



ASIA PACIFIC CHANNELS

**THE NEWSLETTER OF THE
WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE: ASIA PACIFIC CENTER**

2001

Vol. 1/January

**WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE 2001
ASIA PACIFIC DANCE BRIDGE
SINGAPORE
6-10 June**

WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE: ASIA PACIFIC

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Publisher: Australian Dance Council (Ausdance)
ISSN 1328-2115



WDA:APC PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Since the good old Hong Kong Days we must have smiled at each other, shaken hands (and broken bread and legs together), exchanged cards and really followed up on each other's responsibilities for WDA, through conferences, performances, *Channels* deadlines, e-mails to answer, etc. The organization is really alive with our sounding out each other, seeing each other's dances, apprenticeship from our weaning and growing years with Carl and later Miki.

Our editor Hilary suggested I say a bit about myself on this page. Currently, I am in charge of the dance program of the College of Music, University of the Philippines. It is now 20 years old, granting both diploma (4 years) and bachelor (5 years) degrees. Aside from practical and theoretical dance, we have many musical and theatrical (production) courses, plus movement notation and languages. We have been served by Indonesian, Malaysian, Japanese, Australian, Canadian and American guest teachers. Its laboratory arm is the UP Dance Company. I also am the president of WDA-Philippines, succeeding Nestor Jardin (from our Asia Pacific Dance Association days). We work out our membership with the aid of the Dance Committee (of which I am vice-head, with our WDA-AP vice-president Corazon Inigo as chair) of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

For years I have been dance and drama critic for various Metro-Manila broadsheets, and long-time correspondent for *Dance Magazine*. I have contributed to publications in Hong Kong, Singapore, Korea, Australia, Germany and the United States. I have written a good number of monographs on Philippine Dance, including for our *CCP Encyclopedia of Philippine Art* (which dance volume I edited). I was already doing this while a dancer/choreographer for Ballet Philippines and Dance Theatre Philippines (of which I became artistic director for seven years). In college I was an English and History major, going on to do some graduate work in Asian Studies and Comparative Literature. I am also a choreologist in the Benesh system.

I have observed and studied dance worldwide (through several grants), particularly in numerous WDA events — also some with the International Theatre Institute (of whose Dance Committee I was a board member) and with the Conseil International de la Danse.

Because of these activities, we must have met a number of times. From now on we must get in touch with each other more often, see each other annually in WDA events. We hope one such will be in Singapore in 2001. Indeed, we must also meet in 2002 in Germany. Already, we hear proposals from Taiwan and India for 2003. So we will be together more frequently — and I hope comfortably.

After our 'apprenticeship years' with Carl, we are now very much on our own two — and many — feet. May we dance the dance of WDA:Asia Pacific more actively, more colorfully. In a diversity of styles that we must orchestrate as one Life in Dance, a meaningful Dance of Life.

Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz

REPORT FROM TOKYO

BASILIO ESTEBAN S. VILLARUZ
President, WDA-Asia Pacific
President, WDA-Philippines

We are in this together for the next three years! (As we have been and will be for more.) We hope for fulfilling work in and for WDA, and following from that in our own respective careers in dance.

At the 4th Global Assembly in Tokyo, 31 July–6 August, we renewed ties and found new ones to advance our shared projects in dance. Aside from the three active Networks in Education and Training, Choreography and Performance, Research and Documentation, we aimed for the activation of Status and Welfare (formerly named Transitions) for the benefit of dance artists and workers) and saw a fifth and new network in Management and Promotion.

Global delegates and guests at the 4th World Dance Alliance Assembly in Tokyo including Carl Wolz, global secretary-general; Marc Jonkers (president) and Bertram Müller (executive director) WDA: Europe; Grant Strate (president) and Ilona Copen (vice-president) WDA: the Americas; and Lee Lee Lan (vice president) WDA: Asia-Pacific
Photo and caption: courtesy Basilio Esteban Villaruz



We have gained a broadening of areas and perspectives in which to find a place and fulfilment for the dance artists, their collaborators and communities. Already, I have provided a list of Asian agents to Carl and Jan Hanvik (for the American network). In charge for us in Asia are Sal Murgiyanto (Indonesia) and Nestor Jardin (Philippines). Jardin had organized a meeting of the Federation for Asian Cultural Promotion in 1998 in Manila.

The global meeting between the three regional centers of WDA (Asia-Pacific, the Americas and Europe) also clarified provisions in the Rules of Procedure that concerned all delegates and observers, and set forward aims and structures that will make the work of WDA productive and effective. As heretofore talked about, there was always a plan to open up centers for Africa and the Middle East. Europe has already initiated the move to include Russia (which geographically includes a large part of Asia).

Made more firm was the office of the global secretariat with Carl Wolz as secretary general in New York. This crucial office will more clearly define WDA efforts globally, which of course Carl has been doing on a

volunteer basis all these years since the 1995 global assembly in Korea. It is still not possible that much maintenance can be provided for his office, but there were tokens of US\$1,000 from each center to start with. The expansion of the WDA's scope puts further pressure (in terms of both time and finance) on Carl personally!

What was exciting for us was the tapping of new initiatives and young participants in the WDA efforts. Realized in 2000 were a choreography workshop

in Taipei (with Nanette Hassall as chair), and the publication of the Asia Pacific Dance Research Society's *Asian Dance: Voice of the Millennium* issue, following last year's database on researchers, edited by Mohd Anis Md Nor. Already, he is working on the 2001 issue.

Our next event is *Asia Pacific Dance Bridge* to be held in June in Singapore (c/o Caren Carino (email: ccarino@lasallesia.edu.sg)). This is the first time Singapore has offered to host us, and we wish Caren well.

[Details of the 2001 conference will be available on the college website: <http://www.lasallesia.edu.sg> in the middle of February — ed]

Yes, we are optimistic, partly because Lee Lee Lan is our new vice-president. She was our long-time recording secretary, and once informal treasurer. She is from Malaysia.

Another good development is Susan Street's move to the Hong Kong Academy for the Performing Arts as dean of dance. As she is head of our Education and Training Network (with Cheryl Stock at the global level), we have this network at the center of Asia-Pacific. Perhaps we can plan to meet in HK again in 2003, after the next global assembly in 2002 in Düsseldorf. It would be a follow-up on that year's theme of education, this time concentrated on Asia. And because Tom Brown is there and I am nearby, we can also work on something substantial for the Status and Welfare Network.

The paper presentations in Tokyo, organized by Hideaki Onuki, and the workshops all proved rewarding for many who came from various parts of the world. The papers given there have all been published as have those from the Manila event in 1998, which are available from the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Roxas Blvd., Manila, at US\$20 including post.

The festival in Tokyo offered diverse programs that showed the strength (and some weakness) of the Asian dance scene. A regret was the non-representation of South and Southeast Asia. The solo artists' performances (with the dancers of Marie Chouinard of Canada, USA's Bill T. Jones, Korea's Sin Cha Hong, Japan's Kei Takei, and the venerable Kazuo Ohno) were for the most part marvelous journeys through time and space, on cross-cultural orientations.

The opening performance that intimated the diversity to be found in Japan was also made enticing by the multi-faceted nature of Japanese contemporary performers, including our past-president Miki Wakamatsu, who was inspired to close the presentation with a notable solo. A multi-awarded artist, he now heads a group of dancers over 65 called Silver Beat Dancers who have toured globally.

We really must thank Miki and his staff very much for realizing this big event of a global assembly, festival, conference, workshops and dance market. And of course Carl, who has stirred things up globally since 1993 in the first event in Japan (prior to Korea) and of course way, way back in Hong Kong.

