presented on 30 and 31 October at the da:ns Festival organised by the Esplanade. The performance featured works, *Toccata* by Lim Fei Shen, Singapore Cultural Medallion winner; *This & That* by Nirmala Seshadri, Singapore Young Artist Award recipient; *Batulang* by Yvonne Ng, Artistic Director of Princess Productions, Canada; and *Red Bambo* by Laura Tham, NAFA 2009 Diploma in Dance graduate. The production is the third in an ongoing series.

Taiwan chapter

by Su-Ling Chou

From every corner of the island, Taiwan's young dancers and choreographers are emerging. They are building their own space and developing their own dance territory with individual styles and characteristics. They are exploring ways to work with new technology both collaboratively and independently. It is wonderful to see these developments in dance. Central and local governments continue to support dance performance and dance researchers continue to thrive.

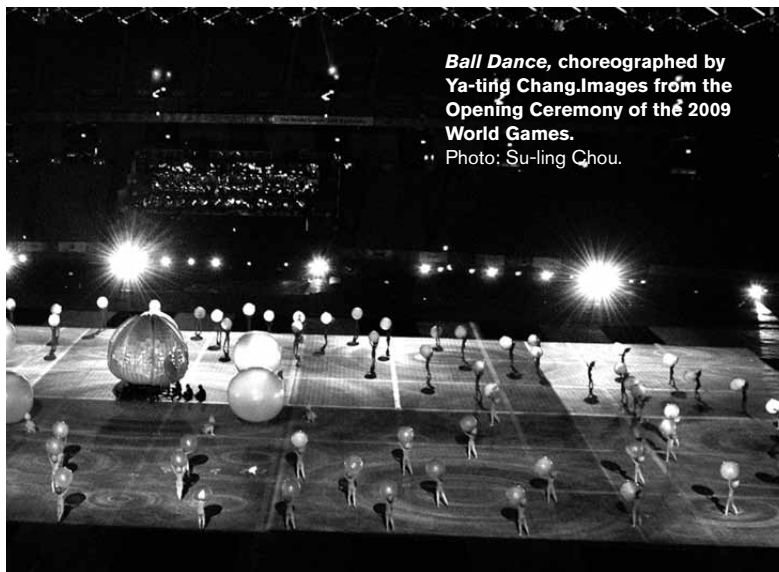
This year the International Young Choreographer Project, hosted by WDA Taiwan, expanded beyond the Asia-Pacific region and included an American choreographer. Eight young choreographers were invited to Kaohsiung for three weeks from 6–24 July to create work. The selected choreographers were: Hui-Chen Tsai, Fang-Yun Lo, and I-Chin Lin (Taiwan); Satoko Yahagi (Japan); Cherry Leung (Hong Kong); Cadi McCarthy (Australia); Debanjali Biswas (India) and Christopher Walker (USA).

The project concluded with two performances on the 25 & 26 July at Tsoying Dance Theater. The program highlighted the choreographers' diverse styles and rich cultural backgrounds.

Taiwan's highlights for 2009

Two international important events were held in Kaohsiung and Taipei. The 2009 World Games happened in Kaohsiung from 16–26 July, while the 21st Summer Deaflympics was held in Taipei from 5–15 September. Many WDA Taiwan members were involved in these events with preparation that took more than a year. Taipei University of the Arts (TNUA) was responsible for the production design of the 2009 World Games: this included visual design and choreography for the opening and closing ceremonies. Former WDA Taiwan Head, Heng Ping, was commissioned as the Chief Producer and WDAAP Vice President Yunyu Wang, the Chief Choreographer. They teamed up with Suling Chou as the Executive Director of rehearsal and production for dance. Three thousand dancers in Southern Taiwan participated in the opening performance. The success of this event has brought high praise, not just to the city of Kaohsiung, but also to WDAAP. These international presentations have shown how WDA Taiwan members are defining their own style with identifiable characteristics.

WDA Taiwan membership is expanding. More graduate students have joined, taking the opportunity to present their papers domestically and internationally. We hope that dance in Taiwan will continue growing.



Ball Dance, choreographed by Ya-ting Chang. Images from the Opening Ceremony of the 2009 World Games.

Photo: Su-ling Chou.

WDA Taiwan members activities July–December 2009

Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company

- The series of dance vs literature, *I died for beauty—Emily Dickinson*, 27–29 November at Experimental Theater of Tainan Municipal Culture Center, 4–6 December at Experimental Theater of National Chiang Kai-Shek Cultural Center.
- *Step In Happening 2009*, Site-Specific Creative Dance Showcase, 26 December at Doupee Art Café in Kaohsiung City.

Sun-Shier Dance Theater

- *Reflections*, 5–7 June at Experimental Theater of National Chiang Kai-Shek Cultural Center
- *Sun-Shier Salon Showcase 2009*, 12–20 September at Sun-Shier Salon Theater.
- *Selected Program*, 25–26 September at Taipei Arts Village.
- *2009 Tsai Jui-Yueh Dance Festival*, 6–8 November at Tsai Jui-Yueh Dance Research Center.

Dance Forum Taipei

- *The Adventure of Spiders—SPIDERINA*, at Taipei Children's Art Festival, 31 July at Da-An Park in Taipei.
- *The Adventure of Spiders—SPIDERINA*, 10–13 September at The Jungil Arts Hall in Taoyuan County, and at Chung-Hsing Hall in Taichung.
- *Flashing Lucidity*, 14 October–1 December at National Sun Yat-sen University in Kaohsiung, at The Jungil Arts Hall in Taoyuan County, at Novel Hall for Performing Arts in Taipei, and at Providence University in Taichung County.
- *Eastern Current*, 28 October–7 November in Belgium, The Netherlands, Italy.

Kaohsiung City Ballet

- *Dreams of Dancing Children*, 31 October–1 November at Kaohsiung Municipal Cultural Center.

Jeff Hsieh and I-Chin Lin

- Invited to choreograph for *Young Stars New Vision: Dance II Anarchy's Dream*, 6–8 November at National Theater Hall in Taipei.

Tso's Dance Association

- 2009 International Young Choreographer Project, 5–26 July at Tsoying Dance Theater in Kaohsiung.

Taipei Folk Dance Theater

- *Dancing Portrait of Taiwan*, 6–8 November at The Metropolitan Hall, 14 November at Chiayi Performing Arts Centre.

Tsoying Dance Group,

Tsoying High School

- 2009 Tsoying Dance Troupe Performance, 22–27 December at Tsoying Dance Theater in Kaohsiung, 30 December at Yunlin Uni. of Technology.

NDHU Indigenous Dance Troupe

- 2009 Cultural Exchange by Dance: *When Ali Mountains Meet Changbai Mountains*, 5–15 September at Jilin University in Changchun City, Northeastern University in Shenyang City, and northeast Forestry University in Harbin City of PRC.

Chin-Hsuan Liu

- 4–8 November at TNUA Dance Theater, 14 November at Changhua County Yuanlin Performance Hall.

Sponsorships

- The Development of Young Artists Grant by CLFCA.
- Individual Project Grant by CLFCA.

