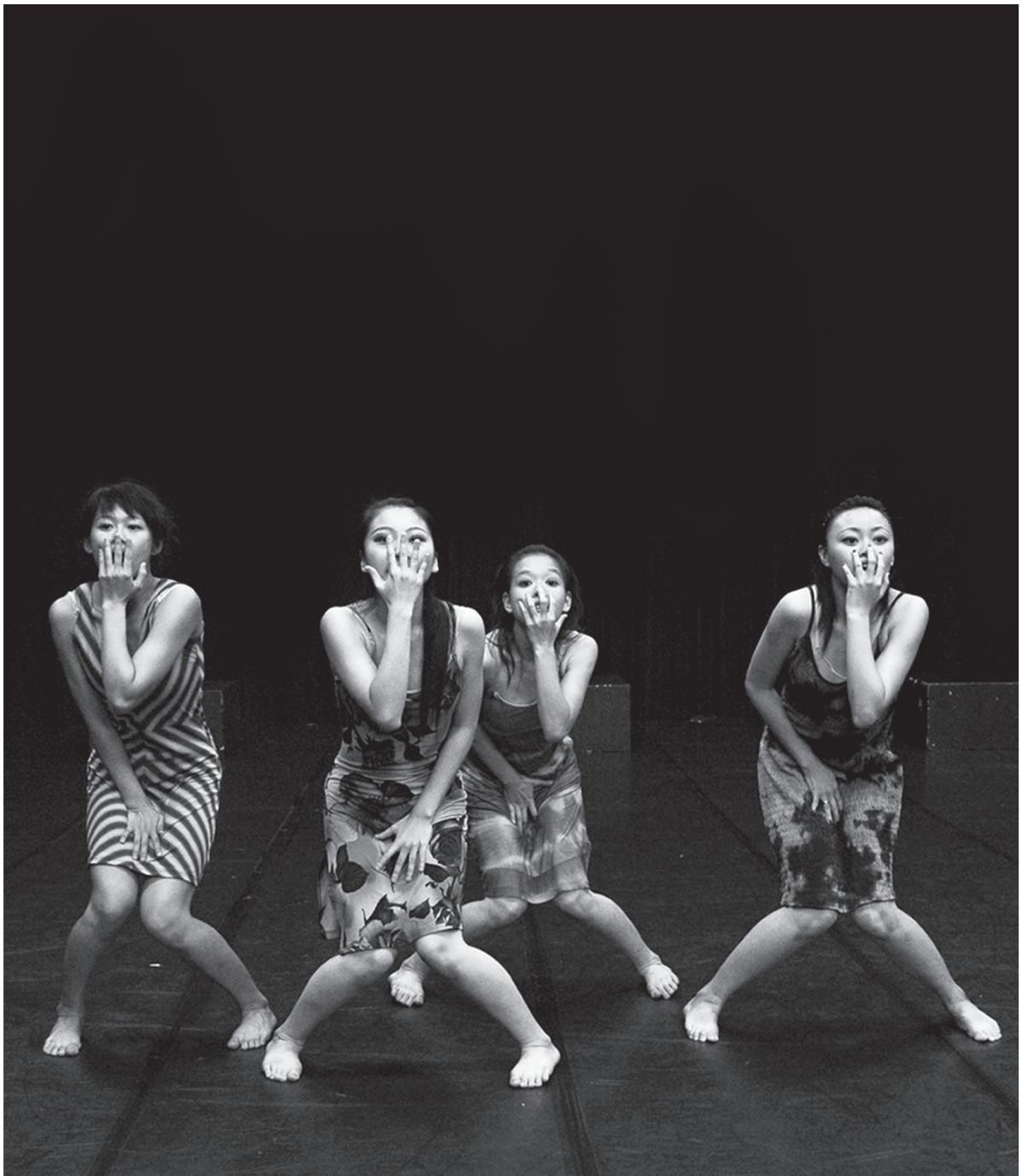


# Asia-Pacific CHANNELS

No. 2 | December 2007



Newsletter of the World Dance Alliance – Asia Pacific

# Contents



**World Dance Alliance  
Asia-Pacific**

Asia-Pacific

## **CHANNELS**

**No. 2 December 2007**

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From the 2007 Asian Young Choreographer Project.

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# Executive reports



The Executive Board of WDA—AP 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, Southeast 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.

## contributors



### President's Message

by Dr Mohd Anis Md Nor  
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# President's Message

by Dr Mohd Anis Md Nor <anisnor@um.edu.my>

This has been a productive and wonderful year for World Dance Alliance—Asia Pacific. In spite of our hectic daily schedules we, as members of WDA—AP, have benefited greatly from the many activities which have taken place this year. Many of the pledges made at the WDA Global Assembly by our Executive Board and Committee have been implemented with great enthusiasm and passion, especially by the Network Chairs. The five networks formulated the following action plans:

- **The Education and Training Network** tabled a strategic plan to build a database for the WDA website focusing on education and achieving outcomes.
- **The Management and Promotion Network** plans to conduct a fundraising workshop in Cambodia, where participants would be trained in fundraising for profit or non-profit organisations.
- **The Welfare and Status Network** invited participants attending the WDA Global Summit in Brisbane in July 2008 to submit ideas about the creation of tools/methodologies centred on 'best practice' models that contribute to issues of self-determination, self-respect, self-esteem, self-confidence and empowerment.
- **The Creation and Presentation Network** is looking forward to bringing the Singapore Choreolab format to the 2008 Global Summit. With feedback already gathered and the experience of Singapore, a similar model will be presented in Brisbane.
- **The Research and Documentation Network** has achieved two primary goals for 2007: the WDA publication *Transcending Borders Through Dance*, now well underway with the publisher in India, will be launched at the Global Summit in Brisbane. Equally exciting is the possible publication of a new WDA journal *Cross-Cultural Dialogues in Dance: Research Journal of the World Dance Alliance*. Negotiations with a renowned publisher are in progress.

I would like to congratulate everyone for their enthusiasm, interest and contribution to the projects envisaged and undertaken by the respective committees in the Networks.

We reaffirmed our commitment to WDA—AP at the Annual General Meeting in Singapore in June. The Asia Young Choreographer Project has now been extended to two cities in Taiwan, while the TNUA summer dance festival has offered scholarships to WDA—AP members to undertake certification courses in Labanotation. Once again WDA—AP wishes to acknowledge Professor Yunyu Wang and her wonderful team in Taiwan for this project.

The WDA—AP Annual General Meeting in Singapore identified key issues to be researched before we meet again at the WDA Global Summit in Brisbane in July 2008. The successful Annual General Meeting could not have happened without the concerted efforts of our colleagues from Singapore. They not only organised a wonderful conference and dance festival, but have evidenced yet another exemplary example of WDA—AP synergies working well

for all of us. Once again, WDA—AP wishes to acknowledge the excellent work of WDA Singapore.

This brings us to our preparations for the Global Summit in Brisbane from 13–18 July 2008, which is organised by Ausdance Queensland and WDA—Asia Pacific, in partnership with Brisbane Festival, Creative Industries Faculty of Queensland University of Technology, Queensland Performing Arts Trust and Ausdance National. The conference, *Dance Dialogues: Conversations Across Cultures, Artforms and Practices*, will present performative dialogues on mind/body connections, sustainability, transcultural conversations and re-thinking the way we make dance/performance. These issues will be highlighted in all presentation formats which will include scholarly papers, panel forums, performances and post-graduate poster presentations.

I encourage everyone to do whatever they can to attend this event, which only takes place once every six years in Asia and the Pacific region. (The next Global Summit in Asia will be in 2014!) I conveyed the same message to members of WDA—Americas when I attended their Annual General Meeting in Salvador, Brazil in November. WDA—AP's presence at the WDA—Americas AGM was further strengthened with the presence of Professor Steve Basilio Esteban Villaruz, our Vice-President for Southeast Asia and Chapter Head of WDA Philippines. Steve and I presented papers at a panel on Dance in Asia and the Pacific with Adrienne Kaepler, President of WDA—Americas, who also spoke in support of urging members from WDA—Americas to attend the Global Summit in Brisbane.

I look forward to meeting you all again at the Global Summit in Brisbane next year!



# Vice-President

Yunyu Wang <ywang@coloradocollege.edu>



Taiwanese Aboriginal Dance, Singapore Dance Festival, 2006. Performers: Focus Dance Company, Taipei National University of the Arts  
Photographer: Jeff Hsueh



The final presentation of the Choreographic Lab, Singapore Dance Festival, 2006. From left to right: the mentors, choreographers and the working team of Choreographic Lab.  
Photographer: Jeff Hsueh

**I**n supporting the new generation in developing dance performance, choreography and scholarly research for next century, Taipei Dance Elite Academy (TAIPEIDEA), sponsored by Taipei National University of the Arts, has again extended the invitation to WDA—AP dance scholars from Asian countries. After two summers and 210 hard working hours, nine certified Labanotation teachers are about to be born, as soon as they finish the final project. The successful country members are from Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The cyber space continues to weave its magic, connecting WDA—AP country members and enabling many difficult missions to be resolved via email. The annual meeting happened in Singapore at the Dance Festival in June and after lengthy discussion, country delegates made the final decision to support the 2008 Global Assembly in Brisbane, Australia.

As the Vice-President, it is my mission to help WDA—AP members of all ages to achieve their dreams. Chin-lin Foundation for Culture and Arts (that I direct), with the funding support of Mr Robert Lee and the Chin-lin board of trustees will continue its effort to create opportunities for all WDA—AP members.

# South Asia Area report

by Dr Sunil Kothari, Vice-President, South Asia <sunilkothari1933@gmail.com>

Since we returned from the Singapore conference to New Delhi, India, regular dance performances have taken place at three major venues: India International Centre, India Habitat Centre and Kamani Auditorium.

A noteworthy festival titled *Ananya, Unparalleled* took place from 11–15 October at the Purana Quila, Old Fort, an historic monument, and featured works by leading choreographers in different classical dance forms. A two-day seminar on choreography was also held at the India International Centre to discuss issues relating to Indian choreography. It focused on the use of monuments and on the relaxation of existing rules regarding the use of old monuments.

As 2007 is the 60th year of India's independence, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, Government of India, sent a contingent of 400 dancers to New York to celebrate the event with both classical and folk dance of India. The Sangeet Natak Akadmi, the nodal agency, was assigned the work, which received a wonderful response from New York audiences. The dances were presented at Lincoln Centre and other venues in New York.

From 14–20 December the Natya Kala Conference will take place at Chennai (Madras) in the South. I will be presenting a paper on the Seraikella Chhau Dances of Bihar during the conference and will be covering major annual dance festivals held by institutions like The Music Academy, Kalakshera Foundation, Narad Gana Sabha and Krishna Gana Sabha. During the month of December a series of dance festivals and seminars take place in Chennai and dance lovers from various parts of India and abroad converge there.

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# South-East Asia Area report

by Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz <basilio\_esteban.villaruz@up.edu.ph>

South East Asia was represented at the WDA—Americas conference at the Federal University of Bahia, 14–17 November in Salvador, Brazil. The theme was Dance as Knowing—Dance as Action. Lead organisers were Leda Muhana Lannitelli and David Lannitelli. Our panel comprised Mohd Anis Nor, myself and Adrienne Kaepler.

Reports from the Asia Young Choreographers Workshop and Labanotation seminar in Taipei were both positive. These have both been going on with WDA—AP involvement, with the extended workshop also held earlier in Kaoshiung. Spearheading the organising is Yunyu Wang, WDA—AP vice-president.

Young artists and scholars have been seriously encouraged by these projects, which can include the Pacific members of WDA.

The University of the Philippines' Integrative Studies and its Noh Theatre Ensemble presented a workshop on the *Ifugao Hudhud* epic and the Noh in September. A special book, *Hudhud and Noh: A Dialogue of Cultures* was launched. Noh master Naohiko Umekawa honored the event with his direction of the play *The Italian Restaurant*.

From his email, Dr Nor intimated about the *Magic Flute* production in University of Michigan, with involvement of Cambodia and Thailand. As I understand it, the Mozart opera was staged in Cambodian style—a landmark.

# Pacific Area

by Dr Cheryl Stock, Vice-President, Pacific region <c.stock@qut.edu.au>

At the recent AGM in Singapore, we observed that, with the advent of the Fiji Chapter headed by Sachiko Miller, dance in the Pacific region now has a voice in the WDA beyond the bigger countries of Australia and New Zealand; we noted the example of the Fijian collaboration with Indonesia and Samoa, and of West Sumatra in another collaboration earlier this year. New Zealand is also a very active member of the Pacific region, and participation by DANZ is particularly valuable. I hope there will be more activity from the Pacific region in WDA events, especially through the excellent processes which allow people to join the Taiwan choreographic programs, and through attendance at the 2008 World Dance Alliance Global Summit in Brisbane.

Not surprisingly my report this issue focuses on the preparations and the draft program (pending funding) of the forthcoming WDA Global Summit.

The Summit will focus on:

- Mind/body connections
- Sustainability
- Transcultural conversations
- Re-thinking the way we make/teach dance and performance.

The summit will explore these critical issues through dialogues:

1. Physical Dialogues—International Choreolab and a program of Masterclasses
2. Dance Dialogues—a program of five facilitated conversations between key international cultural thinkers and artists
3. Conference/Performative Dialogues—a three-day event comprising a series of refereed academic and performative presentation events and forums
4. Networking Dialogues—the biennial World Congress of WDA members

You can read a more detailed program of the Summit on page 13.