To update you with the results of the WDA-AP election on 31 July in Tokyo. Yes, I have succeeded Miki as president (both of us after Carl). As mentioned, Lee Lan is our vice-president. Our recording secretary is Prakriti Kashyap (India), our corresponding secretary is Josefina Guillen (Philippines), and our treasurer is Shirley Halili Cruz (Philippines). (It was decided that the last two should come from the same country as the president.)

We retained the area vice-presidents: Hae Shik Kim (Korea) for East Asia, Tom Ibnur (Indonesia, still to confirm) for Southeast Asia, journalist Sunil Kothari (India) for South Asia, and Cheryl Stock (Australia) for the Pacific.

Our network heads have already been named above, and much of our service-oriented work rests with them. They will prod you (and please reply), or you need to get in touch with them often.

For the Singapore event, contact Caren Carino (ccarino@lasallesia.edu.sg), although you must give her time. (We most certainly want to see New Zealand's presence next year.) Or you can contact me, Lee Lan and Josie (perform@ccp.admu.edu.ph) in our respective capacities.

I must again thank Ausdance and Hilary Trotter for continuing to prepare our newsletter. I also suggest you make contributions to it by mail or e-mail. You may clear this with your chapter heads. The point is to keep in touch and to keep all of us informed about your area activities. So I repeat, 'Keep in touch!'

REPORT FROM TOKYO

Cheryl Stock, Vice-President (Pacific region)

SCOPE OF THE EVENT

World Dance 2000 — Tokyo: Choreography Today was an ambitious undertaking which comprised many discrete but interconnecting events. These were:

- Annual General (and subsequent) meetings of the WDA Asia Pacific Center
- Annual General (and subsequent) meetings of the WDA 4th Global Assembly
- Tokyo Dance Bazaar
- World Solo Dance Gala
- Asia Pacific Next Wave Dance
- Video Dance Theatre
- Workshop Program
- International Symposium

VENUES

Most of the festival took place at the National Olympics Memorial Youth Center in Shibuya-Ka next to the expansive and relaxing Yoyogi Park and the celebrated Shinto Meiji Shrine. This is where we were also accommodated, in small but comfortable and very reasonably priced rooms with an en suite and three meals a day available on a voucher basis. Access was also possible to the Athletics Centre where workshops and some performances took place in the many gymnasiums in the Centre. Main performances were a subway ride away at the Setagaya theatre and Theatre Tram, both in the same complex in Setagaya-Ku. With such a centralised environment social contact and networking could be, and indeed was, maximised.

WDA MEETINGS

ASIA-PACIFIC CENTER, 30 JULY, 1–4 AUGUST

The AGM saw the election of a new President and office bearers and a move of the secretariat from Japan to the Philippines for the next term. The new office bearers for the Board of directors are as follows:

President: Basilio Esteban Villaruz
Center Vice-President: Lee Lee Lan
Secretary (correspondence): Josefina Guillen
Secretary (recording) Prakriti Kashyap
Treasurer: Shirley Halili Cruz
Regional Vice-Presidents: Cheryl Stock (Pacific), Hae-

Shik Kim (East Asia), Sunil Kothari (South Asia), to be confirmed (South-East Asia).

Chairs of the committees:

Choreography and Performance: Nanette Hassall
Research and Documentation: Mohd Anis Md Nor
Education and Training: Susan Street
Management and Promotion: Sal Murgiyanto
plus Chapter Heads of each country

Members present at the meeting apart from the above were Yin-Ying Huang (Taiwan), Myoung-Sook Kim and Eun-Sook Cho (Korea), Caren Carino (Singapore), Helen Ng (Hong Kong), Miki Wakamatsu (Japan), Sunil Kothari and Sonal Mansingh (India).

Miki Wakamatsu (as the outgoing president) chaired the meeting, which was also presided over by WDA Chief Executive Carl Wolz. At the meeting, reports for the Education Committee were presented by Cheryl Stock and for the Choreography committee by Nanette Hassall. At subsequent meetings a report and the first edition of the WDA Research publication was presented by Anis Nor. A separate Choreography Committee meeting was also convened during the week as were meetings to discuss communication strategies, the development of a website and data base, the content of the WDA publication *Channels*, and plans for the 2001 meeting leading up to the Global Summit in Germany in 2002.

4th Global Assembly, 1–2 August

Two full days of meetings took place, with the Americas president Grant Strate and the Europe President Marc Jonkers both present, as well as members of the boards of both these centres, in addition to President of the Asia-Pacific Centre and host of *World Dance 2000 — Tokyo*, Miki Wakamatsu.

Chief Executive Carl Wolz presided over the Summit and the agenda was as follows:

- Welcome and greetings from all three centres and official delegates;
- Executive reports from WDA (International, Americas, Asia Pacific and Europe);
- Approval and discussion of logos, printed matter and website development;
- The organisational structure of WDA, membership guidelines, regional and international networks and honorary patrons;
- Future events and regional assemblies;
- Promotion and budgets.

A great deal was achieved during these two days, meticulously prepared for by the international secretariat — Carl Wolz and Judie Janney.

Tokyo Dance Bazaar, Monday July 31

Following a brief reception, there was an informal collection of 10 short works presented in one of the gymnasiums by a diverse group of Japanese dance artists and students ranging from flamenco to hip-hop, contemporary dance to performance art. Celebratory in mood, it culminated in an impromptu improvisation by WDA: Asia Pacific President and host of the Festival Miki Wakamatsu, also one of the legends of Japanese dance.

World Solo Dance Gala, August 1–4

Program A in the Setagaya Theatre presented a remarkable retrospective of the innovative and often controversial Canadian choreographer Marie Chouinard showing 11 solos from 1978 to 1998, performed by three of Chouinard's most experienced company members.

Program B featured solo work by Sin Cha Hong (Korea), Kei Takei (Japan), Bill T. Jones (U.S.A.) and finally Kazuo Ohno, the great Butoh legend now in his mid-nineties. Performing *The Flower of the Universe*, his delicate and poignant portrayal imbued with humanity and humility left most of the audience in tears. Those of us who had not seen Kazuo Ohno live before felt it was a privilege to be in the audience.

Asia Pacific Next Wave Dance, August 2,3, 5,6

In the smaller Tram Theatre, were four programs of new work by a range of contemporary groups who used multi-media, physical theatre and text to various degrees and in various combinations with their dance content. Apart from emerging Japanese work of variable quality there were groups from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Israel and Australia, which was well represented with Bonemap, Expressions dance Company, Kage Physical Theatre, De Soxy Theatre and Helen Herbertson and Trevor Patrick. The work ranged from highly developed and conceptually sophisticated to extremely mediocre and more thought could have gone into the sometimes incongruous juxtaposition of artists presented.

Video Dance Theatre

Dance videos of all types were submitted and everyone was welcome to come in and out of the sessions as their interests led them.

Workshop Program

For performers and students this daily activity was the most popular aspect of *World Dance 2000 — Tokyo* as it gave them a chance to work directly with the visiting performers as well with local Japanese teachers and artists, and to share creative ideas and processes.

International Symposium

Co-ordinated by Dr Hideaki Onuki, the symposium consisted of morning and afternoon sessions of thirty-minute presentations based around the theme of choreography. Topics were diverse, ranging from improvisation to Butoh in Brazil, and from ancient Japanese dance to the post-modern body. Papers had been presented and blind-refereed well in advance so we arrived to find that the papers were already in print under the title of *World Dance 2000: A Celebration of the Millennium — Choreography Today*, published by World Dance Alliance Japan Chapter.