Workshops

- 2009 International Young Choreographer Project, 5–26 July, at Tsoying High School by Tso's Dance Association and Chin Lin Foundation for Culture and Arts.

Indonesia

by Maria Darmaningsih

The 10th Indonesian Dance Festival 2010: Powering the Future (14–17 June 2010)

The Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF) is an established institution that has consistently nurtured our dynamic dance creators and performers. Founded in 1992, it was initiated by a group of prominent dancers and choreographers who were deeply concerned by the state and development of the dance arts in Indonesia. They were Dr Sal Murgiyanto, Nungki Kusumastuti M.Sos, Melina Surja Dewi M.Si, Maria Darmaningsih, M.Ed, Dedy Lutan S.Sn and Tom Ibnur S.Sn. The establishment of IDF was also supported by leading figures, including Professor Sardono W. Kusumo, Julianti Parani Ph.D, Farida Oetoyo, and others.

Two years after its establishment, the IDF had become a major dance festival, participated by national and international choreographers. Among the well known names were Miroto, Mugiono Kasido, Eko Supriyanto, Boi G. Sakti, Jecko Siompo Ku Ming-Shen (Taiwan), Min Tanaka (Japan), Takiko Iwabuchi (Japan), Gerard Mosterd (the Netherlands), Cezerine Barry (Australia), Janis Brenner (United States, Arco Renz (Belgium), Jerome Bel (French) and Pichet Klunchun (Thailand, read about Pichet in the Thailand Chapter report on the next page).

As an institution, the IDF will reach its 18th year in the upcoming festival. From a human perspective, the year marks the transition from childhood to adulthood. It will be the perfect time for the IDF to reflect, review and plan. There is a retrospective spirit in the upcoming festival; paying homage to the past and at the same time, defining the necessary steps to the future: Powering the Future.

In that context, the upcoming festival will showcase the works of prominent Indonesia choreographers, whose aesthetic explorations and contributions have served as guiding beacons throughout the history of the country's dance development. The works of the late Gusmiati Suid, Sardono W Kusumo, I Wayan Dibia and Wiwik Sipala and Dedy Luthan are festival highlights. In collaboration with Goethe Haus, the IDF will host Meg Stuart from Germany. Other choreographers who will be part of the 10th IDF are Contact Gonzo from Japan, Kim Jae Duck from Korea and Vincent Montsoe from South Africa. Presentations of these works are expected to inspire as well as cultivate the public's appreciation. On the closing night of the 10th IDF, we are going to present young choreographers Asry Widowati and Hanny Harlina as the rising stars/ powering the future.

In 2009, as a pre-event (arising from anxieties regarding the quality of Indonesian dance) the Artistic Board of the Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF)



Samparan *Moving Space* by choreographer Retno Sulistyorini (Eno). Performance at the 2008 Indonesian Dance Festival with dancers: Retno Sulistyorini (Eno), Aloysia Neneng Yunianti and Ina Vivana Putri
Photo: Edi Santoso

presented a dance workshop with the Indonesian Arts Festival, at the Jakarta Institute of the Arts in October. In the past the IDF has included a choreography workshop.

Among other dance specific topics, this workshop placed emphasis on creativity, power and spatial awareness. After discussions with Dr Sal Murgiyanto about the dance workshop, the main question that arose was, 'Why become a dancer?' It is a question that has to be asked by anyone who identifies as a dancer. Therefore, the question became the title of this dance workshop.

We invited Ming-Shen Ku from TNUA, Taiwan and Sukarji Sriman from the University of Malaya to conduct the workshop. After the two-week workshop, they performed their pieces. The dancers who participated were from Bandung, Jakarta, Solo, Surabaya, Pontianak (Kalimantan), Pangkalpinang (Bangka Belitung) and Lombok.

Since starting the first IDF, we have always had a challenge raising funds, and there is minimal support from our government. We are grateful to our sponsors, ACC, ANA, Hivos, the Japan Foundation and the Government of Jakarta who has been our good sponsor. Nevertheless, we still have to work hard to face this challenge, as we are aware that IDF is an important event for Indonesian dancers.

Thailand chapter

by Pornrat Damrhung

What's new in Thai dance? We now have an established dancer and a new company reinventing traditional dances and commenting on contemporary politics. Unfortunately, most performances happen at international festivals, so it is difficult for Thai audiences to see this new work. Although these performances give new life to traditional Thai dance forms, they exist in a cultural ghetto here in Thailand.

These Thai dancers want to show what they have learned from their teachers, training, traditions and culture, while also creating new work for new audiences.

It is particularly difficult for these artists in Thailand, where state institutions claim rich dance traditions for national purposes, and promote preservation more than innovation. Traditional dancers, who are looking for something new, face a choice: Do they turn their deep knowledge of traditions into powerful cultural resources for themselves and their audiences, or do they stay caught in debilitating cultural traps? Many are choosing the first option.

In Thailand, dancers learn the same traditional form and then wonder what else they can do. How can we encourage dancers to work through tradition and infuse it with new energy? Every year many dancers graduate in Thailand, but only a few continue to dance after graduation or develop into dance artists

Audiences, too, only know Thai dance as the strictly crafted classical Thai performances or contemporary mixes of dance for tourists. Still, we have some interesting experimental dance pieces created at universities teaching dance and theatre, where dancers and actors share or borrow tricks and techniques. Many dancers return to old cultural resources to make new performance. Others, like Pichet Klunchun, try to use classical Thai dance as their contemporary brand. His company has staged two innovative pieces this year — but in hard-to-reach places for us Thais.

One piece, *Ganesh*, is a traditional story performed in a contemporary way, both in its form and politics, while the other is a reinvention of traditional dance. The new traditional piece has Pichet dancing all the characters in the story of Lord Ganesh. Innovative and full of energy, this piece uses classical Thai background music, singing out the storyline of how Lord Ganesh lost his tusk while fighting the demon Porasuram. At the same time, the subtext tells the story of Thailand's current political conflicts.

He first depicts the demon living as a Yogi hermit, to give him more power, while the audience only sees his long legs dancing. This powerful demon is so



***Ganesh*, by
choreographer/performer
Pichet Klunchun. Photo:
Mr Chakorn Amornset.**



Khon, by choreographer Pichet Klunchun. Performers: Pichet Klunchun Dance Company. Photo: Ms Weerana Talodsuk

arrogant that he flies up to heaven to the gods and to Lord Shiva's consort, Lady Uma, also played by Pichet. En route, he confronts Lord Ganesh, Shiva's son, who guards the heavens, and the two — both played by Pichet — fight fiercely. To show their combat through a single dancer, Pichet has one hand wrapped with red cloth and another wrapped with his yellow t-shirt. At the same time Pichet stamps his feet as learned in his masked dance training, while he uses his fists to hit a piece of zinc fence painted in the colours of the Thai flag. Both make a loud, angry sound with a feeling of violence. This leads Pichet, dancing as Lady Uma, to furiously curse Porasuram and make him fall from heaven to earth. To save the demon, however, Lord Shiva asks Lord Narai, again played by Pichet, for help. Lord

Narai disguises himself as a young Brahman who curls himself up into a small ball, retreats to a corner, dancing his hands for the famous *Chui Chai Brahm* piece. A subtext of this piece is the contemporary political situation in Thailand, where red and yellow shirts fight each other, and this is done in a very clever and satirical way. Is there dancing? Yes!