I would like to thank the many members from many countries who have shown so much interest in, and support for, what is a somewhat different program, with a curated and integrated series of events unified by the themes and issues above. I would like to particularly thank the Executive of the Program Committee Julie Dyson, National Director of Ausdance and Secretary of WDA—AP, Marcus Hughes, Director of Ausdance Queensland and Janelle Christofis, Chair of Ausdance Queensland, as well as Nanette Hassall, Denise Richardson and the conference committee who are working tirelessly to bring the program to fruition.

Keep checking the website <[www.ausdance.org.au/outside/wda/wdaAP\\_summit.html](http://www.ausdance.org.au/outside/wda/wdaAP_summit.html)> for announcements of the exciting guests we will bring to you in 2008, and further developments of the program. Book now and register as soon as possible and I look forward to seeing you all there!



# Network reports contributors

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 who co-ordinates activities to advance the issues raised by these special interest groups. These networks may also be duplicated in each chapter. They are:

The **Creation & Presentation Network**, which includes all those dealing with creation and presentation of dance such as choreographers; directors; performers; costume, lighting and set designers; composers; librettists; dramaturges; videographers, filmmakers and graphic designers, and any others who collaborate in the creation of dance.

The broad mandate of the **Education & Training Network** ranges from the formal preparation of dance professionals (performers, choreographers, teachers, arts administrators, writers, researchers, notators, dance scientists) in a conservatory or institute of higher education, to dance education and appreciation. It covers public and private schools and studios, cultural and recreational groups, senior citizens and general audiences. It also includes teachers of all genres representing any dance tradition, technique or methodology, as well as others who define part of their mission as education.

The **Management & Promotion Network**, which includes artistic directors, impresarios, presenters, agents, producers and company managers, and is focused on programming, dissemination, advocacy and administrative aspects of the dance field. It also includes those who have expertise in marketing and fund raising for various aspects of the dance field.

The **Research & Documentation Network**, which identifies, supports and initiates projects that preserve dance heritage. Its mandate includes creating, collecting, maintaining and housing dance records of all kinds; promoting the reconstruction and staging of past works using a variety of source materials; advocating the use of existing records to enrich our dance experience, and identifying endangered dances and materials. The network includes historians, anthropologists, performers, ethnographers, notators, librarians, educators, archivists, theorists, critics, videographers, photographers, choreographers and filmmakers.

The **Status & Welfare Network**, which identifies and advocates the interests of dance professionals and of dance, not only as an art form, but also as a significant part of human culture, impacting on society and education. Its scope includes the legal, economic and societal status of the artist; health and transition resources and practices; intellectual property matters, and related issues. Members of the network include physicians, lawyers, dancers, dance scientists, arts policy makers, arts administrators, psychologists, physiotherapists, mental health professionals and financial planners.



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**The world of dance is constantly shaped by the role of state governments and the political arena, dialogues within and between cultures, as well as the rapid developments of multi-media technology.**

## Research & Documentation

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Dr Stephanie Burrridge <s.burrridge@pacific.net.sg>

I would like to share the excitement of the progress of the upcoming publication with all the friends of World Dance Alliance all over the world. As you all know, the Research and Documentation Network of WDA—AP has taken the initiative to bring to fruition the idea of having an international scholarly publication, an idea which was generated at the Global Assembly of WDA in Canada in 2006.

It is a wonderful feeling to finally be able to say that all the contributions have been received for our publication *Dance: Transcending Borders*, which is designed to bring together voices from around the globe on the issue of cultural boundaries and identities negotiated through dance as a contemporary practice.

As globalisation forces us to revisit the *local* in dance, identity formation/generation/affirmation become a vital necessity. The world of dance is constantly shaped by the role of state governments and the political arena, dialogues within and between cultures, as well as the rapid developments of multi-media technology. At this time it is necessary to establish dialogues across regions via scholarly interventions, to identify major areas of concern—some of which may be common to all, and some of which may be completely specific and referential to the historical situation of a particular country. In both cases these dialogues hope to generate a fruitful understanding between regions and countries, as dance and dancers step out and transcend borders.

The final list of scholars and papers to be incorporated in *Dance: Transcending Borders* is:

- Dr Rustom Bharucha (India) *Chandralekha in Retrospect*
- Professor Mohd. Anis Md Nor (Malaysia) *Dancing Religious Iconographies in Southeast Asia*
- Dr Pornrat Damrhung (Thailand) *From Preserving National Forms to Reviving Traditions for the World: Some Recent Uses of Classical Dance from Mainland Southeast Asia*

- Dr Cheryl Stock (Australia) *Connectivity: Dancing Bodies Linking Culture. Site, Technology*
- Dr Urmimala Sarkar, Editor (India) *Boundaries and Beyond: Problems of Nomenclature in Indian Dance*
- Dr Alessandra Lopez (United Kingdom) *Indonesian Dance Performance in UK: Transnational Futures?*
- Professor Janet Lansdale (United Kingdom) *Global and Local: Tracing a Danced and Musical Mosaic*
- Dr Andrée Grau (United Kingdom) *Dance and the Shifting Sand of Multiculturalism: Questions from the United Kingdom*
- Professor Anne Decoret-Ahiha (France) *Cross-culturalism in Dance: An Historical and Ideological Approach*
- Professor Adrienne L. Kaepler (USA) *One Plus One Equals Three [Or More]: Dance Diversity as Intercultural Dialogues in the Pacific Islands*
- Professor Mary Jane Warner (Canada) *Lost Dances: Preserving the works of Canadian Contemporary Choreographers.*
- Professor Randy Martin (USA) *Dance's Diversity: A US Perspective*
- Professor Yvonne Daniel (USA) *Caribbean Dance within Cultural and Economic Globalization*
- Dr Margarita Tortajada Quiroz (Mexico) *Problems and Thoughts About Mexican Dance in the 70s.* (Alan Stark, Research & Documentation Chair of the Americas, translates the paper.)

The timely and enthusiastic cooperation of the eminent scholars from all over the world has overwhelmed and humbled me, and amazed and surprised the publisher. There is also a great response from the contributing scholars about participating in the Global Summit in Brisbane, Australia next year and to be a part of the launch of *Dance: Transcending Borders* which will be an important addition to the list of scholarly publications by WDA—AP.

# Education & Training

by Ralph Buck <r.buck@auckland.ac.nz>

School teachers,  
dance studio teachers,  
independent community  
teachers, company  
teachers and tertiary  
teachers all impact  
on the wider dance  
community—what we  
do, say, see, feel and hear  
matters.

The World Dance Alliance Global Summit, Dance Dialogues: Conversations Across Cultures, Artforms and Practices, to be held in Brisbane from 13–18 July 2008, presents a unique opportunity for dance educators and community dance workers to learn about local and international achievements. Most importantly, it provides a forum for dance educators to inform and shape future dialogues and practices within the dance industry. School teachers, dance studio teachers, independent community teachers, company teachers and tertiary teachers all impact on the wider dance community—what we do, say, see, feel and hear matters.

The Education & Training Network of the WDA—AP will host a forum for sharing issues and agendas. This forum will provide a global and yet personal opportunity to make a direct impact on future activity and learn about dance education from and within diverse international communities. The draft strategic plan for the Education & Training Network will be discussed in detail, while the WDA Global Summit will include papers and presentations that reveal many of the conversations between artistic endeavours, cultures, teaching and learning, performance, criticism and technology.

Every year there is 'a' dance conference that really counts. The World Dance Alliance Global Summit will be that major event in 2008, and your attendance will ensure its role in dance history. I'll be there, and I hope to see you in Brisbane in July 2008.

## Education & Training draft strategic plan

**Overview:** the Education & Training Network is one of the five WDA networks/committees providing opportunities for development and exchange of information within the Asia Pacific Region.

**Aim:** the Education & Training Network aims to advocate for and support dance educators.

In this edition of *Channels* we introduce a draft Education & Training Network Strategic Plan. This plan was first discussed at the 2007 WDA—AP Singapore conference, and will be further refined at the 2008 WDA Global Assembly, Brisbane, where the Network will reconvene. I hope you have an opportunity to review the plan and also come to Brisbane to help inform our network's direction and action.

# draft strategic plan

Objectives	Strategies	Action	Timeline	Who
1 To promote the recognition, development and mutual understanding of dance pedagogy in its diversity.	1.1 Identify and improve access to information about the diversity of dance in the Asia Pacific.  1.2 Identify the diversity of different types of dance education and training pedagogies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Identify and document diverse pedagogies.</li> <li>→ Collate and/or index articles and conference presentations that highlight dance pedagogy.</li> </ul>		
2 To facilitate communication and exchange among dance individuals, institutions, and organisations interested in dance education and training.	2.1 Map and share information about dance education and training individuals; institutions and organisations..	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ List on the WDA—AP website, a dance educators database that provides key dance education and training contacts in the Asia Pacific Region.</li> <li>→ Identify dance education and training institutions.</li> <li>→ Identify Ministry of Education (or like organisations) websites that articulate dance curriculum and policy information.</li> <li>→ Complete a Dance Education Profile for each country.</li> </ul>	Commenced 2007, updated every 6 months	Ralph Buck
3 To provide a forum for discussion of matters relating to dance education and training.	3.1 Establish a reliable and inclusive network for sharing information in the Asia Pacific Region.  3.2 Organise regular forums for networking with dance educators.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Support WDA AP conferences and facilitate Dance educator focus events.</li> </ul>		
4 To encourage the research, education, criticism, creation and performance of dance.	4.1 Share and develop research in education and training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Identify major achievements and major issues throughout the region.</li> <li>→ Develop one regional collaborative research project.</li> <li>→ Identify existing and/or lack of research within dance education and training.</li> </ul>		
5 To liaise, co-ordinate and participate in activities with other dance pedagogy organisations in the world.	5.1 Establish and strengthen links with existing regional networks and organisations.  5.2 Establish and strengthen links with global networks and organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Identify leading dance events and conferences with which WDA AP may develop partnerships.</li> <li>→ List other relevant organisations within Channels Newsletters and WDA website.</li> </ul>		

# Status & Welfare

by Tom Brown <tombro@hkapa.edu>

At the Singapore meeting of the Status & Welfare Network, it was agreed that work should focus on identifying courses in the region which address some of the key areas of concern. Members of WDA—AP are invited to contribute information about courses in their countries which address the following issues of status and welfare of dancers:

- Empowerment of dancers—knowledge and motivation.
- Self motivation, self esteem: how can these be accomplished?
- Best practice—preparing for dance career with lifeskills at tertiary level.
- Preparation of multiskilled dancers.
- Professional self-management, e.g. marketing, taxation, networks.
- Employment of dancers' own creativity in managing their professional lives.
- Identification and documentation of case studies.

- Producing organisations—encourage them to be creative about sharing skills.
- Identification of barriers, e.g. lack of confidence, skills

It was noted that athletes have a bank of transferable skills, and that these skills are now being highlighted through the SCOPE (Securing Career Opportunities and Professional Employment) project in Australia, a unique professional development program providing career and education support services to Australia's professional dance sector (see <[www.ais.org.au/ace/dance-background.asp](http://www.ais.org.au/ace/dance-background.asp)>).

It was agreed that WDA—AP members be encouraged to share programs and courses via a new web page that could be set up to encourage such dialogue, e.g. what courses do you have at your university that address any of these issues? Where are the case studies? Where can these things be accessed online?

We look forward to hearing from members at the Brisbane conference next year.

# Creation & Presentation

by Nanette Hassall <n.hassall@ecu.edu.au>

In recent months we have been working on developing a funding proposal for the 2008 Choreolab, which will be an exciting part of the WDA—AP Global Assembly in Brisbane next year. Two high-profile international choreographic mentors have been approached, and both have agreed to participate should funding become available (although at this stage we are unable to announce names).

The mentors will be invited initially to set choreographic tasks for four mid-career choreographers who will already have a substantial body of work. They will have been chosen through an application process to work with the two mentors, and will be invited to develop a self-devised project based on an initial concept, possibly planned (although not created) before coming to the Choreolab. The two mentor choreographers will be invited to work with the mentorees in a way that will illuminate the choreographic processes involved in the development of new works.

The mentors selected represent quite different approaches to the development of choreographic ideas, coming from different cultural traditions, but managing to speak to diverse audiences. They will be asked to share the practices they have each pursued

in the development of their individual and unique approaches. Choreolab will culminate in a showing at The Loft theatre at the Queensland University of Technology, and the two choreographic mentors will then participate in the final Dance Dialogues session, where they will discuss the outcomes of the Choreolab.

The purpose of the Choreolab is to challenge and develop skills in a constructive and supportive environment. Each choreographer will work with seven dancers of different training and cultural backgrounds, with the majority being drawn from the three WDA regions and chosen by a selection panel. Language skills will be taken into account to ensure maximum communication, as it will be important to maintain a balance of cultural diversity.

Once funding has been secured, there will be a call for expressions of interest from mid-career choreographers and up to 28 dancers who may wish to participate. The Creation & Presentation Network looks forward to announcing further details in January 2008.

# Management & Promotion

by Fred Frumberg <ffrumberg@aol.com>

Fundraising is an issue that applies to everyone, and at the Singapore AGM we discussed the possibility of focusing on a fundraising workshop for this network.