As part of the symposium there were also extended (two hour) sessions on dance in Europe, the Americas, Japan and Australia. The latter was presented jointly by Nanette Hassall and Cheryl Stock covering funding structures and policies, current issues such as globalisation and the influences of popular culture, reconciliation, training, new technologies and the imperatives of project work.

Despite the eclectic and occasionally disappointing nature of various aspects of the Tokyo event, there were some extraordinary performances, thought-provoking papers and stimulating discussions. As with all such festivals and conferences it is the contacts made and the opportunity to look, listen, learn and experience away from one's own environment that are invaluable. One of the tangible successes was the strengthening of the World Dance Alliance network and the commitment to maintain connections not only in the Asia-Pacific region but globally through the other centres.

WDA Choreographic Committee Meeting

Tokyo, 2/8/2000

- **1. Minutes confirmed**

- **2. Report on initiatives**

Taiwan Young Choreographers' Workshop

Man Fei was unable to be present at the meeting. However a copy of the program from this event was tabled and a verbal report was given by Yin-Ying Huang who was present for the performances. Maggi Phillips from WAAPA also made a video-recording for documentary purposes.

The Young Choreographers' Workshop was presented by Cloud Gate Dance Theatre in conjunction with the National Institute of the Arts, Taiwan. It was sponsored by the National Culture and Arts Foundation, Taiwan and supervised by WDA, Asia-Pacific Chapter. The goal was to assist talented emerging choreographers through an extended period of time to make new and interesting dance works. Eleven choreographers were invited from different countries in the Asia-Pacific region to participate. Approximately 80 dancers were involved. The choreographers had to fund their own airfares but all other expenses were met by the host institution. Choreographers attended from Taiwan, Singapore, Australia, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Yin-Ying reported that Man Fei was hoping to extend the number of countries to be included when this project is held again. We will wait for Man Fei to let us know more details.

- **3. Network and distribution lists**

The chair of the committee reported on some difficulties in making contact with some of the people on the list. The problem of the distribution of information was also raised. The chapter representatives will endeavour to extend the list of recipients in their country once the information is received.

- **4. Establishment of database — Choreolink**

The committee agreed that the first steps towards developing a data base of choreographers working

professionally in the Asia Pacific region would be a useful initiative. A list in which people could communicate with each other directly was also thought to be useful. Each chapter representative was asked to send a list of ten choreographers with their addresses from their country. Each would be asked if they would like to be listed on the database and asked to give some basic details about their work including full name and address, background, company details (if appropriate), short excerpts from reviews, style of work, major works etc. The chair will prepare a draft letter for the committee to approve before sending it to the choreographers.

- **5. Business arising**

There was discussion about the need to share as much information as will enable choreographic work developed in the region to be seen by more people. Caren Corino from Lasalle SIA said that she was interested in having choreographers visit to make work. Similarly WAAPA would be interested in receiving videos from choreographers interested in coming to Australia. There are ways in which we may be able to source money for airfares.

- **6. 2001 — meeting date and agenda**

To be confirmed. (Possibly Singapore in July 2001.)

UPDATE: Just a reminder to please send the list of choreographers ASAP. So far I have a list from Singapore only. This will help us to get moving with building the database. Following the meeting with you in Japan, I also had a meeting with the choreographic reps in America and Europe. Hopefully they will also be interested in building databases in their regions to which ours can eventually be linked.

Nanette Hassall
Chair, Choreography Committee

National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum Final Report

The Dance Heritage Coalition is pleased to announce the availability of the final report of the National Dance Heritage Leadership Forum. The report, *Sustaining America's Dance Legacy: How the Field of Dance Heritage Can Build Capacity and Broaden Access to Dance in the Next Ten Years* is available electronically (Word file) or paper.

Contact the Coalition at dance@loc.gov and indicate your preference of electronic or paper copy.

Tokyo, 2000

First meeting of WDA:Asia Pacific, with new officers and network chairs present, amid delegates from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore and Korea

Photo and caption: courtesy Basilio Esteban Villaruz



Seated, L-R: Sal Murgiyanto, Indonesia (Chair of the new Management & Promotion Network); Lee Lee Lan, Malaysia (Vice-president); Basilio Esteban S. Villaruz, Philippines (President); Shirley Halili Cruz, Philippines (Treasurer)

Young Asia Pacific Choreographers' Workshop

Young Asia-Pacific Choreographers' Workshop, organized by Cloud Gate 2 (co-sponsored by the Dance Department of the National Institute of the Arts, and under the supervision of WDA Asia-Pacific Choreographers' League and WDA Taiwan) aims to provide young choreographers from around the world with time, space, and opportunities to create new works.

Cloud Gate 2 wishes to invite artists from different countries and backgrounds to future events in order to expand their knowledge and exchange ideas. Costume and lighting for the showcase will be minimal, but rehearsal studios, per diem, and local accommodations will be provided. However, international travel expenses to and from Taiwan will be participants' own responsibility. There will be one choreographer selected from each chapter of WDA Asia-Pacific Center. Auditions will be held for the choreographers to select their own dancers.

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among those standing are (4th, 6th and 7th, L-R)
Cheryl Stock, Australia (Vice-president for the Pacific); Nanette Hassall, Australia (Chair of the Choreography and Performance Network); Mohd Anis Md Nor, Malaysia (Chair of the Research and Documentation Network)

In the year 2000 eleven choreographers were invited to participate in the event from June 19 till July 14. They are Chung-fu Chang (New York), Wu Kuo Chu (Germany), Ashley Scott Dolman (Australia), Kuo Jing Hong (Singapore), Lee Ching-Chun (Taiwan), Junainah M. Lojong (Malaysia), Lu Hsiao-Mei (Taiwan), and Luke Hockley (Australia), Bulareyaung Pagarlava (Taiwan), and Grace Suzan (Indonesia) Yeh Po-Sheng (Taiwan). Eighty dancers were selected to work with them in a month of intense rehearsals.

The showcase was successfully held in the Festival Theatre in Taipei to audiences of one thousand. Next year the workshop is scheduled to be held in August. Those who are interested in participating or recommending please contact Cloud Gate 2 [see below for contact information].

WDA EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Seoul, 27–28/7/2000

Presentation of chapter reports in dance education

The meeting began with Carl Woiz reporting on activities and future plans of the three WDA centres and the priority areas which have been identified for the next five years, with one being to maintain links and collaboration not only within the regions of each centre but across the regions.

Reports were presented by the following chapters: Singapore (Caren Carino); Australia (Cheryl Stock); Korea (Kui-in Chung); Hong Kong (Sue Patterson); Japan (Carl Woiz)

Bertram Müller, President of the European Centre also spoke about plans for the global meeting of 2002 and distributed a list of issues to be addressed in terms of dance education as he saw them.

PRIORITY ISSUES IDENTIFIED

It was agreed that the overarching priority remains the raising of the status and value of dance. To better promote dance it was discussed that one could tap into the enormous rise globally of seeing dance as a healthy pursuit and as a popular leisure activity in its various forms (ballroom, folk, hip hop, dance raves, ballet, jazz etc) and use this popular culture trend as a basis for building audiences and interest and study in other forms of dance.

In terms of a career path, it was reported that there was increasing resistance by parents to dance being a viable employment option in an economically pragmatic world. A discussion ensued as to how dance artists could be trained intensively but also gain multiple skills to equip them for the future.