Pichet's work shows the value of traditional culture for reframing contemporary problems, which also contributes to the audience perceiving the current conflict as deeply rooted in traditional culture.

The other performances I saw were in Singapore as part of the *da:ns Festival 2009* in late October. There the Pichet Klunchun Dance Company (consisting of ten dancers, five musicians, and three singers) gave audiences a fresh look at the basic elements of Thai masked dance (Khon) in this outdoor space beside the Esplanade. Both performances began with the rarely seen *Chab Ling Hua Kham*, which show the Ramayana as a fight between good and evil, and ended with a blessing dance to send the audience home in good spirits.

Pichet choreographed all parts of both performances for his company of masked dancers into a new and exciting staging of fighting scenes with many fewer monkey soldiers and giants than normal, boosting their energy and interactions into something more powerful for the stage. He did this by limiting the performers' use of stylised formal gestures and poses while emphasising the raw physicality of combat between pairs of warriors.

While foreign audiences may see the piece as a very standard classical piece of Thai masked dance, because it was performed by only a small group of dancers, it was quite different. Instead of dancing in the frame of Thai classical arts where dancers seek to imitate models of beautiful form, Pichet's troupe seeks to show more of the reality of battle, focusing performers' movements on expressive rather than formal aspects. Even though it used an old story, it created a short and precise performance, but again, in a new way. While the troupe used classical techniques and postures, it structured them into a choreographic form that was new, dynamic, and fresh — and unseen in Thailand.

We now have a new generation of dancers who are learning to use the traditional arts in new ways and seeking new venues to stage their work. Pichet continues to develop his dance style and, with his innovative company, a space for new dance in traditional Thailand is starting to open up. His performances are a good sign for the future of Thai dance.

South Korea

by Eun Jung Choi

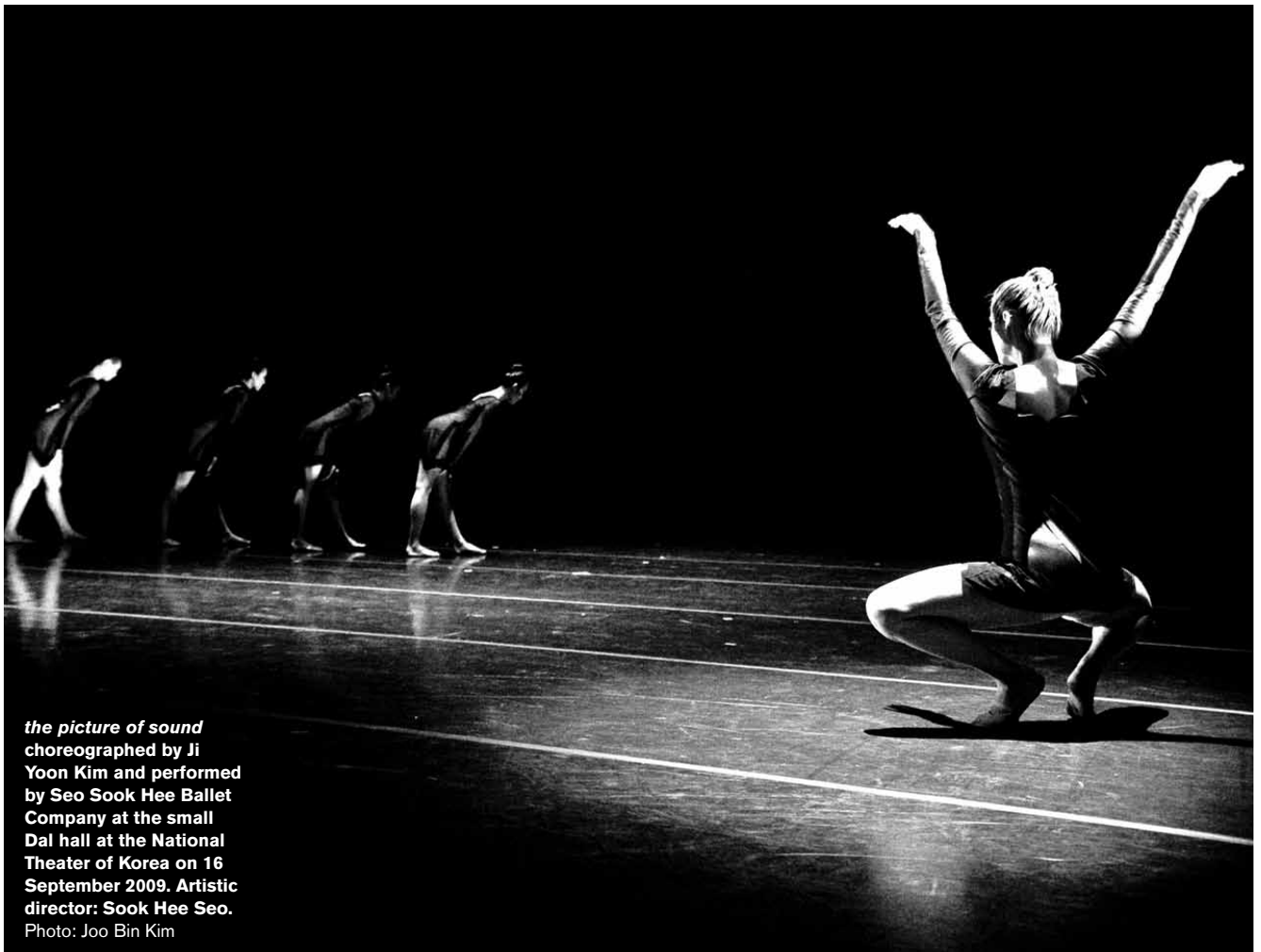
South Korea has been colored yellow and red. The autumn in Korea is so beautiful with all the colored trees and the highest sky of the year.

The series Color of Dance, held every autumn, is WDA Korea's annual performance. It has been in existence since 2003, with Red, Blue, White, Black, Purple and Gold as theme colors. This year, Color of Dance—Gold was honoured to be selected as one of the national dance teams at The World Festival of National Theaters. This year, three contemporary dance pieces were included: *the picture of sound* by Sook Hee Seo (Professor of the Dongduk Women's University), *I wish...* by Moon Sook Hwang (Professor of the Yong-in University) and *the petal...is falling...* by Jung Soo Kim (Professor

of Dankuk University). This performance took place in the Dal hall at the National Theater of Korea on 16 September. The theme of Gold contributed to performances with moments of fantasy for the audience.

In addition, the chapter office has moved to Jangchung-dong in Seoul, with the National Theater of Korea located nearby. New board members have recently joined the WDA Korea chapter, they are: Yooyoung Lee as the Deputy Secretary-General and 18 other dance professionals.