There was discussion about where it should be held, how it would be funded and how to make it as accessible as possible. In countries such as Cambodia there is a need to articulate why a particular dance piece is really important, but there is no system for teaching people how to approach these issues. Tragic legacy is not enough any more, and Amrita Performing Arts has been encouraging this fundraising development by giving artists \$70 to write a proposal, which buys paper, rents a computer and provides meetings with Masters who advise on content. It was acknowledged at the meeting that it would be useful to share this model, but as Amrita is just three people who are already fully occupied, this will be a large project to create. It was agreed that the number of participants needed would be between eight and fifteen.

It was agreed that a pilot be held in Cambodia, and that a budget would be developed which would not be financial cost to Amrita. It would not be aligned with any other program, but be promoted as a single project, including post-workshop dissemination. A workshop model exists as a package already with Amrita, and it could be transferable. Other participants may then ask for this project to be replicated in, say, West Bengal.

A program is now being developed with guidelines and a budget, and WDA members are invited to provide names of those who might contribute fundraising ideas, websites, guidelines, etc. In selecting participants, WDA chapter heads will be asked to call for expressions of interest and select two names to send to Amrita for final selection. November 2008 has been tentatively set for this workshop, but planning cannot proceed unless there is a clear expression of interest from the



*Transmission of the Invisible* by Peter Chin for Toronto's Harbor Front New World Stage International Performance Festival and performed by Phon Sopheap and Yim Sovann. Photographer: Jean Loncle

membership. Please send this to me as soon as possible at <ffrumberg@aol.com>.

Joining WDA in January 2006 was a pivotal point for both Amrita Performing Arts as a producing entity, as well as for the evolution of contemporary performing arts in Cambodia in general. Up to that point, contemporary dance was a taboo topic; one which evoked fear in the elder masters who believed that any discussion of contemporary dance would derail the arduous process of revival and preservation which was the reigning doctrine of all forms of performing arts in Cambodia since the fall of the Khmer Rouge regime in 1979—a tragic period in Cambodia's history which saw the death of nearly 90% of all of its artists.

Convinced that the process of revival and preservation had achieved a respectable momentum, reinforced by such acknowledgements as UNESCO bestowing world heritage status on Cambodian court dance, Amrita Performing Arts shifted the emphasis of its mission to one which nurtured a young community of artists committed to establishing Cambodia's own vocabulary of contemporary dance.

To lay this groundwork, we identified practitioners from throughout the region whose own contemporary dance style has grown from a similar struggle between preservation and creativity and whose

work is deeply rooted in their own ancient traditions. All of these projects have benefited from a mixture of Cambodian dancers, dance educators, choreographers, dance administrators and researchers.

The local community is coming around to how this newly-found sense of creativity, contrary to the fears that it would 'change' the classical dance form or cause young artists to 'lose interest' in their ancient dance legacy, is in fact creating even greater incentive for building classical repertory while moving the traditional forms into the future for the benefit of a new generation of artists and audiences alike. These efforts have not only led to extraordinary new work, but the practitioners have brought these newly-discovered strengths into the classroom, nurturing an ever-growing community of contemporary arts practitioners and future arts leaders, while some have gone on to create their own works.

The WDA has been a guiding light in this effort, offering an umbrella under which the young artists can meet their counterparts throughout the region in a forum of highly productive exchange on both a theoretical level through research and documentation, and a practical one through dialogue in conferences, observing the work of their contemporaries and interactive workshops, some of which have led to ongoing collaborations and fully mounted productions.

It has been stated that The WDA Global Summit 2008 'will provide an integrated platform on an international level to bring dance performers, creators, teachers, scholars, managers, students and allied dance professionals together to share performance work, training approaches, networking opportunities, collaborative and community ventures.' It is vital that Cambodians take part in this forum which will give them the opportunity to develop their burgeoning creative aspirations. The evolution of Cambodian contemporary dance is still in its infancy; a vulnerable transition period during which the building of regional support and collaboration has become more crucial than ever before.



## AGM summary by Julie Dyson, Secretary, WDA—AP

<juliedyson@ausdance.org.au>

The World Dance Alliance—Asia Pacific AGM was held in Singapore on 7 June 2007, chaired by the President, Professor Mohd Anis Md Nor.

The President noted that the last time WDA—AP had met in Singapore it was when Carl Wolz was with us for the last time. Since then the organisation had grown greatly, and he expressed thanks to WDA Singapore for hosting the AGM, at the same time inviting new people to engage more with the organisation, as expressed through *Asia-Pacific Channels*.

The President reported that, in a very important move, WDA was now under the auspices of ITI UNESCO. However, its status would remain in this category until WDA can be registered as an entity by itself, which will not be easy. WDA Americas is handling the registration process, but first and foremost is the need for documentation.

There was discussion about the organisation's official journal, *Asia-Pacific Channels*, and the President noted that many people were reporting how much they enjoyed it. It was agreed that countries which did not submit a chapter should be noted to enable the breadth of the organisation to be acknowledged. The President then canvassed the idea of making *Channels* more than just a newsletter, e.g. commissioning writers and providing more in-depth analysis.

After much discussion, it was agreed that the integrity of the existing publication should be preserved, and that production of a peer-reviewed academic journal should be considered. The Research & Documentation Network meeting later agreed to this proposal, and *Dance: Transcending Borders* will be launched at the 2008 Global Assembly of the WDA in Brisbane.

The Asia Young Choreographer project was discussed, and Yunyu Wang noted that it had been extended to two cities in Taiwan. She encouraged all countries to nominate candidates, and also discussed the TNUA summer dance festival, which offered scholarships to WDA—AP members, resulting in having eight qualified Laban notators certified to teach in their countries. The President recorded his appreciation for the program, noting how beneficial it is to students in the region to be able to access it here rather than having to go to New York.

Two Vice-Presidents reported on activities in their areas of responsibility. Cheryl Stock (Pacific) thanked Sachiko Miller in Fiji for her role in communicating and initiating events in the region, and also New Zealand, which is a very active member of WDA in the Pacific. She hoped to encourage more participation from the Pacific region, especially through the excellent processes now in place for participation in Taiwan programs.

Sunil Kothari (South Asia) said that there were three new members from South Africa, and others from the countries in South Asia. He gave credit to

Urmimala Sarkar for her work in West Bengal, noting that the workshop and grand finale at the gala with Cambodians and Australians had made front-page news. He hoped that there would be a new WDA association in India with seven states, beginning with West Bengal.

The Treasurer's report was presented by the President on behalf of Mew Chang Tsing. There was discussion about improving the payment process and providing invoices and online banking to enable more efficient transactions. It was agreed that this procedure would be adopted, and that a notice to this effect would be published in *Channels*. There was also discussion about adjusting the annual chapter membership fee upwards, but this proposal was not carried. However, there was acknowledgement that WDA—AP would have to find other ways to increase its income if it wanted to be more strategic in its activities, and provide assistance to less wealthy countries for those activities.

The President requested that time be set aside in Brisbane in 2008 with managers and fund raisers who can help to develop a strategic plan, e.g. Brisbane Marketing. The Management & Promotion subcommittee also agreed to address this in its planning for 2008.

The AGM concluded on June 7, and the following day Network Chairs convened meetings of their special interest groups. Reports of these meetings are contained elsewhere in this edition of *Channels*. Full minutes of all meetings are available from the Secretary of WDA—AP, Julie Dyson.

# 2008 WDA Global Summit



## Dance Dialogues: conversations across cultures, art forms and practices

13–18 July 2008 in Brisbane, Australia.

Contact: Cheryl Stock  
<c.stock@qut.edu.au> or Marcus Hughes  
<eo.qld@ausdance.org.au>

The World Dance Alliance Global Summit 2008 presents a platform for the stimulation of significant critical debate and the extension of creativity and dance practice locally, nationally and internationally. It will be an international gathering of overlapping conversations in, through and about dance, the arts, humanities and sciences and will provide opportunities for:

- building networks between international peers and colleagues with a view to instigating ongoing collaborations;
- skills and professional development for choreographers, dancers, teachers, researchers and academics;
- exploration of notions of cultural diversity in choreographic approaches, movement material, training, writing and expressive encounters;
- the stimulation of new ideas and knowledge to empower individuals and groups to effect social and cultural change;
- influencing cultural policy and practice across government agencies and creative communities.

### Program of Activities

The 2008 WDA Global Summit focuses on four critical issues for the creative arts and culture in the 21st century:

**Mind/body connections:** the reflective practitioner; somatic approaches in dance training; bodily writing and writing the body; performing ethnography; dance and site; educational assessment of embodied practices; the nature of choreographic knowledge.

**Sustainability:** the business of culture; managing the arts; support structures for independent artists; extending the life of ephemeral performances; dance ecology; transition pathways; the business of schooling; supporting the school teacher.

**Transcultural conversations:** inter/intra/cross cultural practices; the place of traditional practices in a post-national context; international collaborations; interdisciplinary practices and their convergence; cultural difference and globalisation; transdisciplinary teaching and learning in the school curriculum.

**Re-thinking the way we make/teach dance and performance:** dance and technology; choreographing the virtual body; training challenges in the new millennium; the artist/researcher; dance and community; the school student as an artist—student devised work; the teacher/artist

A four-tiered program will identify and explore these key issues through the notion of dialogues, the driver underpinning the format for all summit programming.

**Physical Dialogues** includes *International Choreolab* and a program of Masterclasses. *International Choreolab* allows four mid-career choreographers (from Australia, Asia-Pacific, Europe, and the Americas) to each work with professional dancers from Australia and overseas, under the mentorship of two leading international

choreographers. This five-day workshop will culminate in a 'showing' at QUT's Loft Theatre. *International master classes* reflecting the four conference themes will feature leading artists and teachers conducting 2-hour studio workshops over four days (14–17 July inclusive) for local and visiting artists, teachers and students.

**Dance Dialogues** features a program of five facilitated conversations between key international cultural thinkers and artists, with each dialogue focussing on one or more of the Summit themes and a provocateur to ensure lively debate.

**Conference/Performative Dialogues** is a three-day event comprising a series of refereed academic and performative presentation events and forums which will explore the Summit's key issues and themes.

**Networking Dialogues** is the biennial World Congress of WDA members from the Asia-Pacific, Europe and the Americas.

### Extension programs

The opening event of the WDA Global Summit will feature performances by Indigenous and Pacific groups and will also be the occasion for the launch of the new WDA publication, *Dance: Transcending Borders*. Following the daily Dance Dialogues, an umbrella program of evening performances by leading local professional companies and independent artists will be presented. The Australian Reel Dance (on Screen) Festival is also being scheduled. On the final night of the Summit, WDA delegates will be guests for the opening of the Brisbane Festival and its premiere of a dance and music collaboration. See <[www.ausdance.org.au](http://www.ausdance.org.au)> for up-to-date information.



## Chapter reports

*Stitchbirds* choreographed by Daniel Belton performed by third year students from the NZ School of Dance  
Photographer: Helen Mitchell

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. WDA Chapters may be represented by existing organisations.

These Chapters propose and implement projects, which address not only the general goals of WDA and WDA Asia–Pacific, but also the specific needs of the local dance community. The countries (chapters) in each WDA—AP region are:

**East Asia:** Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong

**Southeast 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

If you would like to contribute information about dance activities in your country please contact your region's Vice-President (see page 1). To join the WDA see page 33.



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# Australia

by Julie Dyson <juliedyson@ausdance.org.au>

The recent Australian Federal election produced a change of government, and therefore a new arts policy. As Australia's peak organisation for dance, Ausdance has been very active in campaigning for policy change, particularly on the issues of sustainable professional dance practice, the development of innovative and effective infrastructure such as production hubs, and improved dance education in schools, including a focus on professional development for teachers and artists-in-schools programs.

The new Government is promising a range of initiatives, including \$17m to establish an 'innovation centre' in partnership with universities, the private sector and local communities. This will 'house creative industries research programs, building collaboration between researchers and cultural entrepreneurs; provide access to the latest creative technologies, including multimedia and digital design tools, digital production and editing facilities and live performance spaces, and provide students with learning opportunities in a dynamic, hothouse environment, laying down career building blocks for creative Australians'. The arts community is yet to fully understand the implications of this commitment, but is looking forward to more information.

Other commitments include the development of a Dance Action Plan as identified *Resourcing Dance* (Australia Council, February 2004), and the implementation of *ArtStart* 'as a critical step in acknowledging the important role of Australian artists'. The *ArtStart* program will review the current state of artists' incomes and introduce initiatives that enable artists currently on welfare greater opportunity to produce work and generate employment. Specifically, issues confronting young and emerging artists will be addressed through the provision of start-up assistance for professional artists.