Strengthening communication inside and outside the organisation is the overall priority in the next three years. It was recognised that communicating in English as a second language was exhausting and difficult, hence the importance of pre-discussions at chapter level. E-mail communication remains difficult for some

countries, so other forms of communication need to be implemented as well.

It was suggested that Singapore be considered as the place for the 2001 meeting in order to strengthen that chapter and because there is a growing interest in arts education in that region and a push by government to value the arts more highly. It was also agreed that the 2001 meeting would be a three day event and a 'working' conference to find ways to implement strategies to address the issues identified.

Consideration was given to possible guest speakers who might present papers in the identified areas, particularly in the area of multiple literacies as a key to future education and communication. These included:

- Kapila Vatsyayan (dance education approaches in India)
- Muriel Topaz
- Sunil Kothari (sunilko@vsnl.com) (guru system of training)
- Ralph Buck and Cheryl Stock (dance literacy)

Those present agreed to make contact with other chapters and to suggest suitable speakers with expertise in the priority areas. The feeling of the meeting was that we should keep our focus narrow in terms of papers and discussions so as to achieve something concrete by the end of the meeting.

ACTION FOR 2001

- Each chapter education representative to submit up to ten of the best quality dance education resources available in their country e.g. periodicals, on-line resources, videos, publications, music for dance etc. These would be the beginnings of a dance education resources data-base as a sub-grouping of the WDA Dance Database which aims to provide a global network for dance, linking into quality sites and setting up new sites and to be established by 2002
- To plan projects for participation in the global WDA meeting in Germany in 2002. The Legacy collaborative project between WAAPA, Hong Kong Academy, Purchase in NY and NIA in Taiwan is already under way.

Cheryl Stock

THE 2ND KOREA INTERNATIONAL DANCE EVENT

Cheryl Stock

I accompanied a group of students from Queensland University of Technology (QUT) to this event. At the festival they were to perform *Tip of the Iceberg* choreographed by John Utans, who had previously worked and lived in Korea for two years and spoke Korean. Thus he was able to introduce the students to aspects of Korean culture. Before the trip the students were given material to read on the history and culture of Korea and some rudimentary language phrases, together with instructions on aspects of etiquette that differed from Australian customs.

Monday 24 July

The students explored some of the areas around Seoul and visited the Korean National University of the Arts (KNUA). We were able to observe several rehearsals of Korean traditional and contemporary dance and meet some choreographers and dancers.

Tuesday 25 July

This was a rehearsal day for the students and began with a ballet class taught by QUT lecturer Sue LeClercq in which the students from the West Australian Academy of the Arts (WAAPA) also participated. Later that day the QUT group was able to meet with the technical staff and also work on stage for an hour. The performance venue was KNUA Hall, a modern and well-equipped theatre with a capacity of around 400. The time frames for setting up were very tight for the Korean technical staff, who appreciated our careful preparations in terms of adapting lighting and sound requirements. Both rehearsal and stage facilities were new and of the highest calibre. In addition the staff (administrative, technical and volunteer) were unfailingly helpful and friendly. Administrative staff spoke English, as did the technical director, but many language problems in the theatre were alleviated because of a common understanding of theatre terms and requirements.

As on the previous evening the students ate at a local Korean restaurant where no English was spoken and persisted with their few words of Korean and a phrase book, rather than taking the easier option of eating in a more Western setting.

Wednesday 26 July

This was the official start of the festival. The students again began the day with class together with the WAAPA students and rehearsed afterwards in one of the studios at KNUA. Time was allocated on stage for rehearsal and to discuss lighting and sound requirements. That evening the Korea Dance Alliance and KNUA hosted an official opening dinner for dignitaries, guest artists and teachers at the Opera House restaurant.

This was followed by the World Ballet Star Gala Performance which comprised an evening of short works in the main Opera Theatre by internationally acclaimed ballet dancers: Julie Kent and Angel Corella, Carlos Molina (American Ballet Theatre) Irek Mukhamedov (from Moscow, now with the Royal Ballet) Manuel Legris (Paris Opera Ballet) Simona Noja (Vienna State Opera Ballet) Yuan Yuan Tan and Roman Rykine (San Francisco Ballet) Juhjun Jo (a Korean dancer now principal with the Washington Ballet) Dragos Mihalcea and Korean dancer Eusun Jun (Universal Ballet) Jiyoung Kim, Juwon Kim, Wonkook Lee (Korea National Ballet).

Thursday 27

Master classes began on this second day of the festival and QUT students opted to participate in a Korean Mask Workshop which they thoroughly enjoyed and from which they gained some insight into the techniques that they had seen in rehearsal and later in performance. This was followed by a Korean choreographic workshop which unfortunately was a less satisfactory experience because instructions were only given in Korean, thus making it difficult for the non-Korean students to participate effectively. Sue LeClercq taught her first Master Class in classical ballet to mainly Korean dance students and remarked on their high standard and excellent training.

A full dress rehearsal for *Tip of the Iceberg* took place at 1 p.m. and the first performance was held at 4.30 p.m. The performance was well received, with works presented by QUT and WAAPA (Australia), KNUA (Korea) and Cal Arts (California Institute of the Arts School of Dance (USA)). From 1.30-4 p.m. on this day and until Saturday the Asia Dance Market also took place, comprising booths with information and videos

in addition to a series of non-stop performances of work from around Asia, with a predominance of Korean companies and artists. That evening was a second and different performance of the World Ballet Star Gala.

Friday 28

The morning involved another Master class taught by Sue LeClercq (pointe work) and the students took advantage of the Master Class by visiting French choreographer Miriam Naisy. Rehearsals were also held on stage prior to the second and final performance by the students. This performance was by far the better of the two with a larger audience and a less nervous cast producing a more assured and well-paced performance of the work. This second performance also saw the participation of the Sunhwa Art High School from Korea.

With the students' official participation at an end they all took advantage of some free time that day and the following morning to further explore Seoul and to attend the performances on offer. That evening was the first of the two Main Performance programs of contemporary dance of the 20th century featuring work by solo artists and groups from the United States, France and Germany combined with the best of Korean contemporary dance. The latter was impressive, particularly those works that drew on Korean traditions in a contemporary way, making their style of contemporary dance unique. Artists and groups in the program comprised: Myoung Sook Kim NURI Dance Company (Korea); Bill T. Jones (United States); Park Insook – Jigu Dance Company (Korea); Henrietta Horn – Folkwang Tanzstudio (Germany)

One of the benefits of this event, unlike many other festivals, was that it was held in one concentrated area. The Opera House, with its many theatres and studios, the Art Gallery and the home of the Korean National Ballet, is separated only by a plaza from the Korean National University of the Arts. This in turn is next to the Traditional Arts University which houses the Museum of Traditional Music and the Hall of Calligraphy. It was therefore easy to access these treasure houses of Korean culture.

Saturday 29

The dancers and Sue Leclercq returned to Australia that afternoon but I remained to teach two Master classes of contemporary dance attended by Korean students who worked extremely hard and returned early Sunday morning to participate again. I was fortunate in being provided with an excellent interpreter who had trained

as a dancer in New York and was able to explain and even demonstrate the feedback I gave students, most of whom had little contact with the type of contemporary dance that I taught.

The Saturday afternoon showcase in KNUA was devoted to Korean contemporary dance, mainly of solo performers. The second program of Main Performance was memorable for two Korean works, *On Time* (Ae-soon Ahn Dance company) and *Pallae – Womanhood Story* by Jeongho Nam and KNUA Dance Company, along with *Miroir San Tain* by the Miriam Naisy Company.