We are hoping to see some WDA members in Seoul for the UNESCO Global Arts Education Summit in May 2010. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone!



the picture of sound
choreographed by Ji
Yoon Kim and performed
by Seo Sook Hee Ballet
Company at the small
Dal hall at the National
Theater of Korea on 16
September 2009. Artistic
director: Sook Hee Seo.
Photo: Joo Bin Kim



Sharira, by choreographer Chandralekha. Performers: Shaji John and Tishani Doshi.
Photo: Wolfi Kirchner

Report on the 2009 WDA Conference ‘Re-researching Dance’ — Delhi, India

by Dawn Jackson, independent artist, Perth, Western Australia

I was delighted when asked to reflect on the World Dance Alliance, India International Conference on Dance Research in New Delhi, as I have been most inspired by the WDA organisation. I first attended the WDA Global Assembly in Brisbane in 2008 to represent Ausdance Western Australia, where I am the current Projects Manager, and was keen to return in 2009 to India, as my career pathway as a dance artist has seen me drawn to the Odissi classical form from Orissa. I was also excited to again make contact with esteemed artist and my teacher, Dr Ileana Citaristi, who I studied with in 2005.

Nestled in the peaceful, lush surrounds of the India International Centre, set back from the bustle of traffic and road works outside, the conference began with an inspirational and distinctly Indian welcome address by Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, President WDA India, that began with the beating drum of Shiva, Lord of the Dance and ended with a beautiful metaphor of the Lotus flower that emerges from the muddiest depths, but finds its way to the surface to bloom. Dance clearly holds a special place in the heart and history of Indian culture.

After the rush and warmth of greeting old friends and the excitement of meeting new friends over cups of tea, the presentations began and dialogue commenced. The conference promised to open a platform for deeper thinking on dance research in the context of society, politics, pedagogy, kinetics, vocabulary, documentation, gender, history and other topics of contemporary relevance, and the

conference delivered a diverse and interesting array of topics and presenters. The only difficulty is deciding which room to enter!

Individual artists/students presented existing works at the Choreolab performance on the first evening and other evening performances were scheduled from Taiwan, Singapore and Cambodia. Like the panel presentations there were diverse offerings and I reflect here on the words of Carl Wolz, founder of the WDA:

‘The exchanges that occur when two cultures meet can be discussed in different ways: Cross-cultural when some distinct tradition crosses over more or less unchanged from one culture to another. Inter-cultural when corresponding aspects of two cultures synthesise in a new form that is different from either original and Intra-cultural when changes and developments happen within a given and recognised cultural group.’

All of these exchanges were represented in the conference both in performance and panel presentations, which ultimately made the conference relevant and accessible to all.

The second day began and after much laughter over the adventures that took place between the hotel and conference centre, the discussions continued through the lunch hour and grew more intense. Even as a large bird of prey swooped down on participants, attempting to grab some lunch in its talons, the focussed discussions happening in the courtyard remained uninterrupted.

Comments: What did this conference mean to me?

Getting to know WDA and its people better!

Anomita Groswimi (India)

Eating, bonding, some more eating, some more bonding, smoking and more eating!

Ranjita Karlekar (India)

Thinking dance, talking dance and watching dance—a dancer’s carnival!

Ruchika Shauma (India)

It was an eye opener and very motivating.

Sunan Sarawgi (India)

Chaos!

Urmimala Sarkar (India)

Seeing, thinking, learning, sharing—an absolutely enriching experience!

Shrinkhla Sahai (India)

...knowledge, sharing, collaborating.

Sohini Chakraborty (India)

This conference was an incredible intercultural dance event with many important, intelligent, future-oriented and inspiring thoughts and plans. Let the work continue!

Ewa Ferens (Austria/India)

...dense, challenging, rich, invigorating—dialogue and sharing honours the dancing spirit in all of us.

Sue Cheesman (NZ)

It made me feel I am part of a global family who shared the same passion for dance.

Manuela Benini (Brazil/UK/India)

As the smoky sun sets on the bustle of Delhi, a reflective pause exists over the din of traffic and the black air. Our global WDA family leaps exuberantly forward into the next sunrise.

Stephanie Burridge (Singapore/Australia)

Renewal of contacts creates renewal of one’s own energies! New contacts are even more revitalising.

Steve Villaruz (Philippines)



Above left: Launch of the the first book of the Routledge 'Celebrating Dance in Asia and the Pacific' series *Beyond the Apsara: Celebrating Dance in Cambodia* was launched by Dr Karan Singh on 28 November 2009, at the International Conference 'Researching Dance' and the Annual General Meeting of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific.

Photo: Benil Biswas

Above right: Some of the Bangladesh participants at the 2009 WDA Event in Delhi, India.

Photo: Julie Dyson.

What became apparent toward the end of the panel presentations on the second day is the complexity of Indian dance tradition, its history, diversity and unique position culturally, and the somewhat agonising pressures of change, both from within India and from forces outside, in response to globalisation.

Perhaps, because the term 'contemporary' is still so commonly used to describe dance in the West, this by default positions other dance forms as 'traditional' and fixed in time, when Indian dance has an immense, rich history and a contemporary position and practice that parallels the emergence of Western Euro-American history.

Some conference papers focused on the past century, where Indian dance forms were suppressed and affected by the British Raj and the Christian gaze, then re-emerged through the modernist period with cross-cultural collaborations by esteemed artists such as Anna Pavlova and Uday Shankar, to the post independence (1947) renaissance that led to 'contemporary' renderings of the classical dances of India.

This is a form of dance that is physically rigorous and practised to gain a higher state of mind through a system of knowledge handed down from Guru — which translates as one who takes you from dark to light — so a fear of appropriation, misunderstanding or misuse is perhaps valid. Within the WDA, a scholarly approach is facilitated and encouraged. It is a place where respect and value to all forms and approaches is given due.

One of the highlights for many was the inclusion of Bangladesh artists and students at their first WDA conference, and the promise of support to develop dance and networks in a global context. Another highlight was the release of the book *Beyond the Apsara*, that documents and celebrates the resurgence of dance in Cambodia after the fall of the Khmer Rouge. I was particularly moved by the developments in Cambodia when I first attended the WDA Global Summit in Brisbane. Seeing the dancers perform in the program in India was special. When art is born out of a yearning to be free, from political or social turmoil or oppression, when it serves to heal and give expression from the deepest parts of souls, it resonates. Although

the work presented by the dancers at WDA was a light-hearted play on traditional verses contemporary, the dedication, skill, devotion and hunger of these dancers to create and express something new oozes out through personality and performance.

The conference kept us busy day and night— listening, thinking, discussing, viewing, re-evaluating, and the momentum built until we found ourselves at the end of the 3rd day at the India Habitat Centre, Stein Auditorium to see *Sharira* by Chandralekha, which was a truly transformative experience. Some audience members left — a good sign that art is present in the room, some shifted uncomfortably in their seats for the duration of the performance, others sat transfixed by the dancers' incredibly skilled physical movement that transported us beyond the physical plane to spiritual realms. *Sharira* is the final work of Chandralekha in which the female body and energy are explored; the sexuality, sensuality and spirituality in the body is understood without any divisions, and through this work 'what dance is' is re-evaluated and re-defined. I search for words to describe the experience but it actually left me speechless. At the end, I did not consciously rise to my feet, I was drawn to my feet to applaud. It was a powerful experience.