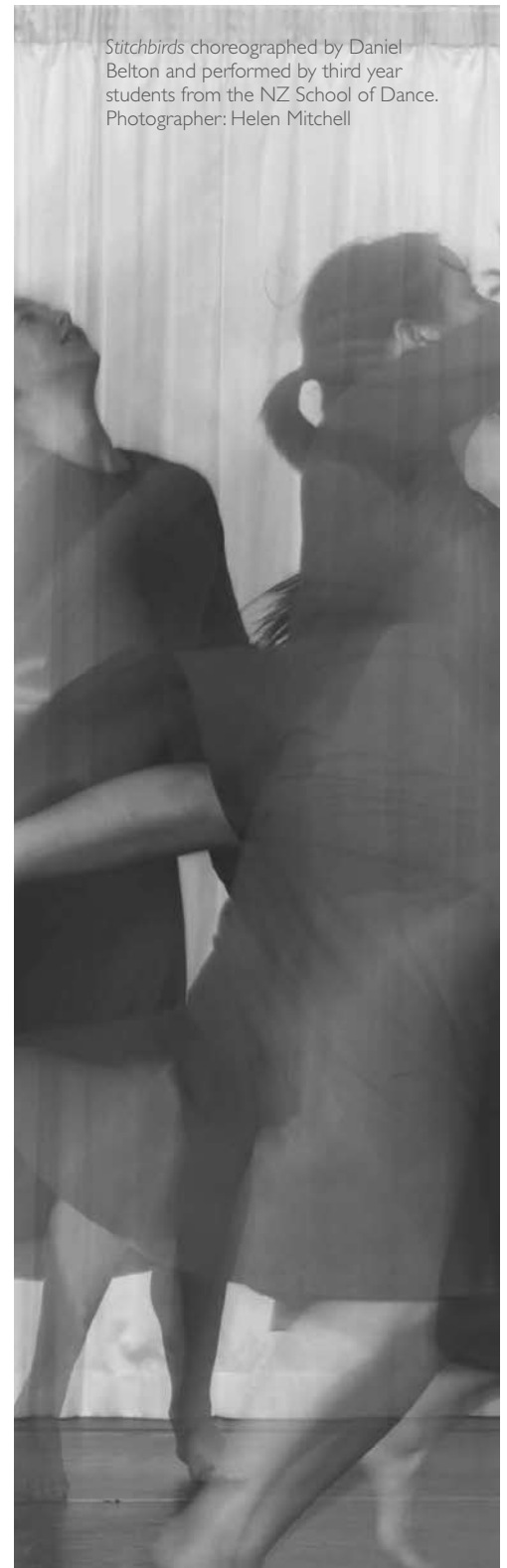
The new Government will also develop a 'Social Security and the Arts' policy that harmonises current Australia Council, Centrelink and Australian Tax Office rules and determines the most equitable way to treat earnings and royalty payments

for artists currently receiving welfare. The Government will consider adding 'participation in arts projects' to the criteria for employment and community participation in work for the dole programs where it is likely that such participation will improve a person's prospects of gaining employment or private income. Ausdance will work with the Government on implementation strategies, and welcomes these initiatives as a major contribution to the sustainability of artists' careers.

For the first time since 1989, the directors of dance companies and tertiary dance courses met in Melbourne on September 24 and 25, where they discussed a range of issues and enjoyed the opportunity to meet over two days to share ideas and network with their peers. The meeting was facilitated by Ausdance and hosted by The Australian Ballet, with funding support from the Australia Council. The evaluation questionnaire revealed a strong preference for an annual national meeting in future, and more frequent local meetings. Company managers, artistic directors and tertiary dance directors all contributed positively to the dialogue, and Ausdance is now collating the recommendations which require action in 2008.

The Australian Dance Awards—usually held in November each year at the Sydney Opera House—will now move to Melbourne, where Ausdance Victoria will present the Awards ceremony at the State Theatre on 15 June 2008. Nominations open in January next year, and eligible works are those which have been performed between 1 July 2006 and 31 December 2007.

Ausdance is hosting the World Dance Alliance—Asia Pacific Global Summit, with information on its website—go to <[www.ausdance.org.au](http://www.ausdance.org.au)> for all information connected with this exciting event in 2008. We all look forward to welcoming our World Dance Alliance friends and colleagues to Australia!



*Stitchbirds* choreographed by Daniel Belton and performed by third year students from the NZ School of Dance. Photographer: Helen Mitchell

# Aotearoa, New Zealand

by Tania Kopytko <execdirector@danz.org.nz>



**K**ia ora and warmest greetings from New Zealand and DANZ!  
2007 has been a very active and buoyant year for dance in New Zealand.

We have just completed the September/October dance festival season. Wellington's *Dance Your Socks Off* festival was an umbrella for a wide range of dance from recreational through to the Bats Theatre season, which particularly supports emerging performance dance. *The Body Festival* of dance and physical theatre in Christchurch has grown in strength and stature under the directorship of Adam Hayward. A feature was *Stitchbirds*, a new work by respected choreographer and dance filmmaker Daniel Belton performed beautifully by third year students of the New Zealand School of Dance. Mary Jane O'Reilly, Director of Auckland's *TEMPO Dance Festival*, developed some successful audience marketing approaches this year through themed performances such as *Loud* which featured dance based on percussive feet (new tap, Irish, Bharata-Natyam and Flamenco). Another trend is the emergence of projects which support the return of mature dancers and choreographers to performance, from which exciting work is emerging. All the festivals provide strong support for community and recreational dance from cultural through to hip hop and Latin. Reviews of dance in the festivals can be found on *Theatreview* <[www.theatreview.org.nz/](http://www.theatreview.org.nz/)>.

The three festivals, through their support for new and established choreographers and groups, audience development initiatives and support for recreational dance, do much to encourage the current growth and profile of dance. Strong New Zealand dance growth is also supported by the inclusion of dance in schools as an arts and physical education subject, the energetic growth in cultural dance (seen in festivals and competitions in Maori and Pacific Island dance and new styles such as Bollywood) and increases in social dance encouraged by film and television dance programs. This I believe is developing new performers, participants and audiences and will increase in significance as momentum grows. The current conservative estimate is that 270,000 New Zealanders dance annually, which is high compared to sports genre participation.

2007 is also a landmark year for some of our dance companies and institutions. The New Zealand School of Dance marks its 40th year in November with a gala season and three days of special events.

Touch Compass, a mixed ability dance company, celebrates ten years with a national tour. This is remarkable and a credit to Director Catherine Chappell as the company exists on a project funding basis. Touch Compass has just published *Touch Compass—celebrating integrated dance* to mark the occasion.

Whitireia Polytechnic Performing Arts Faculty celebrates 10 years and its landmark position as the first Maori and Pacific Island contemporary-based dance course in New Zealand. The course has grown in strength and reputation and now offers a diploma and degree.

DANZ has also had an innovative year with DANZ Tamaki, the Auckland office, partnering with The Edge performing arts complex in an innovative choreographic mentoring project which will develop over future years. DANZ national will launch a 2008 generic training program covering teaching best practice, dance health and safety and working in schools as an artist, guest teacher or community/cultural dance leader. This is the result of two years of resource and training development.

We look forward to more dance in 2008 beginning with the huge Pasifika festival in Auckland in March <[www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/whatson/events/pasifika/about.asp](http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/whatson/events/pasifika/about.asp)>, and of course in seeing you all again in Brisbane!!

Yours in dance!

# Cambodia

by Fred Frumberg <ffrumberg@aol.com>

When we first joined WDA in January 2006, our introductory program included a workshop with Mew Chang Tsing from Malaysia, based on a Laban approach to analysing movement—a groundbreaking experience for our young artists. We finally had the opportunity to follow up on this program thanks to the generosity of Yunyu Wang, who invited four of our dancers to Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) in Taipei in August 2007 to attend a ten-day workshop in Laban notation. Two of these dancers excelled in the program and are eager to incorporate this new-found knowledge into their own efforts to notate Cambodian dance and we are now exploring ways to build on this brief introduction.

Twelve of our young dancers recently launched their own group called Compass which meets several times a month to explore ways in which they can generate their own contemporary dance programs. They have already created their first piece which was presented to an extremely enthusiastic audience in September. Arts Network Asia (ANA) is supporting the rental of their rehearsal studio for the first six months of their inception. The creation of this group was entirely

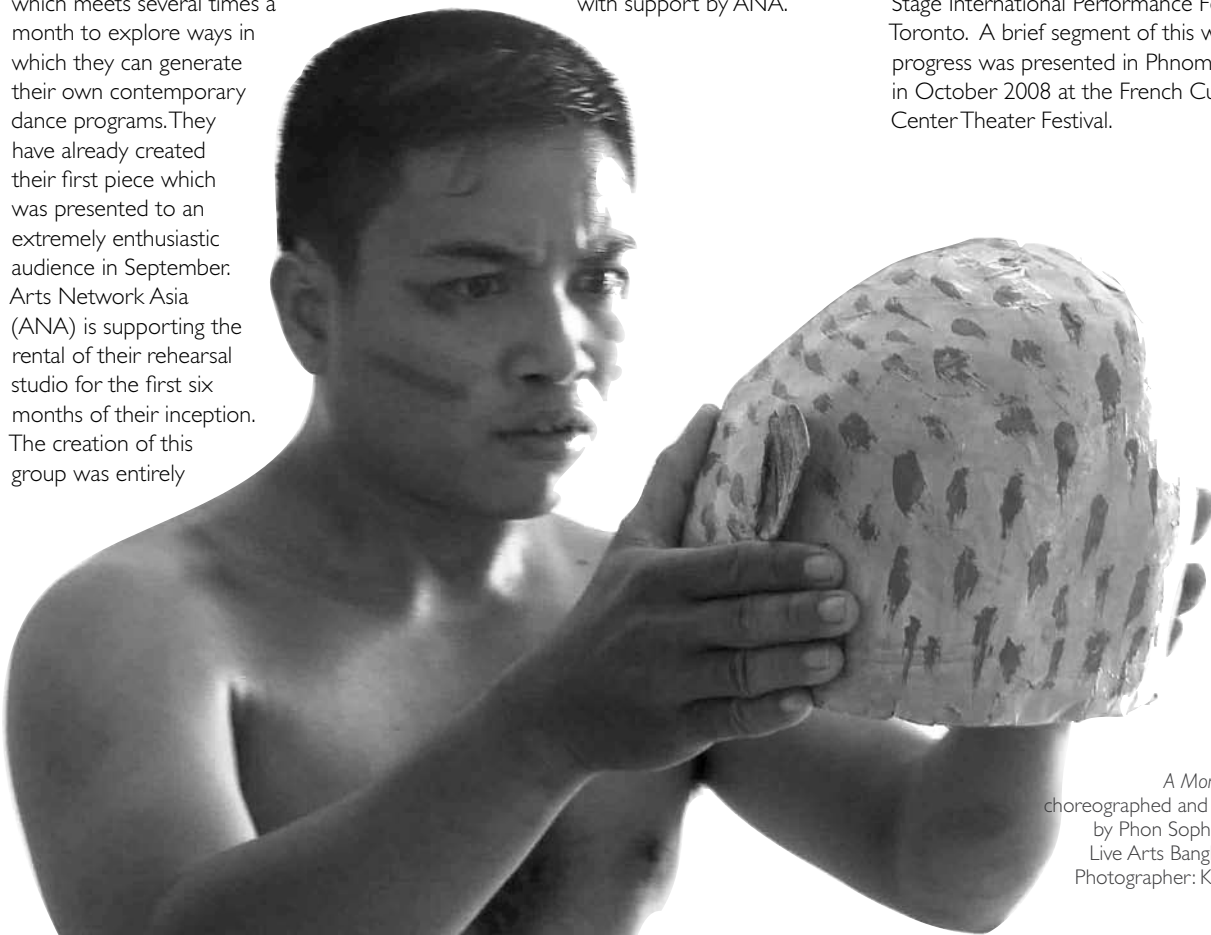
motivated by inspiration from the various WDA programs to which these young dancers have been exposed since we joined nearly two years ago; there is clearly no stopping them now!

Phon Sopheap and Chumvan Sodhachiv (Abelle) joined Indonesian artist Miroto Martinus in Yogyakarta in August for a contemporary dance workshop which resulted in a spectacular performance on the river bank at Miroto's studio; we hope to continue this very successful collaboration and work towards developing a full work.

Phon Sopheap was featured at the Live Arts Bangkok Festival in August 2007 where he continued to develop his new work *A Monkey's Mask* and returned to Bangkok a few weeks later to begin a new collaboration with Thai and Lao dancers under the guidance of Pichet Klunchon with support by ANA.

Our first full contemporary dance program *Revitalizing Monkeys and Giants*, a contemporary interpretation of Cambodian classical male masked dance by Pichet Klunchon (first created in 2005) was revived in July as part of TARI Malaysia and there are plans underway for a possible European tour in the summer of 2008. The greatest honour of all was when the dancers had the opportunity to present their work in Phnom Penh on 1 October to His Majesty King Sihamoni, who hailed the work as a great contribution to the advancement of Cambodian dance.

In December, Phon Sopheap and Yim Sovann will travel to Toronto to further develop our new collaboration with Canadian choreographer Peter Chin in a new work entitled *Transmission of the Invisible* which will premier on 8 February 2008 at the Harbor Front New World Stage International Performance Festival in Toronto. A brief segment of this work in progress was presented in Phnom Penh in October 2008 at the French Cultural Center Theater Festival.



*A Monkey's Mask*  
choreographed and performed  
by Phon Sopheap for the  
Live Arts Bangkok Festival.  
Photographer: Kang Rithisal

# Fiji

by Sachiko Miller <sachikomiller@gmail.com>



Dancers of the Oceania Center for Arts and Culture at the 1st Asia-Pacific Youth Arts Festival in Shenzhen, China. Photographer: Simione Savudredre

The dance sector in Fiji has been quite industrious since the last issue of *Channels*. In June, Sinu Naulumatua and myself travelled to stage a piece titled *Balance* for the International Dance Festival at Taman Budaya in Padang, West Sumatra. Thanks to the generous support of Indra Utama (Chapter Head, West Sumatra) and the students of STSI in Padangpanjang, we were able to work closely with eight students over a period of two-and-a-half weeks and incorporate them into our work.