What we all gained from exposure to such a diverse and large range of Korean dance was the beginnings of an understanding of the rich traditions underlying and driving dance developments in Korea. Technical virtuosity and quality was evident in the classical, contemporary and traditional dancers and dances. Most impressive, particularly in the traditional work, was the strong but refined aesthetic, the exquisite use of colour, fabric and staging techniques, and the use of drums by the dancers as an integral part of their dance. In terms of the movement, we marveled at the fine and subtle articulation especially of the head, shoulders and arms and the light turning jumps, alternating with smooth gliding steps, that propelled the dancers in sweeping pathways across the stage in graceful curves and diagonals.

One of the greatest benefits of the visit was the opportunity to make contact with dance artists and educators in the region and to build networks for the future. With particular reference to QUT, Korean Dance Companies were most generous in presenting me with videos and written information about their work. These invaluable resources supplement the videos and books on Korean culture which I purchased in Seoul and are unavailable elsewhere. As the dance lecturer for two units at QUT, The Performing and Visual Arts in Asia and Dance and Theatre of Asia, this exchange will enable me to feature the work of Korean dance artists, which I was previously unable to do due to the lack of substantive resources. The corollary in terms of benefits of this visit was for the Korean dance community to make contact with Australian dance via our performances and classes, as well as a renewal of contacts for those Korean artists and educators who had been to Australia for *World Dance '96* in Melbourne and whom QUT staff and students had met in *World Dance '98* in Manila.



AUSTRALIA CHAPTER REPORT

Julie Dyson

Dance policy

There have been several key initiatives in dance recently, the most significant being an Ausdance approach to the Australia Council to develop some 'roundtables' in each State and Territory between the Dance Fund, local funding bodies, Ausdance and other key stakeholders. There is a perception that dance policy and funding in Australia need the benefit of some broader co-ordination, and there are voices which need to be heard in this process. We are looking forward to assisting with this dialogue in 2001, and will ensure that members are kept fully informed.

Ausdance partnerships

These are many and varied, with several significant partnership activities well in train at the end of 2000.

- ArtsPeak, the coalition of arts service organisations, continues to meet and to work with the Australia Council in developing dialogue about the needs of ArtsPeak's estimated 80,000 members.
- The National Affiliation of Arts Educators met in Canberra at the end of November, and was able to meet also with Government and Opposition arts spokespersons in the cause of promoting arts education.
- The Keep dancing! partnership between Ausdance,

ScreenSound Australia and the National Library of Australia, continues to flourish.

- The Australian Institute of Sport has set up a new board with Ausdance representation to look at transition issues for dancers and athletes, and it should meet for the first time in 2001.

Events

The Australian Dance Awards were held at the Sydney Opera House on November 19. During the same weekend Marilyn Rowe delivered the sixth Dame Peggy van Praagh Memorial Address. The forum 'The Critic as Advocate' produced some fascinating discussion and debate.

Australian Dance Week

The next Australian Dance Week will be held across Australia from 12–20 May 2001. Ausdance branches are already planning activities with professional companies, community groups, schools and independent artists.

Australian Youth Dance Festival

The Third Australian Youth Dance Festival, for dancers between 12 and twenty-five, will be held in Armidale, NSW September 30–October 6 2001. Details are on the Ausdance website.

Ausdance website

You can find the latest issue of 'Channels' on this site, which is continually updated. Some fascinating debate on the Unspoken Knowledges research project is the latest addition. In 2001 we hope to add current news to our site to enable you to find the latest information on issues such as taxation, funding policy, news

and research in dance.

Arts policy

The Federal Opposition has advised that it is broadening its policy on assisting young contemporary musicians to include all performing artists, and perhaps visual artists also. Young artists would be able to receive unemployment benefits while developing their artistic careers, in recognition of this early career transition phase from training to professional practice. This development has come in response to lobbying by several ArtsPeak members, including Ausdance. The Federal Opposition had already included a policy on dancers' career transition in its 1998 arts policy, and we will continue to press for a more detailed proposal in time for the forthcoming election. Similar proposals have been put to the Federal Government, but so far there has been little response. However, the Government did respond to artists' concerns about aspects of its GST policy, with Moral Rights legislation the latest battleground.

People

David McAllister has been appointed Artistic Director of The Australian Ballet at the conclusion of Ross Stretton's contract in 2001. Ross will take over the Royal Ballet in London in September 2001.

Congratulations from 'Channels' to Julie Dyson on receiving the 2000 Australian Dance Award for services to dance — she is too modest to tell you herself!
— ed.

Check out <http://ausdance.anu.edu.au>
for the most recent issue of 'Channels' and the latest
Australian dance news and information.

BROLGA — an Australian journal about dance

This journal is committed to providing a space for the publication of current research, critical thinking and creative activities relating to, and impinging on, dance in a cultural context in Australia and elsewhere.

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Correspondence and submissions are welcome and should be addressed to:

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INDIVIDUALS A\$40 INSTITUTIONS A\$80

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Brolga Subscriptions,
c/- Ausdance National Secretariat
PO Box 45 Braddon ACT 2612 Australia

Editor: Dr Michelle Potter
Associate Editor: Hilary Trotter

Publisher:
Australian Dance Council

ISSN 1322-7645



HONG KONG CHAPTER REPORT

Tom Brown

As newly appointed chair of the Asia Pacific Status and Welfare Committee I have had some correspondence with Steve and the Philippine delegate, Joy Coronel, and have put together a draft of a data collection sheet that might be of some interest — I have asked for comments on it but as of yet have received none.

DRAFT (for Professional Companies)

1. Name of Company
2. Address of Company (including telephone, fax, e-mail numbers)
3. Company Directorate (including Artistic Director, Chief Executive Office, etc.)
4. Number and Titles of Administrative Staff Employed
5. Number of Dancers Employed
6. Number of Intern or Trainee Dancers Employed
7. Salary Range of Dancers
8. Comparison of Salary Range of Dancers with Salaries in other fields — i.e., musicians, theater personnel (ushers, etc.), school teachers (primary, secondary, and tertiary), etc., include minimum hourly wage where applicable
9. Length of contract for Dancers — by production, seasonal, yearly
10. Are Dancers members of a national/local union
11. What fringe benefits are provided for dancers
 - (a) health care including health, dental, maternity benefits and sick leave pay
 - (b) retirement or pension plans including mandatory contributions by employer/employee
 - (c) vacation leave pay
 - (d) sabbatical leave pay
 - (e) housing benefits
 - (f) education benefits
 - (g) post career / career transition benefits aid
 - (h) equipment allowance (shoes, etc.)
 - (i) other benefits
12. What are Dancers working conditions
 - (a) length of day — include length of maintenance class, rehearsal calls, and performance calls
 - (b) length of week, of year, of vacation time, and sick leave time
 - (c) is there a staff doctor, nurse, masseur or physiotherapist
 - (d) touring conditions
13. Additional Information

INDONESIA CHAPTER REPORT

Helly Minarti

Arts Summit Indonesia 2001

Preparation has already started for ASI, which is an international performing arts festival that has taken place every three years since 1995. Next year will be the first time for theatre to be included in the program, in addition to the regular contemporary dance and music. Several countries already have confirmed to send their artists. They are Germany (Tanztheater), Belgium, Netherlands, France (possibly Ea Sola) and Circus Baroque. Some other are considering — countries such as Greece, Russia, Italy and England. In 2001 there will be more entries than there were in the last two. For contact, call Ms. Raya Sumardi at: +62 21 5725572.