While visiting the Sanskriti arts and cultural centre on the final day, we had the opportunity in this exquisite environment, surrounded by textiles, gardens and terracotta designs, to reflect on what was a most memorable conference. What makes it so special is the sense of being part of a family, and the distances each person travels to share their ideas and passions, and coming together to confirm the importance of dance as a meaningful vehicle for change and expression.

In 1987, while in my final year at the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts (WAAPA), I attended the International Festival of Dance Academies in Hong Kong. It was here that I was exposed to different dance forms, with students from India, China, USA and Germany to name a few. At the time, Carl Wolz was the Head of Dance in Hong Kong, which I only discovered after a conversation with Basilio Estban S. Villuruz at this year's conference. It seems as though I have been part of the WDA for some time but just didn't know it!

Report on the World Alliance of Arts Education Summit

31 October – 2 November 2009, Newcastle, UK

The WAAE Summit: 'Towards a Paradigm of Creative Education for the 21st Century' involved approximately 120 educators, artists, academics, members of civil society from 60 nationalities. The WAAE members: International Drama/Theatre and Education Association (IDEA), International Society for Music Education (ISME), International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) and World Dance Alliance (WDA) drew upon respective memberships and networks in inviting up to 20 persons from each organisation.

The three days were characterised by an emphasis upon dialogue before, during and after Public Dialogues (keynotes) and discipline, interdisciplinary and regional working groups.

Outcomes of the summit included:

- Development of proposals for action within the working groups of Research, Networking and Advocacy.
- Extension of the advisory role of WAAE in planning the 2010 UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education.
- Clarification of expectations and assumptions regarding relationships between WAAE and UNESCO, KACES (Korean Arts and Culture Education Service) in relation to the future world summit to be held in Korea in May 2010.
- Development of a mandate to establish a formal relationship with UNESCO.

The Summit was infused with great generosity and camaraderie across disciplines and regions. The greatest outcomes included the deepening of relationships and knowledge within and across disciplines, cultures and geographical regions.

The international 'Dance Team' co-ordinated under the auspices of WDA included: Ralph Buck, Julie Dyson, Jeff Meiners, Naomi Faik-Simet, Nicholas Rowe, Anna C.Y. Chan, Yang Sook Cho, Lucia Matos, Sherry Shapiro, Ann Kipling Brown, Eeva Antilla, Maria Speth, Ken Bartlett, Linda Rolfe, Tim Rubidge and Tamara Ashley.

As a group we met throughout the Summit and very effectively represented dance educators.

Within the WAAE Summit, key persons from daCi and WDA met and discussed the daCi/WDA conference for Taipei, 2012. This was a fruitful meeting in sharing visions for the conference. Ann Kipling Brown (daCi) agreed to initiate dialogue regarding conference themes, marketing of the conference, and a timeframe for key dates.

The WDA played a significant role in every aspect of this summit, a result being a vastly greater understanding of and respect for the WDA.

The WAAE meeting with UNESCO

3 November 2009, Paris

Following the Summit, Dan Baron Cohen (IDEA), Rita Irwin (InSEA) and Ralph Buck (WDA) (Hakan Lundstrom: ISME was ill and did not attend) met with Georges Poussin (Director, Division of Arts and Cultural Enterprise UNESCO) and Doyun Lee (Assistant programme specialist and project coordinator UNESCO) in Paris. The agenda for this meeting focused upon the following:

- Formalising the relationship between UNESCO and WAAE. It was established that a statement of agreement/understanding would be possible between WAAE and UNESCO, once WAAE had a ratified constitution. This agreement would automatically establish the relationship with each of WAAE's member organisations.
- Reviewing the success of the Newcastle Summit and in particular highlighting the effectiveness of the dialogic and interactive sessions that may also be effective in Seoul at the 2010 World Arts Education Summit.
- Establishing clarity on how diverse sectors of the arts education and UNESCO communities will be given access to participate in this Summit. After much discussion it remained that UNESCO and the Korean Government had to refine their process first. It was stressed that time was short, and that our fear was that leading arts educators will not include Seoul in their planning for 2010 if clarity and transparency were not forthcoming.
- Discussing the importance of building relationships between UNESCO Commissioners and arts educators. The Seoul Conference presents an ideal time for establishing clarity around access, protocols and process. We suggested that a specific meeting between UNESCO Commissioners and WAAE would be beneficial.
- Discussing the long-term goal of establishing an International Arts Education Week. It was agreed that the Seoul Conference was an ideal forum for the progressing of this idea.

This WAAE/UNESCO meeting was successful in further building the profile of WAAE and also each of the member organisations. There is no doubt that InSEA, IDEA, ISME, WDA are well regarded and seen as the central discipline organisations. This building of trust and knowledge is invaluable and we discussed the benefit of an annual meeting of a similar nature.

The key outcome for WDA was the high profile that WDA has achieved. Several networks and individuals expressed interest in joining and/or facilitating WDA action. The WDA is respected as a global dance education network. With ongoing dialogue with daCi and other dance networks, dance educators' interests and concerns will continue to be networked, researched and advocated.

WAAE reports by Ralph Buck

WDA Asia Pacific Annual General Meeting

New Delhi, India – 30 November 2009

This Annual General Meeting of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific (WDAAP) was marked by the exciting news of a new chapter in Bangladesh and the possibility of establishing a chapter in Thailand. Both countries have provided reports for this edition of *Channels*, and delegates were delighted to join their colleagues from across the region at their first AGM.

The AGM also marked the launch of two new WDAAP publications, *Beyond the Aspara* edited by Dr Stephanie Burrige and Fred Frumberg and published by Routledge, and the refereed conference proceedings from the 2008 WDA Global Summit in Brisbane, *Dance Dialogues: Conversations Across Cultures, Artforms and Practices* (www.ausdance.org.au/resources/publications/dance-dialogues.html), edited by Dr Cheryl Stock and Denise Richardson. Cheryl and Stephanie spoke about the process of producing these landmark publications, and thanked those whose contributions were in English as a second or third language.

The President, Dr Anis Mohd Nor, noted that the publications program of the World Dance Alliance was impressive, and thanked both editors for their expertise and commitment to these projects. He also noted the growing profile and importance of *Asia-Pacific Channels*, produced by Ausdance National, and its importance as both a newsletter and an advocacy document for funding applications in the region.

Dr Anis then introduced each member of the Executive Board, and explained the new position of Secretary General, held by Cheryl Stock. He particularly expressed a debt of gratitude to WDA India, and to Dr Urmimala Sarkar as president, for the presentation of the current conference, the excellent speakers and facilities, and for managing the diverse demands of such an event in India.