*Balance* examines a conundrum that faces many indigenous peoples, which is 'how does one reconcile the values of the communal nature of Fijian/indigenous culture, of always putting the collective before the individual, with that of the individualistic values of today's capitalistic, consumer society to survive and find balance?' The entire experience of working with the talented and creative people in Padangpanjang was an unforgettable treasure.

Fiji-based Samoan choreographer Allan Alo choreographed the opening of the South Pacific Games on 25 August in Apia, Samoa. This indeed was a spectacle with 1500 dancers, most of whom were school students, performing traditional and contemporary dances, all beautifully adorned either in traditional dress or the blue and red of the Samoan flag. The internationally televised choreography presenting ancient Samoan legends and illustrating the strength and life of Samoan culture, was indeed a grand welcome for all the Pacific's athletes. The dance was accompanied by a 400-strong choir conducted by Igaliese Ete.

Katalina Fotofilis staged her first major full-length work on 29–31 August in the AusAid Theatre at the University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji. Katalina is of Tongan and Fijian heritage and the Tongan titled work, *Koe Halanga Mo'ui (the Portal of Life)*, was a tale of three generations of Pacific women which investigated their roles and sacrifices within Pacific society. The piece was masterfully

danced by the Oceania Dance Theatre. The floor of the stage and walls of the theatre were intricately painted by the artists of the Oceania Centre and immediately placed the audience in a mystical and supernatural world. After the success of her debut work, Fotofilis wishes to do more major compositions and hopes to collaborate with other young, talented and like-minded artists.

In September USP held its annual open day, which is a full-day celebration of the richness and diversity of Pacific dance, featuring performances by every cultural group to be found at the USP: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Thousands of students proudly performed their traditional dance, in the most spectacular and colourful array of costumes.

The week-long Hibiscus Festival was staged in Suva in September; this year with themed nights: Indian, Fijian, Asian, Hip-hop and Island nights. The growth of community dance and music groups was astounding. It was very positive to see the youth of Fiji taking such enthusiastic initiative and the festival was a delightful celebration of Fiji's multicultural melting pot.

Dancers and musicians from the Oceania Centre of USP travelled to China to perform at the inaugural Asia Pacific Youth Arts Festival in Shenzhen. The work was a fusion of traditional and contemporary Pacific dance and was choreographed by the dancers themselves. The piece was accompanied by the music of Calvin Rore which featured his own original bamboo pipes made from PVC piping, a modern interpretation of the traditional bamboo instruments of the Solomon Islands. The Oceania Centre dancers and musicians were given a special award in honour of their performance and of the 26 countries represented at the festival, they were one of three chosen to perform at the closing ceremonies.

The performance highlight in Fiji this year was the staging of *Malaga* at Suva's Civic Centre. The 100 singing dancers from last year's production were re-auditioned and 20 were selected to perform again this year. *Malaga* (the journey) is about the ancient canoe voyages across the Pacific and all the cultures and stories that these explorers encountered on their travels. The music was composed by both the singers and Igaliese Ete with choreography by Sinu Naulumatua and Ateca Ravuvu, featuring a poignant duet performed by the choreographers themselves. This piece moved the audience to tears and will hopefully be touring to Korea soon. Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, described *Malaga* as 'an extraordinary experience'.

# Hong Kong

by Anna CY Chan <annachan@hkapa.edu>



*Cho ngoi dik fu wuhn* choreographed by Cody Choi for Hong Kong Dance Alliance's *Taking Off* and performed by Wong Sze Ling and Trista Cheung. Photographer: Cheung Chi Wai.

## Emerging Choreographer series

Nine emerging choreographers were selected from amongst 35 applicants to participate in the Emerging Choreographer series project, commissioned by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council in May. They are Chan Tan, Cody Choi, Justyne Li, Kwok Ka Yuen, Lai Tak Wai, Jo Leung, Anthony Suen, Chloe Wong, and Wu Yi San. These choreographers, well on their way to establishing themselves as the new generation of Hong Kong dance artists, have danced for some of the world's most exciting dance companies and their choreography has been presented at international festivals and on the world's stages in Hong Kong, Europe and America.

Under the guidance of the mentors, each of the nine choreographers create an original dance for the Emerging Choreographers Series. The works are shown in two different productions: four choreographers on Series I, and five on Series II. The mentors meet regularly to brainstorm with participants during the three months of intensive rehearsals. In review sessions mentors discuss ideas, movement and formal aspects of the dance works with participants. On September 22 the Dance Alliance held a colloquium on the Series I new works that included a showing of excerpts from the dances and a discussion in which mentors and guests in attendance shared their views with each choreographer. Series I, entitled *Taking Off* with Chan Tan, Cody Choi, Justyne Li and Kwok Ka Yuen, was presented successfully in the Theatre of the Sheung Wan Civic Centre on 19 and 20 October. Details of programs and rehearsal photos can be found at <<http://emergingchoreographersseries.blogspot.com>>.

## Hong Kong Ballet nurturing young choreographers

Since 1984, Hong Kong Ballet has produced Choreographic Workshops every year to encourage dancers to participate in choreography. This year, under the artistic leadership of John Meehan, three young choreographers, Carlo Pacis, Selina Chau and Eve Chan, have been appointed as apprentices. Carlo Pacis and Selina Chau choreographed for the Company's *Swan Lake* in August and for Opera HK's *Aida* in October. Eve Chan was commissioned to create a new work *Night Light* for the Company's production *Momentum* in November. Eve may also participate in another new production, *Evolution of Ballet*, in January 2008.

## Performance by three modern dance companies

Founder and artistic director of the City Contemporary Dance Company (CCDC) Willy Tsao, presented *Awakening* by the three Chinese modern dance companies in Hong Kong and China at the Kwai Tsing Theatre Auditorium on 1 & 2 June. A pioneer of modern dance in China and one of the most prolific choreographers in Hong Kong, Willy Tsao established CCDC in 1979 and has been its Artistic Director since 1989.

In 1992 he was invited to be the Artistic Director of Guangdong Modern Dance Company (GMDC). He formed Beijing LDTX Modern Dance Company in 2005 and became the artistic leader, presiding over these three dance companies. Building on the success of their critically acclaimed debut in the Kennedy Centre's Festival of China in 2005, *Awakening* is a triumphant performance featuring CCDC resident choreographer Helen Lai's new work *It's So Easy to Fall in Love*, Deputy Artistic Director of GMDC Liu Qi's *Upon Calligraphy* and *All River Red* by LDTX's Li Hanzhong and Ma Bo.

#### **Three independent Hong Kong choreographers perform in Beijing**

Hong Kong Dance Alliance, invited by LDTX Modern Dance Company in Beijing and sponsored by Hong Kong Arts Development Council and Home Affairs Bureau, was able to send three independent choreographers to Beijing for a modern dance exchange project at the Beijing Modern Dance Summit in July. Pewan Chow, Ong Yong Lock and Yeung Wai Mei each presented a night of performance and one workshop at the LDTX company's venue.

#### **New Dean of Dance at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts**

Dr Anita Donaldson OAM has been appointed Dean of Dance at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. She first joined the Academy in September 2006 as Head of Academic Studies and Coordinator of the MFA (Dance). Dr Donaldson was Dean of the Faculty of Performing Arts of the University of Adelaide and Head of Research & Graduate Studies of the Laban Centre prior to joining the Academy.

#### **Congratulations**

Tom Brown, the Emeritus Chairman of the Hong Kong Dance Alliance was awarded a commendation certificate from the Secretary for Home Affairs, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, 'in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the development of arts and cultural activities' at a ceremony at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on 21 June. Many congratulations to Tom.



Group dance from *City and the Self* choreographed by Kwok Ka Yuen for Hong Kong Dance Alliance's *Taking Off* Photographer: Cheung Chi Wai

# Indonesia

by Helly Minarti

<wda\_indonesia@yahoo.com>

WDA Indonesia was pleased to send its largest delegation ever to the 2007 WDA—AP meeting in Singapore last June. The team managed to raise enough funds to send the four young choreographers, with their dancers, to perform at the Showcase Forum. They were Ni Kadek Yulia Puspasari, Rianto Manali, Ni Kadek Rai Dewi Astini and Liesdia Indriasari.

Kadek Yulia has since been approached by the Esplanade and Rianto Manali was selected for the Asia Young Choreographers Project (AYCP) in Taiwan. Participation in these events proved to be a valuable experience in learning how to plan and work together with our limited resources.

The most immediate project the committee is focusing on at present is the publication of a *Dance Catalogue* in which active choreographers, dance companies, dance schools and dance-related organisations will be able to list their profiles. We aim to have this ready early in 2008 and will utilise the process for recruiting more members.

Since June the local dance scene has been unusually active. The Jakarta Arts Council curated *Urban Issues*, a series of dance performances presenting works by Indonesian choreographers Judi Syuman, Fitri Setyaningsih, Jecko Siompo and Ery Mefri, as well as touring Japanese choreographers organised by Japan Contemporary Dance Network. Jecko Siompo performed his duet, *Tikus-tikus (Rats)* at L.A.B festival in Bangkok, an event curated by Tang Fu Kuen.

The Teater Utan Kayu <www.utankayu.org> also presented an eclectic dance program in the National Museum of Singapore including works by Hartati, Indra Zubir, Hanny, Okty Budiati and

others, representative of the many styles and techniques of local contemporary dance.

The month of November marks the 5th Art Summit Indonesia <www.artsummitindonesia.com> a triennial festival for international performing arts. Highlights of the dance performances were Berlin-based Constanza Macras/DorkyPark's Asia Premiere *I'm not the only one part 1 and 2* and Arco Renz of Kobaltworks. Other companies in the festival were Danza diez Danza from Spain (Monica Runde) with a world premiere; Angela Liong's Art Fission (Singapore) and Jecko Siompo from Indonesia presented a triple bill.

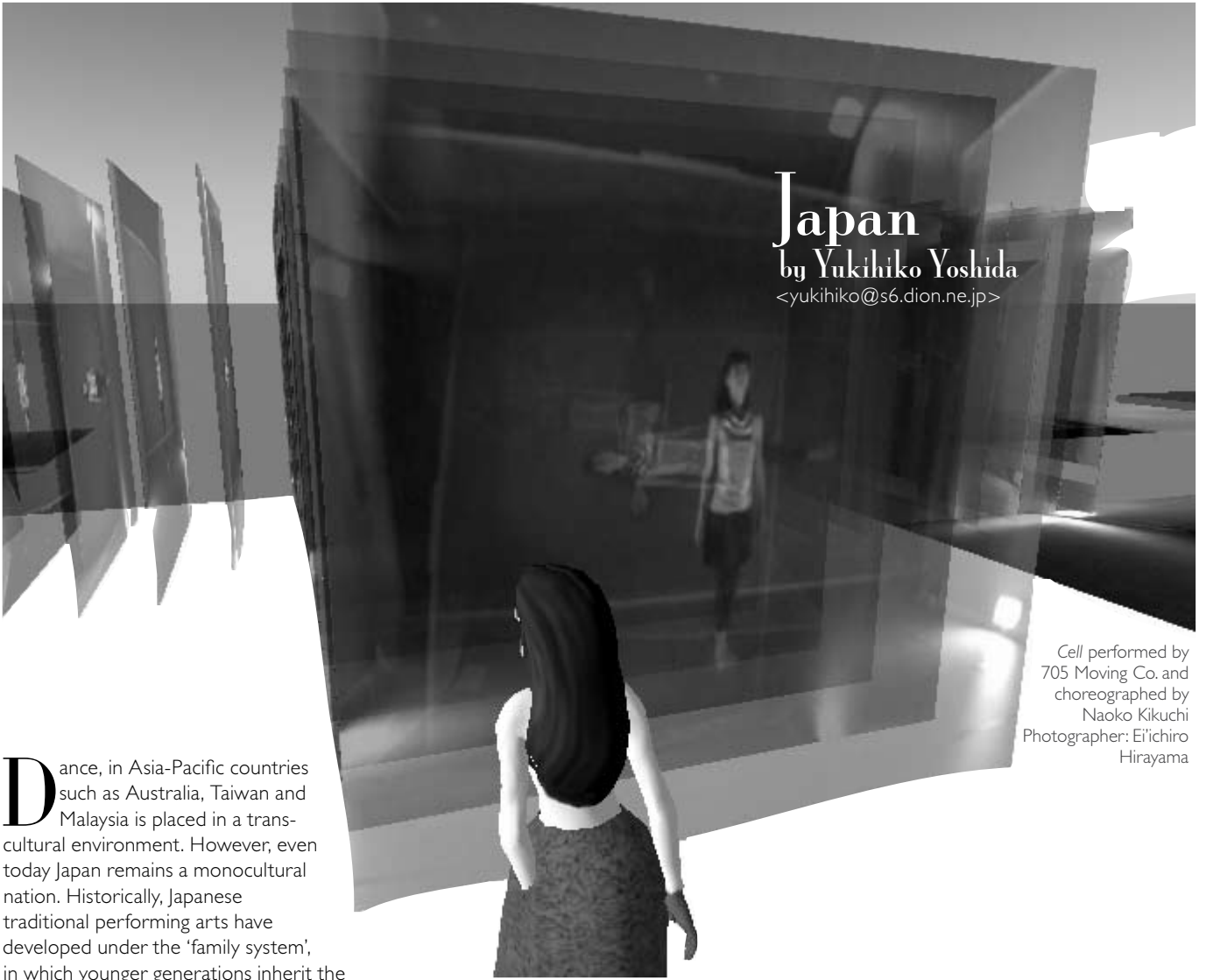
2007 will come to a close with the Dance Gathering—an exchange between choreographers organised by the Jakarta Arts Council. They will invite local choreographers to present and share choreographic techniques with their peers, in the presence of local dance critics and managers. Two international observers are invited: Daesuke Muto from Japan and Bettina Milz from Germany (former curator of Tanzplattform).