IKJ Dance Company (Jakarta Arts Institute, Dance Department) has returned from Seoul International Dance Festival (SI Dance 2000), held last October. Choreographer Bambang Kristiono Swardjo performed his solo piece, which won the second prize of GKJ's Choreography Competition (GKJ is The Jakarta Playhouse — a performing arts

venue that stages modern dance frequently). Bambang was chosen by one of the jurors, Korean choreographer Seong Joh who took part in the Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF) in 1998.

Some of IKJ Dance Company's dancer/choreographers (among them Nungki Kusumastuti, Tom Ibnur, Trisapto, Dewi Hafiyanti and Wiwiek Sipala) were sent to Incheon Dance Festival in Korea — an hour's drive from Seoul. The festival celebrates the traditional dance. Indonesia's team performed an array of cultural diversity in dance from Sumatra, Java, South Celebes and Betawi (native Jakarta).

From 10–20 November the dance company Eksotika Karmawibhanga Indonesia (EKI) toured to three cities: Bandung, Solo and Yogya, featuring a new dance piece by its choreographer, Rusdy Rukmarata, entitled *The Third Person*. The main dancers included Rusdy Rukmarata himself, Sujiwo Tejo, Takako Leen, Bujel Dipuro and a dozen of EKI's dancers.

The prominent choreographer Sardono W. Kusumo performed at the Asia Pacific Art Forum in Taiwan last October.

Temu Seniman (Artists' Meeting) was held in Malang, East Java, from 11 November. Eleven choreographers from East Java performed their latest pieces, based on tradition.

Organized by the Goethe Institut, German dance company Sasha Waltz & Guests performed in Jakarta on the 18 and 19 November at the Jakarta Playhouse as part of their South East Asia touring. Sasha Waltz — the choreographer — did not come, but one of her dancers held a workshop on 19.

Visual artist Teguh Ostenrik ventured his first dance number on 24 to 26 November at the Jakarta Playhouse. Collaborating with musician Tony Prabowo and the dancers of Kreativitaet dance company, he staged *Biarkan Mereka Menjamah Langit (Let Them Reach the Sky)*, coinciding with the launch of a book on his art work, *Transcending Time*. Young choreographer of Kreativitaet, Yudi Syuman also performed his new piece, *Sketsa Maya (Virtual Sketch)*.



MALAYSIA CHAPTER REPORT

Rogayah Shahrman

july

Odissi — a timeless journey by Ramli Ibrahim and the Sutra Dancers. This program, involving Orissan musicians and Malaysian Odissi dancers, was a cross-cultural manifestation that transcended racial and religious barriers and revelled in a timeless journey of music and dance. The programme was toured to many places around Malaysia.

august

Sketch III was a dance showcase by Ng Mei-Yin, Loi Chin-Yu and Lim Swee Keong of Nyo-ba & Dancers, and invited dancer/choreographer, Judimar Monfils. It featured many works ranging from the improvisory to works in progress to complete solos.

september

Re: Lady White Snake was restaged by RiverGrass Dance Theatre. Originally choreographed by Mew Chang Tsing and Lee Swee Keong, the piece is a contemporarised adaptation of the Chinese legend of the title.

october

Festival TARI 2000 was a major dance festival organised by the ASK and Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism. It had several components. Main performances at the Istana Budaya were mainly by invited international companies from Australia, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Bermuda. There were also showcase performances by many local dance companies and schools at the Experimental Theatre. In addition there were workshops and lecture demonstrations by many of the invited artists.

Quintessence Odissi by Ramli Ibrahim and the Sutra Dancers presented select pieces from Sutra's extensive Odissi repertoire.



Danz has a new director.

Philip Tremewan,
Executive Director DANZ
Dance Aotearoa New Zealand Ltd
PO Box 9767, Wellington
Tel: (04) 382 8463
email danz@danz.org.nz

Dari Mengadap Rebab ke Moden showcased many pieces ranging from traditional Malay court dance, folk dance, martial arts through to contemporary dance and jazz. The production was by students of the ASK Dance Co.

October Dance Bash was a showcase performance by students of the Federal Academy of Ballet and La Salle-SIA College of Art from Singapore. A highlight was a work in progress by Louise Hawke titled *Monsoon Sonata*, and featuring Ho Sheng Hsien and Shion Kai Unser.

At the last meeting of WDA-Malaysia for 2000, there was a change in office bearers. The positions are now held as follows:

National Advisor: Dr Mohd Anis Md Nor

Chair: Rogayah Shahariman

Treasurer: Mew Chang Tsing

Secretary: Elaine Pedley

Our representatives for the various WDA Networks are as follows:

Research and Documentation: Dr Mohd Anis Md Nor

Choreography and Performance: Joseph Gonzales

Education and Training: Marion D'Cruz (unconfirmed)

Welfare and Status: Mew Chang Tsing

Management and Promotion: Rogayah Shahariman

Our membership for this year stands at 20.

The main goals for WDA-Malaysia this year will be to formalize the organization, to contribute in some way to the WDA:AP Conference in Singapore and to organize the Malaysian Dance Festival for October 2001. Hopefully as a result of these activities we will be able to encourage more people to take up membership.

MyDance now has a website: www.dancemalaysia.com

Auckland Dance Festival

For the Auckland Dance Festival Calendar go to:

<http://www.danznet.co.nz/auckdancefest2001.html>

This page will be regularly updated, as events are confirmed.

Details supplied by Raewyn Whyte

email: raewyn@url.co.nz

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Contact Raewyn if you wish to subscribe to her dance listserv, which covers dance news from New Zealand and many overseas items of interest.



Kapila Vatsyayan — Formative Influences

An interview by Uttara Asha Coorlawala — New Delhi, January 12, 2000

An earlier version of this article appeared in *Dance Research Journal* Vol. 32, No. 2., July 2000

UTTARA COORLAWALA: Your writing goes beyond Indian or Western models. Would you talk about influences on your writings?

KAPILA VATSAYAN: You are kind Uttara but it is hard for me to analyze myself. I have been ... extraordinarily fortunate. My training began with the practice of dance, from Oriental dance to Kathak to Bharatanatyam, and Manipuri. My concurrent training in English Literature at Delhi University provided critical apparatus. Although my academic disciplines were English Literature, Western Art and whatever we learned in pre-Independent India, I had to learn Sanskrit and Indian languages because of the (sic) family background (a reformist family, deeply rooted.)¹ I was exposed to the best of English Literature, Sir Morris Goyer Chief Justice of India was my tutor. Then after completing the M.A., (at Delhi University) I went to the United States on the Barbour Fellowship. It is a distinguished fellowship for Asian women based on the outcome of a written exam. That is how I got to Ann Arbor Michigan, where apart from other courses, I took a course with Rudolf Laban's daughter Juana Laban. I also spent two summers in Colorado Springs, with Hanya Holm and Alwin Nikolais.

UC: Would it be rude to ask you the dates?

KV: In 1948, 1949. Not at all rude. One is old enough to accept everything as it is.

UC: In 1948, 1949, to have studied Oriental dance and Kathak would have been unusual. Not many women at that time could have found teachers. People did not even know about the dance then. So how did you?