Reports from each region were tabled and are published in this edition of *Channels*. Of particular interest were the reports from the Pacific region (presented by New Zealand chapter head Tania Kopytko on behalf of Ralph Buck), and the East Asia report, read by Dr Anis from Anna Chan. Anna has worked hard with her Chinese colleagues to develop programs in China through WDA, as government restrictions prevent the formation of a chapter in that country. The announcement of two scholarships with the Guangdong Dance Company drew much applause!

Secretary General Cheryl Stock then described the structure of the World Dance Alliance and its three regions — Asia Pacific, the Americas and Europe. She outlined some of the major points from the Presidents' meeting held in the US in May, and noted the development of the new WDA global website which is now online, thanks to Jeff Hsieh and Yunyu Wang, both based in Taiwan.

Cheryl noted that partnerships were becoming increasingly important to the WDA, and that the organisation was actively looking for partners, e.g. with the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE). Active networks were also very important, but she suggested that there needed to be more participation from ordinary members to ensure the networks' viability. She also noted that the Presidents had decided that membership of any region means a person is automatically a member in any other

region. Jetty Roels (who is based in Belgium) noted that she will be attending a meeting of WDA Europe on 16 December and would be reporting on the WDAAP meeting. Cheryl noted real commitment from the regional presidents, and thanked them for ensuring the work of WDA continued.

The WDAAP Secretary then reported on her role in ensuring accurate and timely records of the organisation were kept and Ausdance National's production of *Asia-Pacific Channels*. She noted that elections for some WDAAP Executive Board members are due next year, as the President, Vice-President and the Vice-President for South-East Asia will have completed maximum terms. There was discussion about succession planning and the need also for some networks to appoint co-chairs as a matter of urgency. At the network meetings the following day, Marcus Hughes (Australia) was appointed as co-chair of the Management & Promotion Network with Fred Frumberg; Nirmala Seshedri (Singapore) was appointed co-chair of the Creation & Presentation network with Nanette Hassall, and Sohini Chakraborty was appointed co-chair of the Status & Welfare network with Tania Kopytko.

Future events: there were presentations from those planning the next events, including Jin-Wen Yu, President of the WDA Americas, and Anna Chan, VP for East Asia. The next Global Assembly will be hosted by the Creation & Presentation network of WDA Americas in New York from 12–17 July 2010, and the next WDAAP AGM and conference will be hosted in Hong Kong from 25–28 November 2010. There was also a presentation by Jeff Hsieh on behalf of WDA Taiwan, about the joint WDA–daCi event to be held in Taiwan in 2012, and an overview of the new WDA website now being developed by Jeff with support from Yunyu Wang and Cheryl Stock. The WDAAP event for 2011 is yet to be confirmed, but WDA Cambodia has indicated that it is keen to host the AGM that year in conjunction with workshops associated with the Management & Promotion network.

Julie Dyson presented Ralph Buck's report from the World Alliance for Arts Education, in his capacity as the WDA's chief negotiator. The WAAE had met in Newcastle (UK) in early November to plan for the UNESCO-sponsored conference of arts educators to be held in Seoul from 23–25 May next year. This report (and further information about that conference) appears on page 29.

Network meetings were held the following day in the grounds of the beautiful Sanskriti museums and gardens in New Delhi, where many achievements were noted and exciting plans for the future discussed. Notes from these meetings will be available shortly.

Julie Dyson WDAAP Secretary

2010 WDA events

The Second UNESCO Global Arts Education Summit

The summit will be held in Seoul, Korea, from 25–28 May 2010. The WDA and in particular the WDA Asia Pacific will play a key role in establishing the dance agenda. See www.artsedu2010.kr

2010 WDA Global Dance Event

New York City, 12–17 July. For more information and call for papers visit the WDA Americas website www.yorku.ca/wda/

2010 WDAAP Event: The Hong Kong Dance Symposium

Part of the 2010 Hong Kong Dance Festival. This event will run from 25–28 November 2010 at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. It will consist of four parts: Dance Conference, World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific Meeting, Dance Workshops, and Dance Performance. The Symposium will focus on sharing and exchange of ideas and concerns; facilitated exchange of skills and techniques and promote exchange in creative ideas, aesthetic and artistic views. For more information on the Symposium and open call for papers and performance. www.hkdanceall.org

International Young Choreographer Project

Participant reports

Each year a total of eight choreographers are chosen by the 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 organised 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 Endowment for the Arts, and the Bureau of Cultural Affairs Kaohsiung City Government in Taiwan as well as Chin-Lin Foundation for Culture and Arts.

The selected choreographers, three from Taiwan and three from WDA Asia Pacific, one from WDA Americas (WDAA), and one from WDA Europe, had four 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, America and Europe) country delegates, based not only on their choreographic work, but also 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 America 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.

Captions for all AYCP images

Zen-hau Liu is the photographer responsible for all of the stunning images documenting the Asia Young Choreographers Project.





Hui-Chen, Tsai (Taiwan)

It has been a great experience to work with dancers from the south of Taiwan. I was very happy to have my six brilliant dancers who were hard-working and gave a lot what they had to me and to my piece *Trapped Heart*, during the working process. Even though they are all very young and still studying either in senior high school or university, I found them very professional and full of great potential.

I would like to thank the WDA Asia Pacific and Tso's Dance Association who made this event happen. Everyone in the office was very helpful and supportive. I hope this project will continue to give students from the south of Taiwan the opportunity to work with different choreographers from both Taiwan and overseas and to share different cultures and experiences.



Cadi McCarthy (Australia)

The project was a fantastic opportunity to exchange creative vision and artistic knowledge, and build friendships and long-lasting connections with other artists. Although we spoke different languages, we all shared a passion for dance.

The project not only provided an opportunity to develop and explore ideas for a new work, but introduced new perspectives in dance through the many and varied conversations, and the viewing of seven unique and outstanding works by international choreographers.

The project commenced with an audition process where more than 60 talented young dancers pushed themselves for three hours to gain acceptance into the project. I was introduced to the dedication, generosity and desire of these young artists. After selecting six dancers (which was a difficult task because all of the students were outstanding), the three-week choreographic process commenced.

The work *Behind the Veneer* looked at the fragility of interactions, the exploration of collisions in relationships, and the instability of continual shifting roles. The delivery of movement material and the precise and exact manner the dancers replicated movement language demonstrated their talents, precision and technical training. But how would I get the appropriate emotional intention across without language? This proved to be my ultimate challenge. However, with six dancers who demonstrated such dedication, enthusiasm, open mindedness, and mental maturity, the work quickly evolved and communication moved beyond words. I felt extremely lucky and privileged to be part of this process. The young dancers worked so hard and invested so much of themselves into the work it was a privilege to watch their development and understanding of the work.

The city of Kaohsiung also treated me well, the friendly nature of the people, the food, the culture, and tearing along the busy streets, weaving in and out of traffic on the back of a scooter will stay with me forever. I hope I have a chance to return to Taiwan very soon.

I would like to extend my thanks to everyone involved in the project. It was an honour to work with you and I am a better person for being part of this project.