Finally, WDA Indonesia has just launched its blog <www.wdaindonesia.wordpress.com> which is posting regular news and updates from the local dance scene! Enjoy!

## Future Events 2008

- 27–29 March Workshop by Helly Minarti: *Contemporary Dance in Asia: Mapping Out a Discourse* in Yogyakarta—in conjunction with Universitas Sanata Dharma <www.usd.ac.id> and Kunci Cultural Studies <www.kunci.or.id>
- October Biennial Indonesian Dance Festival





# Japan

by Yukihiro Yoshida  
<yukihiro@s6.dion.ne.jp>

Cell performed by  
705 Moving Co. and  
choreographed by  
Naoko Kikuchi  
Photographer: Ei'ichiro  
Hirayama

Dance, in Asia-Pacific countries such as Australia, Taiwan and Malaysia is placed in a trans-cultural environment. However, even today Japan remains a monocultural nation. Historically, Japanese traditional performing arts have developed under the 'family system', in which younger generations inherit the skills and art from their teachers who also play a parenting role. Education about networks and technology has not been popular with dancers and dance researchers in spite of rapidly developing media technologies. But change is beginning.

The Japanese dance world is awakening to the Asia-Pacific regions. Young talented dancers such as Kimiho Hulbert, Yu'uko Nishida, Satsuki Sejima and Yu'uka Takenaka are flourishing. Ikue Shiga, from Tokyo City Ballet travelled to Australia on a fellowship from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. Modern dancer Motoko Ikeda toured across the Asia-Pacific region as a member of Homeless Dance Company, which comprises dancers from many different Asian countries. Naoko Kikuchi danced at the WDA Singapore Conference.

Other dancers to be acknowledged are Saeko and Satoko Yahagi, Fukiko Takase, Katsuhiro Uehara, Kanako Yokota, Manami Araki, Hisano Yamanaka, Arisa Kusumi and Natsumi Tokoro. Both Kusumi and Tokoro had the wonderful experience of dancing in The Seoul International

Dance Competition. Butoh artist, Min Tanaka released the dance movie, *Umihiko Yamahiko Maihik* which documents his travels across South-East Asia.

The contemporary dance scene has been relatively quiet and the Toyota Choreography Award Dance Competition was not held this year. The Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN) has remained active however, with artists such as Ko & Edge, Masako Yasumoto, Pink and Ho-Ho Do touring Asia-Pacific countries.

Nihon Buyo artists Toshinami Hanayagi and Sumi Hayanayagi, as well as new generation dancers, Seira Hanayagi and Takajo Kazura, continue their excellent and popular work.

For monocultural Japanese society the dynamism of Asian expression, which is born from a trans-cultural and post-colonial society, shows the way to overcome cultural and racial tension with its multicultural and multi-lingual society.

In Asia-Pacific countries there exist multi-layered conflicts such as class issues, cultural diversity, environmental differences

between northern and southern hemispheres and the conflicting lifestyles of pre and post-modern culture. With the development of media technologies and computer science comes new knowledge and life-styles in an age of globalisation.

The contexts of media content and distances from the object enable materials to have meaning in a multimedia environment. The meanings which are conveyed by the materials are influenced by post-colonial and trans-cultural views, even in analysing dance expression. Those phenomena exist with the support of digital communities on the Internet.

Post-war Japanese culture placed a great deal of importance on Butoh, a style of Japanese contemporary dance. However, there is significant stagnation within the contemporary dance scene today.

Japan needs to recognise and value its ancient indigenous cultures of Ainu and Ryukyu which have their own original traditional dance and arts. We also need to construct and develop new ways for the future of Japanese contemporary dance other than Butoh.

# Korea

by Yang Sook Cho

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During the last WDA—AP AGM in Singapore, current Chapter Head of East Asia, Professor Kui-In Chung of Busan National University and Korea's General Secretary, bid for the 2009 AGM in Korea. Upon her return from Singapore, Professor Chung commenced preparations with Korea's executive board members.

WDA Korea Chapter's President Hae-Shik Kim retired from The Korea National University of the Arts in August and her former students gathered together to organise a night in her honour on 3 June at the Marriot Hotel in Seoul. She was from the first generation of Korean ballet dancers and was the first Korean to join international ballet companies such as Zurich Opera Ballet and Les Grandes Ballets. She was the director of the National Ballet of Korea from 1993 to 1996 and then the first Dean of

Dance Conservatory at Korea National University of Arts from 1996–2003. Professor Kim has successfully trained many young Korean dancers to become prima ballerinas in internationally-renowned ballet companies. Since retirement, she is concentrating on WDC/WDA Korea Chapter as the President and acting as jury member in numerous international ballet competitions such as Varna and New York International.

On 18 November the fifth *Colour of Dance-Purple* was shown at Naru Arts Centre in Seoul. In this series a different colour is designated to each year and compositions are inspired by each colour. The four choreographers this year are Cho Yang Sook, Kuk Eun Mi, Jo Ju Hyun and Chung Sun Hye.



Gala Performance 2007

# Malaysia

Mew Chang Tsing <rvgmew@pd.jaring.my>

For the 2007 MyDance Series (MDS '07) the WDA committee stepped back to become the initiator rather than organiser. We sourced funding, artists and organisations and then left the production in the hands of the choreographers, collaborators and dance organisations. MyDance did not assist or interfere with the administrative and creative processes, and the feedback has been very positive. This is a clear sign that more and more dance companies are well established with networks for publicity and marketing, front-of-house management, licensing and stage/technical management.

In 1997 the majority of dance companies, then only 1–2 years old, had no idea about how to apply for performance permits from a government authority, or deal with tax issues. The infrastructure is maturing!

Malaysian dance companies in 2007 want autonomy. They are ready to sail and MyDance's role is simply to provide the open water. MDS '07 is blessed to have the strong support from the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage and The Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre.

## Major events MDS '07

- MyDance Alliance: DVD Viewing/ Discourse—German Tanztheater. Sponsored by Goethe Institut Kuala Lumpur. (May)
- Nyoba Dance+ (Kuala Lumpur) with Unlock Dancing Plaza (Hong Kong) *Whisper of Love*. Co-sponsored by The United Lee's Association Selangor & Kuala Lumpur. (July)
- Balletbase/LAPAR Lab *Technatomy*. (September)
- Kwang Tung Dance Troupe *The Patched*. Sponsored by Goethe Institute Kuala Lumpur. (December)

Some of the choreographers/organisers have documented their thoughts on these events and we are excited to include their articles here:

***Technatomy* by Balletbase/LAPAR Lab**  
28–30 September. Written by producer/ artistic director: Bilqis Hijjas:

MyDance Alliance provided funding for Balletbase and LAPAR Lab to produce a full-length triple bill, entitled *Technatomy*, addressing the impact of technology in our lives today and in the future. MyDance Alliance's reputation and connection with the Malaysian government and with the Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre allowed us to enjoy a level of support we would not otherwise have had.

The flexibility of the grant application also meant that the three choreographers involved were empowered to drive the content of their own contributions. In this way, we were able to reach out to different tiers of the dance audience, providing accessible multimedia-based works for newcomers and casual viewers as well as works displaying high production values and technical skills to cater to more experienced dance fans.

The feedback we received was extremely positive. Without the support from MyDance Alliance, we would not have been able to mount this production in this slightly unorthodox format.

In future, I expect that this funding opportunity from MyDance Alliance will be able to support similarly emerging and experimental choreographers who individually may not be able to attract support from the establishment, allowing them to make inroads into the industry. It also provides the dancers and the technicians and staff involved with a fair wage, moving the Malaysian dance scene towards greater professionalism.

***Patches of Dreams* (WIP)**, a collaboration between Amy Len (Kwang Tung Dance Troupe, KL) and Ben J. Riepe (Germany) 21–23 December.

The artist, choreographer and dancers from Kwang Tung Dance Troupe enjoyed the week of workshops and rehearsals. They found the experience valuable, as they were not pressured to 'produce' a work, but more focused on learning and growing as choreographers and dancers. Below is a compilation of dancers' after-thoughts, (compiled by producer Samantha Chong, edited by Mew Chang Tsing):



Poster Design for *Technatomy* performed by Balletbase (Kuala Lumpur), LAPAR Lab (Kuala Lumpur) and Axis Dance Company (Singapore). Design: Bright Lights at Midnight

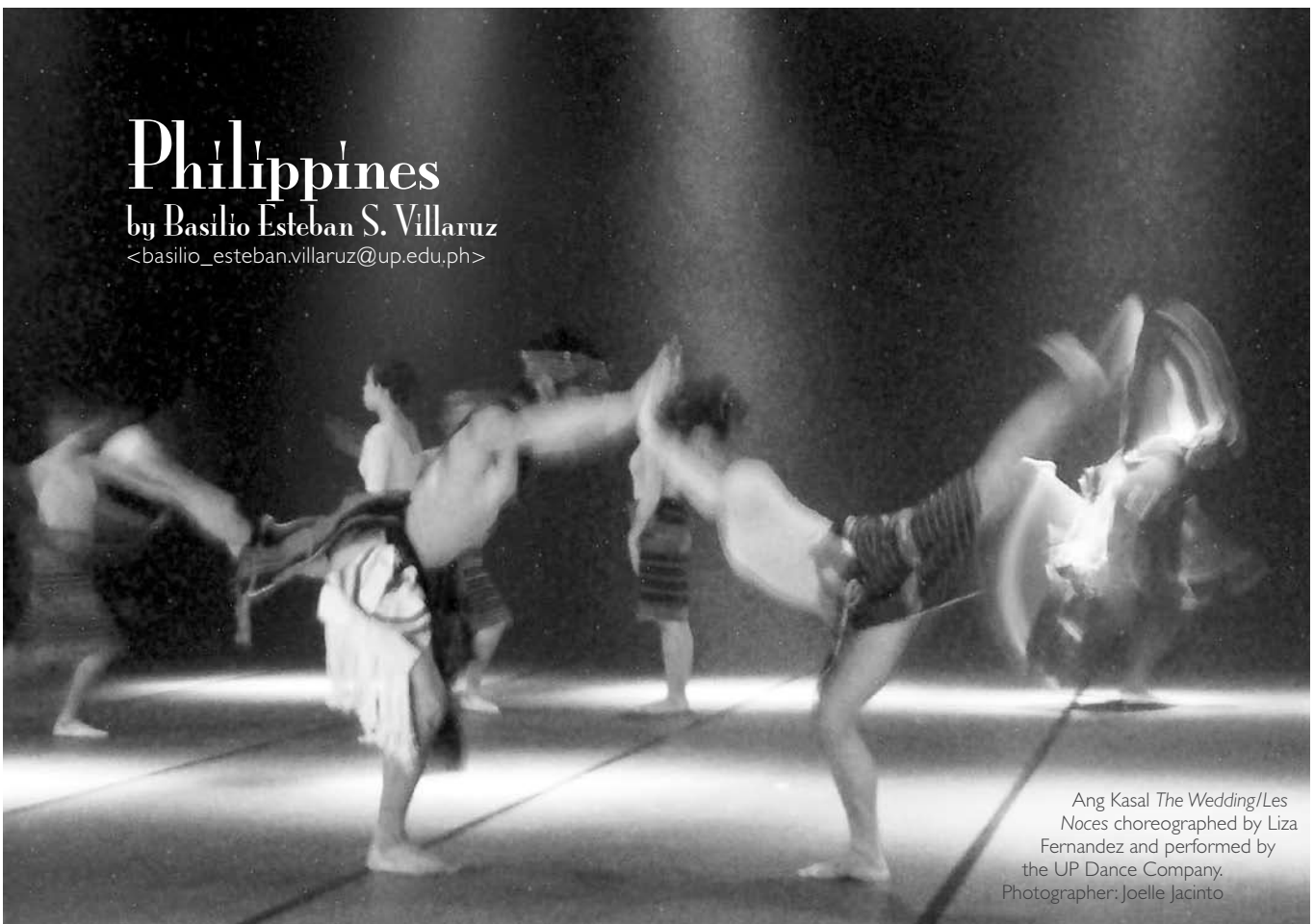
Kwang Tung Dance Troupe is honoured to be given an opportunity to collaborate with a German artist with the sponsorship of MyDance Alliances, The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Heritage and KLPac. Thanks to Goethe Institute Kuala Lumpur for bringing Ben J. Riepe from Germany. *Patches of Dreams* featured works by Ben J. Riepe, Amy Len (tutored by Riepe) and two films by Riepe and Len with other film artists.

Due to the differences of cultural background, body language and facial expressions became the most effective way of communicating, proving that they are the global languages. A vast knowledge of dance theory is essential in this learning process. In order to improve the mutual understanding between dancers, not only must they have total control over their bodies, they must be sensitive to, and aware of, other dancers' bodies, as well as being musically astute.