KV: This is another story. It goes back to the 1930s in Calcutta when my family was involved with the

nationalist movement. In Bengal at this time there was what one called Oriental dance, analogous to the Bengal school of painting, very feminine, amorphous, lyrical. This was my first training. Then I got to Delhi. In the audience at a school performance where I danced was Nirmala Joshi, a lady who later became the secretary of the Sangeet Natak Akademi² and none other than Acchan Maharaj.³ I remember that, at age ten, I considered my dance on *ardhanarishwara*⁴ great choreography. It must have been absolutely silly. Acchan Maharaj called for me and Nirmala Joshi told me to touch his feet because he was a great Kathak dancer. He said to me '*Bahut accha naachti ho, lakin talim ki jaroorat hai*' ('You dance beautifully but you need training.') He suggested that I study with him. You must see this sociologically. The dance was coming out of the [royal] courts on the one hand and then my mother was telling my father to let me learn dancing. Imagine. He was appalled.

UC: I do understand.

KV: I attended a co-educational college where there were eleven girls to nearly a thousand boys and throughout my undergraduate and graduate education, I never mentioned that I danced. My dance practice was a totally separate life.

UC: You also studied other dance forms?

KV: In the summer breaks, I learned Bharatanatyam from Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai and later in Delhi from Rukmini Devi's disciple Lalitha of Kalakshetra. Then I invited Guru Amobi Singh [to come] from Manipur to Delhi and learned Manipuri dance with him. All this was post-Kathak, because by this time Acchan Maharaj had died. I went to Lucknow and fetched Birju here from his uncle's tutelage and established him in the dance school that we were running.⁵ I made him a master *prima facie*, when his was just nine years old.

UC: When you say you brought Lalitha and Birju Maharaj to Delhi, you provided them with a place to live and livelihood, so that you could study from them too?

KV: Yes. yes. I collected funds to pay for his trip. There was no Government of India and no grants of the sort available today. It was hard but very pleasant work.

UC: I get the feeling that these were very exciting times. People had faith?

KV: Absolutely right! We may have been foolish, we may have been ignorant. but we were idealistic to the core, devoted and dedicated to our concept of this great country that arrived in freedom. We had our role models, my mother and Kamaladevi Chatopadhyaya among others.⁶

UC: To recapitulate, while you worked towards your M.A. degree, you studied Kathak, started Bharatanatyam, and were involved with running a dance school?

KV: Then I went to America where I where I was introduced to Laban's tools of movement analysis and Hanya Holm's movement system. The whole experience of modern dance via Hanya and Alwin Nikolais gave me that analytical approach. That was one of my richest experiences because it enabled me to know my body. Self-awareness.

UC: Different in India, where one does not want to know the body.

KV: Of course not! You just use your body, transcend your body. a very different experience.

UC: Was it difficult?

KV: No not difficult. I enjoyed every moment.

KV: People were open to you?

KV: Yes

UC: Did you feel culturally isolated?

KV: No. I had very good friends. If I had not had the experience in the United States with modern dance and literary studies, had it not been for the writings of Coomaraswamy who had just died in 1947 before I got there, were it not for these influences, I do not think I would be the person I am today. I read

Coomaraswamy, Heinrich Zimmer and the parts of the Upanishads that my parents gave me. I acquired the two volumes of Stella Kramrisch's book *The Hindu Temple* which I did not understand and which I thought was a nice possession. I still have that 1946 edition.

America gave me the time, which it does even today, to ask questions both about *myself as a body* but also about *myself as my culture*.⁷ Being often called upon to speak here and there, I realized that despite my extensive education, my ignorance was abysmal. One day after doing my prerequisites for the Ph.D degree, I decided to return to India and to give up my fellowship. I felt that I was ignorant about the culture to which I belonged. I had to know it. I also felt that if I wanted to go further in English Literature and Western art (I have much love for that civilization) I would have to go to its language foundations in Greek and Latin. Then there was this dance thing that also called. So, all told, one autumn day outside the library in Michigan, I meditated upon it and surprised my parents by returning home. I returned with this sense of searching for identity and started traveling. I traveled from Madurai to Kanya Kumari, to Palghat practically on foot and in buses. I got to the Kerala Kalamandalam.⁸

UC: Did you do this alone?

KV: We were three returnees from school abroad together, one was F.R. Leavis's student (she has actually just retired from Cambridge as a professor of English) another from the Freud School of Psychoanalysis in London. Khajuraho was a profound head shaking, heart shaking experience.

We were very close friends, the three of us, but after seeing the sculptures at Khajuraho, we just could not look at each other! Yes, it shook us — it made us realize what our conditioning had been. ⁹ Later, after reading and writing, one realized that one had been conditioned by this whole business of the separation of the sacred and the secular, the body and the mind and so on. Nineteenth century India was very Victorian. We had not known what to make of the Khajuraho visual statement then, though later I realized it was integral to Indian mores.

Just as I had done a great performance before Acchan Maharaj when I was ten, this time I wrote a great book on movement and dance because I had seen the sculptures of dance everywhere. I was introduced to the scholar Vasudeva Sharan Agarwal — he has written about forty books on the history of Indian art, on India through the eyes of Panini, and so on. You must read

some. He had become the head of the Archaeological department at Benares Hindu University. He accepted me as a special Ph.D student. As a person returning from America, and as a woman, I faced great resentment. Here neither my degrees in English nor my American education were considered adequate preparation. I had to take a Sanskrit philological exam.

I did that and then got a grounding in Indology and archaeology. He [Agarwal] would say 'Just read up the reports from 1905 to 1914. We will talk about it day after tomorrow.' I was taught how to look at manuscripts, primary sources. Whereas all my earlier training had been with secondary and tertiary sources, here manuscripts were literally thrown at me to decipher. 'Here are five thousand photographs in this trunk. Arrange and identify their contents.' He had a tub of photographs very different from the way we arrange things now with filing systems. He had bundles of manuscripts. He would say 'Pick up that seventh bundle on Marwari painting. Rearrange them in chronological order', or something like that. 'Here are some bundles of Rajasthani or Mughal paintings. They are mixed up. Please sort them out.'

UC: What excitement!

KV: I touched these manuscripts with my hands for years. That is how I know my primary material. I had the greatest Indian scholars to teach me. Rai Krishen Das, Motichandra, Hazari Prasad, Radhakumar, the top scholars of this country. If you did nothing but sit while they talked to each other, you imbibed the real flowing stream of Indian scholarship. It was at the end of this experience that I rewrote my thesis as *Classical Indian Dance in Literature*... but I put that first enthusiastic book to the flames.

UC: Do you have a copy of this somewhere so I could know how you once thought?

KV: No. Nothing that Acchan Maharaj did was as harsh as what Vasudev Sharma did, though he was a great teacher. He would test you and argue for five days, but if you convinced him he said 'I have been in the field for thirty years. Why has this not occurred to me?' He acknowledged our hard earned insights—and with such generosity. I did not go to Indology from the traditional Indology route. I did not go to modern dance from modern dance, but from tradition. I did not come to Indian dance by growing up with it as a family tradition. I think I got the essence of each of these traditions without being bound by the

conventions of these traditions. I became an unbounded bounded person.

UC: You were forced into having a freedom of perception by not having belonged to any one of these traditional systems.

KV: Yes I belonged nowhere and I belonged everywhere.

UC: You were forced...

KV: Yes I was forced to create my own world and I had the negative capacity of entering into all these worlds.

UC: You stay informed about developments in dance scholarship. How do you keep on going?

KV: Being up-to-date is a matter of keeping your mind alert. I try to read everybody's writing. If you see my purse it is full of little chits to see this and that book. Sometimes I track them down in Delhi. If not here then often during my teaching stints in the United States. This time, for example, when I was teaching in Santa Cruz. I bought a lot of books. Another opportunity, frankly, has been attending the CORD and World Dance Alliance conferences. At the moment I do not feel that I am at a level where I am not searching. I am very much on the road.