Cherry Leung Tsz Yan (Hong Kong)

It has been an honour to be part of the 2009 International Young Choreographer Project and to work with choreographers from different parts of the world. Also, the Kaoshiung World Games happening at the same time made my trip very special.

I was inspired by the energy and commitment that the young dancers gave to the performance, they were truly amazing. The staff at Tsoying Senior High School made everything smooth and provided a great environment to work in. With an intensive production schedule, everyone really put all their effort into the piece. Although I am not satisfied with my piece, I still learned a lot in the process.

Apart from this, the most unforgettable thing for me was the relationship I developed with the other choreographers. From our discussions about dance, I learned new ways of problem solving and how to explore more possibilities in choreography.

Watching their works on the performance nights was like a small world tour of performance. It felt like I was visiting India, Japan, Taiwan, Australia and Jamaica. I understood more about their cultures from how they presented their pieces. That is dance and even though we have different backgrounds, lifestyles and languages we are still communicating with each other through our works. I also realised that dance was the simplest and most effective way for me to understand and express myself.

Finally, I would like to thank the World Dance Alliance, the Bureau of Cultural Affairs Kaoshiung City Government and all the organisers of this wonderful program. I really enjoyed and learned so much from it.



Chris Walker (USA)

The 2009 IYCP was by far one of my most fulfilling choreographic experiences. I was forced to re-investigate who I am as a choreographer through constant engagement with artists from all over the world, and dancers who did not speak the same language. The dancers were always eager to try new things and this encouraged and pushed me into previously unexplored areas of fusion. The support from the organisers, fellow choreographers and local friends with whom I have formed relationships continue to open my eyes to Eastern culture.

Artistically, my work engaged the fusion of traditional Jamaican movement and contemporary expressions. At the beginning of the process I was focused on sharing movement and the technical principles and physical philosophies that underscored the dance forms from which the vocabulary derived. This was particularly challenging. In the absence of the verbal language, I began to focus on the play-like/game qualities of the movement. It was in this experimentation that we were able to find common ground.

I was both challenged and excited by the dancers' approach to the movement. There was always a general sense of problem solving and eagerness throughout the rehearsal process and that made for an encouraging work/play space. I felt like we were truly able to engage work-play aesthetic sensibilities because of the energy and light hearted sense of joy that the dancers brought to the process. This made for inventive movement discoveries through a collaborative process where the dancers were able to take foreign physical expressions and distil them in their own body knowledge. In the end I feel like we were able to present a work that was a true demonstration of a process grounded in collaboration, disciplined work and colourful play.

It was always a learning experience when all the choreographers got together, whether for a meal or for a walk to and from the studios. Our conversations usually surrounded our challenges, but I feel like I gained a lot of best practice information from those chats. This was certainly a highlight of the project and I wish we had more formal meeting times where all the choreographers could share.

Communication with the organisers has been easy and clear. Upon arrival and departure I was made to feel like I was in good hands, which was comforting. The project assistants went above and beyond the call of duty and I continue to be grateful.



Debanjali Biswas (India)

When I thought about choreographing a piece with young dancers in Taiwan, I had in mind collaboration and curiosity. I wanted to combine the energy of the young Taiwanese dancers with the movement tradition I come from and was eager to explore their fresh approaches towards making movement. The dancers' exuberance, their imagination and conscious effort of meaning-making while making *Wintering*, was seen in the performances.

The content and intent of *Wintering* had been developed in the first two weeks of rehearsal in Taiwan. We played with music and silence, explored Manipuri, ballet and churned new movements to be fair to the theme. We reached a balance where we would share ideas freely. I like to think I steered *Wintering* in the direction my dancers took me. Christine, Winnie, Da-Dong, Julie, Mi-fi, and Mary echoed my thoughts throughout the dance, for which I express my heartiest gratitude.

I will always look back at Taiwan with poignant memories. ICYP has given me a platform to share my work and dance traditions with like-minded dancers and choreographers. If not for ICYP, I would not have come to appreciate the subtle and elegant mix of conventions and modernity that manifests in the cultural ethos of Taiwan. The city and the people were extremely kind and hospitable.

ICYP provides the resident choreographers with the best facilities. They gave me a space where I could dabble with innovation and examine the set patterns of movements. Eight very different performances came together on the same stage. The dances were metaphoric, mimetic, and some abstract; they experimented with stagecraft, lights and technology. The performances highlighted each of the choreographers' abilities, which I think is the aspiration of ICYP.

Ms Chou, Hsing Ying, Lucas and many others spent sleepless nights to give shape to the choreographers' vision. I owe them the deepest gratitude and respect.



Satoko Yahagi (Japan)

In this work, dancers were required not only to dance, but also act, play and change costumes.

To create this work, we discussed and drew pictures in English, Chinese and Japanese. We communicated with each other by repeating this process over and over.

Before the final staging, we went shopping together, shared dinner, exchanged ideas, taught each other our language and worked very hard. Other choreographers and staff who saw our processes were very encouraging.

The title of work was *A Wandering Egg—beyond daily life*. The original concept was 'casting the mystery of daily life to the darkness'. Human beings have imagination and can interpret; we can change and develop our ideas as we talk and work through them. The experience of making the work reflected what I wanted to express in the concept of the work. In only three weeks we had to develop new relationships, work in a new environment with new languages and establish new ways to work. We had to be very aware of each other and I think the whole team made a miracle together.

Dance sharpens the senses and is a language beyond language. That was what I felt about the whole process and I discovered again this important aspect of dance.

I felt Taiwan's hot ground and the vast energy of the people. I worked with powerful and eager dancers, choreographers and staff, and I had an excellent time. This experience has developed my work and become an important part my life. If I have the chance, I hope to work in Taiwan again.



I-Chin, Lin (Taiwan)

The three-week project went by so fast and ended so quickly! I would like to give special thanks to everyone and particularly my dancers for their hard work. It has never been easy to complete a program in three weeks, especially one that included movement training, choreographing and costume/props making. At the same time, some of the dancers were also part of the opening ceremony of the 2009 World Games in Kaohsiung. All their hard work was beyond description.

Even though I grew up in Taiwan, this was the first time I have worked in Southern Taiwan, which is always showering under the sunshine.

My first challenge was working with young dancers. I spent most of the rehearsal time teaching the dancers how to move and how to build their emotion. We also used Laban notation to speed up movement development. As we only had three hours for rehearsing each day, we kept challenging each other to work efficiently. During the process, when my dancers felt tired, I asked myself how to let them sink in my piece without over training and how to use Laban notation to help clarify the movement and the floor pattern. As a result, I think my dancers and I confronted a special summer—filled with challenge.

The eight choreographers in IYCP had their own styles and characteristics. Being part of this project really opened my eyes and mind. I appreciate this excellent opportunity.



Fang-Yun, Lo (Taiwan)

It has been a pleasure to join IYCP this year. I'd like to thank the organisers and enthusiastic workers at Zouying Senior High School. Because of their devotion, this project was very successful. Attending this project gave me an opportunity to work with young Taiwanese dancers and meet choreographers from different countries. Everyone was so friendly.