In order to spark creativity during this collaboration, the choreographers chose to employ improvisation in spite of the many uncertainties and lack of predictability. The dancers attempted to remain in neutral positions in order to be open to all kinds of movement possibilities. However, many dancers were constricted by their own movement languages and found that it is a barrier to improvisational creation. In order to break through this barrier, the courage to go beyond individual comfort zones and to challenge perceptions is very important.

# Philippines

by Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz  
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Ang Kasal *The Wedding/Les Noces* choreographed by Liza Fernandez and performed by the UP Dance Company.  
Photographer: Joelle Jacinto

After the May election—with supposed recurrence of anomalies from an earlier presidential one—the Philippine government is still dogged by graft and corruption charges, especially at the top. Yet the financiers say the economy is improving—with the urban poor still complaining. President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo might end her term in 2010 with this prevailing image.

Moreover, while her predecessor Joseph 'Erap' Ejercito/Estrada has just been convicted of economic plunder from his time (still being appealed in the Supreme Court at the time of writing), there is already an alleged offer from the Arroyo government to grant him pardon. Not even the dictator Ferdinand Marcos—who fled the country in 1986—had this kind of conviction, nor his wife Imelda Romualdez Marcos, who has long returned and enjoys dues from sequestered assets, including foreign bank deposits.

In *Butting Out*, Ananya Chatterjea reports on how Chandralekha, upon encountering social stresses, would choreographically ask, 'How can we poeticize this?'

In the '80s I had once thought of doing a ballet inspired by Macbeth and his Lady to disguise a choreographic criticism of the Marcoses. Circumstance did not allow this to happen. At the assassination in 1983 of 'Ninoy' Aquino—arch rival of Marcos—I instead choreographed to a Catholic Mass by composer Ryan Cayabyab in 1984, symbolically encapsulating his martyrdom and paralleling it with Christ's crucifixion. Later, Denisa Reyes did create a modern ballet to a libretto by Nicanor Tiongson on the seven sufferings of the Motherland in *Siete Dolores*.

Perhaps today, it is long overdue for some choreographers to reflect in dance on both the past and current governance.

(Coincidentally in August, I did a two-session dance workshop in a congress for good citizenship: *ImagiNation—Art of Nation*

*Building* for the College of Public Administration and Governance, University of the Philippines. Artists from all mediums contributed to this congress which focused on artistic integrity as possible examples for governance and society.)

To mark National Dance Week and International Dance Day in April, Contemporary Dance Map of WDA—Philippines Choreography and Performance Network, headed by Paul Morales and assisted by Angel Lawenko and Nina Hayuma Habulan, conducted its third year of workshops and performances. CDM gives voice to independent dance groups in regional areas. The National Commission for Culture and the Arts also provided performances all over Metro-Manila for several companies.

In July we had our second year of the Wi-Fi Body festival at the Cultural Centre organised by Morales and Myra Beltran and featuring the CDM groups (and network members) in a gala, plus others in the *Emerging Talent Showcase*. Also this year there was a solo contemporary dance competition for emerging choreographers. Japan Foundation and Nestor Jardin (president of the Centre) donated the prizes.

The winners were: 1st place—Ava Villanueva for *Inside*; 2nd place—Herbert Alvarez for *Lamentations*. The popular choice prize went to Habulan's piece. Coincidentally, all three were students of the dance degree program and with the UP Dance Company (College of Music, University of the Philippines.) Villanueva and Habulan are now associated with Airdance. Villanueva has joined the Asia Europe Foundation's dance forum in Poland, while Alvarez was with the WDA-AP linked Pandang Panjang Workshop-Festival in Sumatra in 2006 and the Asian Young Choreographers Forum in Taipei in 2007.

Also in July the UP Dance Company again joined *Tari'07* at the National Academy for the Arts, Culture and Heritage in Kuala



Lumpur. It was organised by WDA-Malaysia's Joseph Gonzales. The festival included a seminar on education and choreography, and workshops run by all participating groups from Malaysia, Korea, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, India, Australia and New Zealand.

UP Dance Company performed *Ang Kasal*, a localised version of Stravinsky's *Les Noces* choreographed by Flordeliza Fernandez, former Associate Artistic Director of UPDC and now working in Toronto. Other performances included a restaging of *Mata sa Damgo* (*Eye in a Dream*) by Elena Laniog; Ernest Hojilla's *Udlot-Udlot*; Alvarez's male duet, *Janus Me* and the hilarious trio *Sa Se Si* by Laniog. UP dance graduate and now journalist, Joelle Jacinto, covered the festival for the newspaper *Malaya*.

UPDC encored *Ang Kasal* at the MCO Foundation dance season in October, together with Myra Beltran's Dance Forum, Morales' Airdance and Neo-Nescas. The festival was organised by Vella Damian who earlier presented her own ballet school in the same event in Makati, Metro-Manila.

Activity by the major ballet companies in Pasay City included Ballet Manila with premieres of works by Ernest Mandap (France) and Sergei Vikulov (St Petersburg) and Vikulov's staging of *Swan Lake*.

Philippine Ballet Theatre premiered works by Morales, Ronilo Jaynario, Stanley Canete, Bezhnev Larlar (once a student at the Australian Ballet School) and Gener Caringal (Artistic Director), plus *Don Quixote* with Filipino-Finnish guest Aarne Kristian Ruutu and Faye Abigail Tan.

Ballet Philippines premiered works by Augustus Damian with Jeffrey Espejo and Alden Lugnasin.

WDA—Philippines secretary-treasurer Shirley Halili Cruz also scored successes at the Commonwealth Society of Teachers of Dancing competitions in Singapore, Asia and Los Angeles.

Pappa Tarahumara's *Three Sisters* production from Japan performed in the Philippines in July and this was followed in August by Japan Contemporary Dance Network's artists: Ho Ho-Do, Pink, butoh artist Hiroyuki Miura, and Ko Murobushi's Ko & Edge Company, joined by Ava Villanueva as Wi\_Fi winner for Japan Foundation. The network also conducted a workshop at the University of the Philippines, all under the auspices of Japan Foundation.

Japan is increasingly linking itself to Philippine dance, with Donna Miranda of Green Papaya winning at the Yokohama Dance Collection-R Solo X duo competition. She also performed a duet by, and with, Jay Cruz of Dancing Wounded Commune. In October, Filipiniana Dance Company of the University of the Philippines also performed in Japan.

Another visitor was the Filipino/Canadian Alvin Tolentino with a new, extended version of his *Rice*, together with Myra Beltran's *Frieda Kahlo*, earlier presented at the Instituto Cervantes. (Spain has been presenting interesting contemporary dancers along with its flamenco and other artists. As a former colonialist, Spain now contributes more significantly to the arts in the Philippines than does a later colonialist, the USA.) Beltran herself celebrated the 10th anniversary of her Dance Forum.

The national finals of the ballet section of the National Music Competition for Young Artists at the Cultural Centre of the Philippines were held on November 24 & 25

Entries are first sorted by video (this year a record 93 applications nationwide were submitted) with 28 qualifying for the regional finals. Co-chairing the dance competition were Corazon Inigo (Vice-President, WDA-Philippines) and myself. Overall direction for the NAMCYA is by Dean Ramon Acoymo of the College of Music, University of the Philippines. The competition is under the auspices of the Cultural Centre, with assistance from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

It is only the third year in which ballet has been included in this competition. Past winners have been Jared Tan (juniors, 2004), and Faye Abigail Tan (seniors, 2005) both from Philippine Ballet Theatre.

This year the Francisca Reyes Aquino Memorial Foundation produced the long-awaited book about our first national dance artist, *Lola Kikay: Pioneer Researcher on Philippine Folk Dance—the Life and Works of Francisca Reyes Aquino*. It was launched at the Cultural Centre in July during Wi\_Fi Body Festival and then re-launched in September in Kikay's own province of Bulacan.

Aquino has anthologised all Philippine folk dances since before WW II, feeling that the incursion of the West was going to eventually exclude them from folk practice. Aside from her other books, she has produced nine volumes on these alone (the ninth with several collaborators). Other researchers followed, including Libertad Villanueva Fajardo, Jovita Sison Friese, Jose Balcena, Juan Miel, Petronila Suarez, Ligaya Fernando Amilbangsa and Ramon Obusan (also a national artist).

My own book *Treading Through: 45 Years of Philippine Dance* (University of the Philippines Press, 2006) won in the cultural studies category at the annual awards of Manila Critics Circle. The book was launched in 2006 at the Cultural Centre and University of the Philippines, and in 2007 in San Francisco and at the WDA—AP conference in Singapore in June this year.

# Singapore

by Siri Rama <sirirama@hotmail.com>

We are now under the dynamic leadership of our newly elected president Caren Carino, who coincidentally also took on the position of Head of Dance at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore. At the AGM former President Dr Chua Soo Pong was bid a reluctant adieu and some other changes took place in the executive body of this WDA chapter. As we were quite reluctant to let go of Dr Chua's experience and expertise, he agreed take on the role of coordinating the Research & Documentation network in Singapore. Madam Som has resigned as treasurer, a job which she has proficiently handled all these years, and she has been succeeded by myself as of 19 November. Teresa Pee was elected coordinator of the Education & Training network and Kavitha Krishnan is to lead the Management & Promotion network. Aaron Khek was elected again to be the vice-president as well as the Creation & Performance network coordinator, and Joey Chua took over the vital role of secretary from Caren Carino.

Bidding goodbye to the delegates and presenters at the WDA Asia Pacific Dance Bridge Conference, the Singapore committee hoped to take a breather; but not so my friends! We enthusiastically jumped into organising the 2nd Dance Education conference *Choreography: Approaches, Safe Dance Practice and Resources*, in partnership with the Ministry of Education Co-Curricular Activities Branch and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA). The two-day conference was aimed at dance instructors/teachers and teachers-in-charge of dance programs in Singapore's schools, studios, academies and institutions.

Established choreographers and dance educators, including WDA members Madam Som Said, Lim Fei Shen, Ku Meng Shen, Zhang Xiao Xiong, Nirmala Seshadri and Dr Siri Rama presented, along with local and international artists. The conference saw a dynamic team of presenters talk on choreography, followed by discussion sessions with choreographers and teachers-in-charge. This was followed by workshops by leading choreographers in which they demonstrated their works and coached the dance instructors in choreography. Under the leadership of Caren Carino, Aaron Khek, Peter Ng, Boon Fam and Teresa Pee a number of WDA volunteers teamed up with others from NAFA and worked hard to bring together very meaningful dialogue in Singapore's growing dance sector.

In October, under the aegis of Maya Dance Theatre, a collaborative effort between them and the Institut Seni Indonesia Denpasar, saw the presentation of a contemporary dance theatre work. *Atma* has evolved over the years and although it is set to the amalgamation of several classical Asian dance forms—namely Bharata Natyam and Baris Dance from Bali—the production has a strong contemporary flavour. *Atma* is based on the demonic character Ravana in the epic *Ramayana*, with WDA member Kavitha Krishnan leading the cast with music contributions by Alex Dea.

Also in October, students at the NAFA Department of Dance saw the presentation of *The Third Space Series: Contemporary Asian*



*ATMA* performed by Kavitha Krishnan and choreographed by Kavitha Krishnan & Juraimy Abu Bakar

*Explorations*. Ku Meng Shen, Aaron Khek, Ix'Wong, and Lim Fei Shen presented works influenced by both Asian cultural heritages and Western contemporary approaches.

With these performances, and many more in the future, the Singapore chapter sees itself quite energised after the last WDA meeting.

## Events

- 2nd Dance Education Conference  
Choreography Approaches, Safe Dance Practice and Resources. 6 & 7 September at NAFA Singapore
- Maya Dance Theatre *Atma* 26 & 28 October, Singapore
- *The Third Space Series: Contemporary Asian Explorations in Dance*. 21 October at NAFA Singapore
- *Mriga Jataka—Buddhist Dance Drama* by Siri Rama and Kanaka Sabha dance troupe. September 30, Murdeshwar, India at World Vegan Conference
- Series of Indian classical dance programs by Siri Rama and Kanaka Sabha troupe *Divya Darshanam*. 2 October at Udupi, India and 6 & 7 October at Bangalore, India

# Taiwan

by Su-Ling Chou <dance@mail.tyhs.edu.tw>

Taiwanese dance continues to develop as young generations experiment with new ways and technologies for presenting their choreography. The Taiwan Dance Research Association, established in 2003, together with the tertiary dance programs, are the main driving forces behind the development of dance research, with annual dance panels and/or seminars.

WDA—AP Taiwan hosted the 2007 Asia Young Choreographer Project in July and August in two locations—Kaohsiung and Taipei. In Kaohsiung there were eight talented young choreographers invited to make and present work from July 9 to 26. Five were from Taiwan: Ting-yu Chen, Ya-ting Chang, Pei-jun Lee, Cynthia Lee, and Ching-ru Wei, plus Low Mei Yoke from Singapore, Rianto from Indonesia and Kim See Sun from Korea. The performances held on July 27–29 in Tsoying Dance Theater presented different and distinctive styles expressing various cultural backgrounds.

The project in Taipei was hosted by TNUA under the guidance of Council for Culture Affairs, Taiwan. Aimee Smith from Australia, Herbert E. Alvarez from Philippines, Wei-jia Su from Taiwan and Saeko Aoki from Japan were chosen to present their works in TNUA Dance Hall on 25 August.

WDA—AP Taiwan is working hard to expand its membership to include the high school dance programs as well as increase the number of independent members. WDA—AP events are published through the membership email system and reach a majority of members of the dance community.

## July to December 2007

### Performances:

1. Wind Dance Theatre *Optic Fun*, 11–14 October at National Experimental Theatre
2. Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company *Shadow of I*, 9–11 November at Art Space of Eslite Bookstore in Tainan City
3. Dance Forum Taipei *Untitled Work #25*, 25 August at TNUA Dance Theater; *Blink*, 28 November at Chun-li Hall of Tao-yuan County Bureau of Culture; 6 December at Yi-shen Hall of National Dr Sun Yat Sen University in Kaohsiung City
4. Assembly Dance Theatre *Love in Wonderland*, 13–16 September at National Experimental Theatre; 5 October at Cultural Affairs Bureau of Miaoli County Chung-cheng Hall; 27 October at Hsin-Chuang City Culture Center of Arts; *Lily*, 9–11 November at Tsai Jui-yueh Dance Studio
5. Ku & Dancers *Memory Puzzles*, 29 September at Dream Hall of Wen-in Building in Taichung City
6. Sun-Shier Dance Theatre *Sun-Shier Salon 2007*, 15–16 September at Sun-Shier Dance Studio; *Gala of Kuan-du Arts Festival*, 19–21 October at TNUA Dance Hall; *Hood, Veil, Shoes*, 9 November at Yilan Performing Arts Center; 24 November at Arts Hall of Cultural Affairs Bureau; 30 November and 1 December at Tsoying Dance Theater; 7–9 December at National Experimental Theatre

7. Tsoying Dance Group, Tsoying High School *2007 Tsoying Dance Troupe Performance*, 19 December at Shu-ter Science and Technology University Big Hall; 25–30 December at Tsoying Dance Theater in Kaohsiung City
8. Chunghwa School of Arts 2007 Students' Creative Dance Concerts, 2 December at Kaohsiung City Cultural Center Chih-Shan Hall; 15–16 December at Tainan City Wu-Yuan Art Center
9. Kaohsiung City Ballet *The Peony Pavilion, Mudanting*, 9 November at Cultural Affairs Bureau of Pingtung County Art Center; 15 November at The Chungli Arts Hall; 21 November at Tainan Municipal Cultural Center; 29 November at Kaohsiung Cultural Center Chih-Teh Hall; 11 October at Taitung County Government Bureau of Cultural Affairs; 28 October at Chiayi Performing Arts Center
10. Taipei Folk Dance Theater *Life-Long Companionship*, 2–4 November at Novel Hall for Performing Arts in Taipei City
11. Jessie Fan Dance Company *Vu.Shon*, 24 November at Tsoying Dance Theatre in Kaohsiung City; 30 November at NCTU Theater
12. Tso's Dance Association *Living Matters*, 4–5 August at Tsoying Dance Theater in Kaohsiung City; 11–12 August at Crown Theater in Taipei City

### Scholarships:

1. Chin Lin American Dance Festival Scholarship, sponsored by Chin Lin Foundation for Culture and Arts (CLFCA).
2. The Award for the New Generation Choreographers in Taiwan, by CLFCA.
3. The Award for Graduates' Paper Presentation, by CLFCA.

### Sponsorships:

1. 2007 Annual Plan of Taiwan Dance Research Association by CLFCA and Ministry of Education, Taiwan.



2. 2007 Annual Plan of Tso's Dance Association by CLFCA and its memberships.
3. 2006 WDA—AP, Taiwan Annual Planning by CLFCA.
4. The Development of Young Artists Grant by CLFCA.
5. Asian Choreographers Workshop Travel Grant Program for Ms Yi-fen Tung to India funded by CLFCA

**Conferences:**

1. The Seminar on Contemporary Dance in Both Sides of Taiwan Strait, 24–26 August by Taipei Physical College and Taiwan Music/Dance Culture Foundation
2. Research Panels and Seminars for Graduate Students, 28–30 August by Taipei Physical College and Taiwan Music/Dance Culture Foundation

3. Appropriation and Appreciation of Dance and Music: A Trans-Cultural Perspective, 24–25 November by Dance Research Society, Taiwan

**Workshops:**

1. Chinese Classical Dance Workshop, 20–23 August by Taipei Physical College and Taiwan Music/Dance Culture Foundation
2. Taipei International Dance Elite Academy (TAIPEIDEA), 20–23 August by Taipei National University of the Arts including Professional Dance Workshop, Labanotation Workshop, and Asia Young Choreographers Project
3. 2007 Kuan Du Arts Festival and TNUA 25th Anniversary Lecture/Demonstration, 15–16 October by Dance Forum Taipei



Pieces from 2007 Asian Young Choreographer Project  
 1. *Forest*, choreographer Low Mei Yoke (Singapore)  
 2. *Being Late*, choreographer Wei Ching-ru (Taiwan)  
 3. *I am Here*, choreographer Rianto (Indonesia)  
 Photographer: Liu Zen-hau

# Vietnam

## Ho Chi Minh City

by Sophie Yuen Mason <smason@sischool.org>

After a 20-year absence from its repertoire, Vietnam National Opera Ballet Theatre (VNOBT) performed *Giselle* on 23 & 24 September at the Hanoi Opera House. The stunning theatre is a replica of the Paris Opera, built in 1900 and restored in late 1990s.

The unique group founded by Le Vu Long and his wife Luu Thu Lan, Together Higher Dance Company, consisting entirely of deaf performers, produced a dance video titled *Thau Truyen* in July, performed *Round Heaven—Square Earth* in June and has also toured in the USA. The company's repertoire includes an 80-minute long dance piece entitled *Stories of Us*, choreographed by Le Vu Long.

The Ho Chi Minh Ballet Symphony Orchestra Company has been busy with many events such as: *Autumn Melodies* (17, 18 & 19 August); *Ballet Saga of a Romance* (2 September); the 13th Anniversary of HCMC Ballet Symphony Orchestra (9 September); *Ballet Le Corsaire and Modern Dance* (9 October). The dance works included: *Mazurka, Lankedem & Gulnare, Three Slaves, Conrad-Medora-Ali, Pair of Shoes, The Moment of Love, Brothers, One Minute and Vein of Life*.



1



2



3

1. *Le Corsaire* choreographed by Le Thi Hoa and performed by Nhu and Bao Trung  
Photographer: Le Thi Hoa

2 & 3. *Stories of us* choreographed by Le Vu Long and performed by Lu Thu Lan  
Photographer: Cao Xuan Huy

### Performing Arts Week and Dance Competition, Saigon South International School Ho Chi Minh City:

SSIS Performing Arts Week took place on 24–28 September with music and dance students performing in the school cafeteria during the morning break each day. Students also presented a Powerpoint display and dance video clips during the week. At the United Nations Day program on 24 October, SSIS High School dance team performed *Satori Remix*, a dance theatre piece from the New York City Broadway Dance Centre. The beginning music for the work was composed by SSIS music students with additional music from the Japanese drumming group Tatakku. This dance has many complex sequences, very strong rhythmic movements and showcased the youth, passion and spirit of the dance team.

# Events & opportunities

## Rural Retreat

Hertfordshire, UK, 10–14 January 2008

The dance world's artistic directors and creative producers of the future are the focus of DanceEast's fourth Rural Retreat. From a list of 70 applicants, 26 aspiring leaders from around the globe have been selected for an intensive think-tank of inspirational and provocative talks and discussions about the realities and challenges of the artistic director's job in the 21st century. The 2008 Rural Retreat is structured for would-be directors of mid to large-scale ballet and contemporary dance companies. In addition to group workshops, there will be key speakers on leadership including Sadler's Wells' artistic director Alistair Spalding, Frank Andersen from the Royal Danish Ballet and Reid Anderson, artistic director of Stuttgart Ballet. Two other luminaries from the worlds of sport and business will also attend the retreat as guest speakers. For further information go to <[www.danceeast.co.uk](http://www.danceeast.co.uk)>.

## International Dance Day

29 April 2008

Celebrations at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France and throughout the world.

## World Dance Alliance 7th Global Assembly

Brisbane, Australia, 13–18 July 2008

WDA—AP will host the 7th WDA Global Assembly in Brisbane, Australia, in association with Ausdance Queensland. Details of the program on page 13 and the Ausdance website <<http://www.ausdance.org.au>>. Enquiries to Marcus Hughes <[eo.qld@ausdance.org.au](mailto:eo.qld@ausdance.org.au)>.

## Interface 2008

Kolkata, India

This International Festival of Alternative and Contemporary Expressions is the first ever international arts festival of Eastern India and the only international platform for contemporary expressions in the alternative arts. It aims to facilitate the gathering of artists from various disciplines to exchange ideas, develop collaborations and solutions and to develop a larger and more meaningful international arts fraternity. Interface is a major event in the cultural calendar of Kolkata covering the disciplines of dance, music, installations, painting, fashion, theatre and cinema. All artists are invited to join us for the 2008 festival <[www.sapphirecreations.org](http://www.sapphirecreations.org)>.

## International Performers Village '08

Malpils, Latvia, 1–28 August 2008

The four-week International Performers Village is open to professional actors, dancers, musicians, directors, choreographers, playwrights, scriptwriters and artists from different countries, creative genres, techniques and styles. <<http://www.iugte.com/projects/Performance.php>>.

## Study Tour to Pacific Arts Festival

Pago Pago, American Samoa, July/August 2008

The Continuing Education Department of Victoria University is planning a study tour to the tenth Pacific Arts Festival. Held every four years, this festival allows Pacific Island nations to share their

cultures and aspirations with each other and the rest of the world. A series of preparatory sessions will be offered in Wellington and will be open to those who are interested but who are unable to attend the Festival itself. For further details, please contact <[andrea.cochrane@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:andrea.cochrane@vuw.ac.nz)> or <[jennifer.shennan@vuw.ac.nz](mailto:jennifer.shennan@vuw.ac.nz)>.

## National Prague Dance Festival

1–7 July 2008

The festival/competition is open to all private and amateur dance schools, groups and institutions. <<http://www.praguedancefestival.cz/lang/en/home.php>>

## Society of Dance History Scholars SDHS *Looking Back/Moving Forward*, 31st Annual Conference

Skidmore College, Saratoga Springs, New York, 12–15 June

2008 marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of the incorporation of SDHS—an opportunity for us to acknowledge and honour our founders. On this occasion, we invite scholars to look back—at dance, at dancers and at the field of dance scholarship itself. Saratoga Springs is home to the National Museum of Dance, an important site for considering archival work and the Saratoga Performing Arts Center <<http://www.sdhs.org>>.

## Study Balinese Music & Dance in Bali with Gamelan Cudamani, Summer 2008 Çudamani Gamelan Music & Dance Summer Institute

Bali, Indonesia, 30 June – 19 July 2008

Application deadline: January 25, 2008 or until enrollment fulfilled. With the success of the 2007 summer program, the internationally acclaimed Çudamani ensemble will once again invite a select group of 35 individuals from around the world to participate in a rigorous study of Balinese Music and Dance in Pengosekan. In addition to intensive classes with master artists/teachers, the program will include: visits to temple ceremonies and sacred sites; observations of a wide range of performances including Çudamani rehearsals; and daily encounters with the local artists and the community. This program is a rare opportunity for participants to be a part of one of the most vibrant and creative cultures in the world. Fees: \$1,950 (includes instruction, shared housing, breakfast, lunch, and excursions). Non-refundable application fee of \$25. <[www.cudamani.org](http://www.cudamani.org)> or email: [s.rodiguez@ucla.edu](mailto:s.rodiguez@ucla.edu)

## International Workshop on Folk Dances

Chandigarh, India, 15–24 February, 2008

The Chandigarh Institute of Performing Arts (CIPA) is a leading cultural organisation in Northern India which aims to develop, promote and preserve performing arts in India and abroad. CIPA is committed to the dissemination of art and culture for the purpose of educating emerging artists in a variety of mediums. Indian Folk Dances are rich in variety and rhythmic in nature. The participants will experience different folk dance forms such as Bhangra and Giddha (Punjab), Ghoomer (Haryana), Dandia (Gujrat), Kabelaia (Rajasthan) and others. The workshops will culminate in performances on the final day before an invited audience <[www.geocities.com/cipa\\_india](http://www.geocities.com/cipa_india)>.

# World Dance Alliance – Asia Pacific

## MISSION

To serve as a primary voice and support group for dance in the Asia-Pacific region

## OBJECTIVES

- 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.

## FOUNDER

Carl Wolz

## 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](http://www.wdaamericas.org)> and WDA Europe <[www.wda-europe.com](http://www.wda-europe.com)>. A fourth regional centre, WDA Africa, is in the process of establishing itself.

## NETWORKS

Based on specific areas of interest, these networks focus the activities of WDA and WDA Asia-Pacific.

They are:

- Education & Training
- Research & Documentation
- Creation & Presentation
- Welfare & Status
- Management & Promotion

## CHAPTERS

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, which address not only the general goals of WDA and WDA Asia-Pacific, but also the specific needs of the local dance community.

The countries (chapters) in each WDA—AP region are:

- East Asia: Japan, Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong
- Southeast 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

## MEMBERSHIP

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

## 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.

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# World Dance Alliance – Asia Pacific

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