We had the opportunity to watch and learn from each other, which is the most precious working experience. It has also been Taiwan's pleasure to organise this international project. As a Taiwanese, I am proud of myself to be selected. I wish we could have more of this type of international project in Taiwan. I would like to thank Ms Chou, Hsin-Ying, Lucas, all of the hard-working staff, and my lovely dancers.

About the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific

Our Mission

WDA is to serve 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



World Dance Alliance key contacts

WDA Presidents

WDA Asia Pacific President

Professor Mohd Anis Md Nor
Cultural Centre,
University of Malaysia,
50603, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
anisnor@um.edu.my

WDA Americas President

Professor Jin-Wen Yu
Lathrop Hall
1050 University Ave.
Madison, WI 53706
jwyu@education.wisc.edu

WDA Europe President

Professor Joseph Fontano, Accademia
Nazionale di Danza,
Largo Arrigo VII n°5
00153 – Roma, Italy
joseph.fontano@fastwebnet.it

Secretary General

Ass. Prof. Cheryl Stock
c.stock@qut.edu.au

Asia-Pacific Executive

President

Professor Mohd Anis Md Nor
(see above for address)

Vice President

Yunyu Wang
yywang@coloradocollege.edu

Secretary

Julie Dyson

Treasurer

Mew Chang Tsing

Vice President South East Asia

Basilio Esteban Villaruz
basilio_esteban.villaruz@up.edu.ph

Vice President Pacific

Ralph Buck
r.buck@auckland.ac.nz

Vice President East Asia

Anna Chan
annachan@hkapa.edu

Vice President South Asia

Urmimala Sarkar Munsri
urmimala.sarkar@gmail.com

Asia-Pacific Network Chairs

Education & Training

Ralph Buck (New Zealand)
r.buck@auckland.ac.nz
Jeff Meiners (Australia)
jeff.meiners@unisa.edu.au

Research & Documentation

Urmimala Sarkar Munsri (India)
urmimala.sarkar@gmail.com
Stephanie Burrige (Singapore/
Australia) s.burridge@pacific.net.sg

Creation & Presentation

Nanette Hassall (Australia)
n.hassall@ecu.edu.au
Nirmala Seshedri (Singapore)
nirmalaseshadri@yahoo.com

Management & Promotion

Fred Frumberg (Cambodia)
ffrumberg@aol.com
Marcus Hughes (Australia)
director.qld@ausdance.org.au

Welfare & Status

Tania Kopytko (New Zealand)
execdirector@danz.org.nz
Sohini Chakraborty (India)
sohinidance@gmail.com

Asia-Pacific Chapters

Aotearoa New Zealand

Tania Kopytko
Dance Aotearoa New Zealand (DANZ)
PO Box 9885
Wellington New Zealand
T +64 4 382 8463
F +64 4 382 8461
execdirector@danz.org.nz
www.danz.org.nz

Australia

Julie Dyson
Ausdance National
PO Box 45
Braddon ACT 2612 Australia
T +61 2 6248 8992
F +61 2 6247 4701
juliedyson@ausdance.org.au
www.ausdance.org.au

Bangladesh

Lubna Marium
General Secretary, Shadhona
A Center for Advancement of
Southasian Dance & Music
House 69, Road 5, DOHS (old),
Dhaka 1213
kanchendzonga@gmail.com
T +88029889426
M +8801713040814

Cambodia

Fred Frumberg and Suon Bun Rith
Amrita Performing Arts
#128 G9, Sothea Blvd. Sangkat
Tonlé Bassa, Khan Chamcarmorn
PO Box 1140
Phnom Penh 12000, Cambodia
T +855 2322 0424
F +855 2322 0425
rithsb@amritaperformingarts.org
www.amritaperformingarts.org

Fiji

Sachiko Miller
PO Box 228
Suva, FIJI
T +679 3362 408
F +679 3303 160
sachikomiller@gmail.com

Hong Kong

Anna CY Chan
Performing Arts Education Centre
Hong Kong Academy for Performing
Arts
1 Gloucester Road
Wanchai, Hong Kong
T +852 2584 8757
F +852 2584 8948
annachan@hkapa.edu
www.hkapa.edu

India

Dr Kapila Vatsyayan
asiaproject@gmail.com
Indira Gandhi National
Centre for the Arts
New Delhi 110 001 India
F +91 1 1338 1139
asiaproject@gmail.com

Karnataka chapter

Bhanumati, Chairperson
wdakarnatakachapter@gmail.com

Maharashtra chapter

Mrs Darshana Jhaveri, Chairperson
darshanajhaveri@yahoo.co.in

West Bengal chapter

Urmimala Sarkar, Chairperson
urmimala.sarkar@gmail.com

Indonesia representative

Maria Darmaningsih
mariadarma@yahoo.com

West Sumatra

Indra Utama
Padang Panjang Cultural Institute
c/o Rumah Buku Boestanoel Arifin Adam
Jl. Bahder Djohan 12, Padangpanjang
West Sumatra, Indonesia
T +62 752 82133
M +62 08126619193
padangpanjang_cultural_institute@
yahoo.com

Japan

Miki Wakamatsu
Japan Women's College of Physical
Education Graduate School
10-7-3 Nishi Boria
Sakuraku Urawa City 338 0832 Japan
T +81 4 8853 9410
F +81 4 8853 9421
mikiwakama@aol.com

Korea

Hae-Shik Kim
C/- Professor Yang Sook Cho
World Dance Alliance Korea
1st floor, Dongmyung building,
414-12, Sindang-2dong, Jung-gu
Seoul, South Korea 100-452
T +82 2 2252 8086
danceproject@nate.com

Malaysia

Mew Chang Tsing
Mydance Alliance or Rivergrass
12A Jalan 20/16A, 46300
Petaling Jaya Selangor, Malaysia
T/F +60 3 7877 8796
rvgmew@pd.jaring.my
www.mydancealliance.org

Philippines

Basilio Esteban Villaruz
College of Music,
University of the Philippines
Diliman, Quezon City 1101 Philippines
T +63 2 428 7772
basilio_esteban.villaruz@up.edu.ph

Singapore

Teresa Pee
pee.teresa@gmail.com
Pamela Leong
wdas.secretary@gmail.com

Taiwan

Su-ling Chou
Dance Division, Tsoying High School
#55 Hai-Kung Road
Tsoying, Kaohsiung, Taiwan 81326
T/F +886 7 585 3083
dance@mail.tyhs.edu.tw

Thailand representative

Pornrat Damrhung
Graduate School
Chulalongkorn University
Viclyabhothna Bdg,
Phya Thai Road, Bangkok 102220
dpornrat@hotmail.com

Vietnam representatives

Hanoi
Chu Thuy Quynh
136/106 Nghio Ton,
Cau Giay, Hanoi
F +84 4 756 0326

Ho Chi Minh City

Sophie Yuen Mason
Saigon South International School
Saigon South Parkway
Tan Phong Ward, District y7
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
smason@ssischool.org