UC: What was it like for your generation? You were, one might say, making footprints in the snow, setting up precedents for my generation. Were you conscious of this, and of a need to be as comprehensive as you could be? This time, when a nation is new, is a very exciting thought for me.

KV: I did exactly what I wanted to do. I did nothing because of any great mission. Things came. I wanted to explore. I got into this Geeta Govinda study and am still in it. I have done nothing to feel that I carry any burden.

UC: Do you have any specific examples of how your writing, your knowledge, your presence in Delhi and closeness to ICCR [Indian Council for Cultural Relations] might have informed perceptions and policies of Indian dance?¹⁰ Do you have any memories of events that might reflect this? When Narayana Menon spoke of sending Balasaraswati to the Edinburgh Festival, he spoke of how it changed people's concepts of Indian dance, and how he had fought to ensure that she was selected and sent.¹¹

KV: Now when I look back, I recall great moments and moments of regret. The moment of success was also the moment when Bala was picked up by the West. History will question whether that was good or bad. Similarly I recall the Kathakali performances of Ramana Kutty, Krishna Kutty in Russia... I do not know if what has happened to Kathakali today was a step in the right or wrong direction. I have several questions like that. These are contextual arts. They are decontextualized, exposed to market forces, presented to larger audiences where communication is not taking place. While the artist gets success — and this is very good — what happens to the art is a big challenge. We need to address what has been done by this overexposing of dance to uninitiated audiences. It is the presented surface body that we are looking at, not the experienced body. The attitude of ‘how I will be seen by you’ makes for a completely different aesthetic experience than a concern with experience and communication.

UC: I am really glad you brought this up.

KV: What we have not understood is that while the ‘classical’ or what I call the ‘neoclassical’ dance styles are extremely popular, and when everyone is saying Wah! Wah! and so on,¹² let us remember the crises we are going through.¹³ We are with the form of these dances, but we are not even in the dynamics of the movement at the technique level, in most cases. Some of us are extremely skilled but imbuing the dance with *prana* [flow] is a difficult task.

UC: Can you recall some other bittersweet moments?..

KV: Uttara another time. I must stop now.

UC: Thank you. You have given generously and... I am being greedy here.

1. Though we think of English as a common language across continents, it is in fact, spoken differently in different places, in America, in Britain, in India. Nigel B. Hankin’s recent book *Hanklyn-Janklyn*, like its earlier predecessor *Hobson-Jobson*, by Colonel Yule, deals entirely and exclusively with a vocabulary of English words of Indian origin. Indian usages of English have been deliberately cultivated by recent Indian authors writing in English, such as Salman Rushdie. See *Hanklyn-Janklyn* (New Delhi: Banyan Books, 1992).

2. In 1953 the Sangeet Natak Akademi was set up and funded by the Government of India as an autonomous institution to promote performance, research and creativity in sangeet or dance and music and *nataka* (drama). *Akademi* resulted from an attempt to frame a non-British

version of a word for arts institution as in the European sense of the word academy.

3. Achhan Maharaj (1883-1947) was a legendary performer and teacher of the Lucknow *gharana* (tradition, lineage) of Kathak Dance. Born Jagannath Prasad, Achhan Maharaj, danced in the court of Nawab Hamid Ali of Rampur before he was invited to Delhi in 1936 by Nirmala Joshi to teach at the Delhi School of Hindusthani Music and Dance where Kapila Malik, (now Vatsyayan) was among his first students. See Sunil Kothari, *Kathak* (New Delhi: Abhinav Publications, 1989). 31-32

4. *Ardhanarishwara* is a manifestation of Shiva in which his right half is male and his left half is in the female form of his wife Parvati.

5. Birju Maharaj is India’s leading exponent of the Lucknow lineage of Kathak Dance and son of Achhan Maharaj. Maharaj is not a last name. Rather it indicates status in the world of dancers—a great dancer, a maharaja among dancers. The Dance school Vatsyayan refers to was called The School for Hindusthani Music and for Dance, later called Sangeet Bharati.

6. Kamaladevi Chhatopadhyaya (1903–1988) is the subject of a biography by Kamala Narasimhan. A political activist from a young age, Kamaladevi was immersed in the freedom struggle before Independence (1947) and a founder of the Socialist wing of the Congress party. She resigned when she was over-ruled on the issue of the partition of India and Pakistan. Involved with theatre, she founded the Natya Sangh, Bombay, and the Indian National Theatre, Bombay. Both organizations are still active. A widow at age nine, it was after her second marriage to the unconventional poet Harendranath Chhatopadhyaya that she went to college and was encouraged to express her independence. She is known internationally for having founded the Indian Handicrafts Board to support traditional craftsmen and their crafts. She served a term as Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi. Satyavati Malik, Vatsayan’s mother, was active in the struggle for freedom alongside Kamaladevi Chhattopadhyaya, founder member of Gandharva Mahavidyalaya and involved similarly with other institutions for the arts. Her father was a lawyer, from Kashmir.

7. Indian philosophical and perceptual concepts of body and self are extensive, detailed and different from Euro-American ones. ‘My self as a body’ indicates that Vatsayan does not acknowledge the subject-object split which is embedded in the English-language usage of ‘my body’, in which the body is objectified. ‘Myself as my culture’ indicates that she questioned her relationship to her culture and to herself as an embodiment of her culture.

8. Kerala Kalamandalam is the name of an institution in Kerala (west coast of south India) where Kathakali, (a dance-drama form performed traditionally by males) is taught. Kathakali was one of the earliest ‘classical’ dance forms to be recovered by the poet Vallathol and

Manakkulam Mukunda Raja (a literary person and friend) who jointly established Kerala Kalamandalam in 1930.

9. The rock carved temple at Khajuraho (c.1000 A.D.) is famous for its erotic sculptures. Here, in an environment that is intended for reflection on Divinity, the visitor confronts a profusion of carvings of couples (*mithuna*) involved in all stages of the love act. The sculptures are not merely sexually titillating, they evoke profound emotional resonances and glorify the pleasure of both females and males in love and in sexual intercourse. Sensuality and sex are represented as yoga, a path to realization. Again, this psycho-physical perception is mirrored in danced representations of the *nayika* (female protagonist) as devotee and her Beloved.

10. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations is a branch of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that deals with projecting India's culture abroad, as for example in several Festivals of India in many countries. The ICCR is also the main sponsor within India of state-subsidized performing troupes from abroad.

11. Narayan Menon, Ph.D (University of Edinburgh) a musician, (Veena, Carnatic music, or south Indian classical) worked in in the BBC Eastern services from 1942 to 1947 before returning to India as Director General of All India Radio (AIR). He went on to become the Director of the National Centre for Performing Arts, Bombay, (1968–1982) until he retired, and served as Chairman of the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi from 1982 to 1987. Known for his expertise in both Indian and western classical music, he served on several international committees on music studies, including two terms as

President of the UNESCO Council on Asian Music, the Music Council. He passed away on July 26, 1997 at the age of 86.

12. 'Wah, wah' is an Indian expression of approval, such as 'Bravo'.

13. I believe that the larger crisis she refers to, and which we spoke about before the interview, is what I consider the 'millenium crisis' experienced by those who at the time of Independence were young and idealistic about India's great culture and free and great future. Once beautiful cities (including Delhi) are now hopelessly overcrowded, polluted ecologically and visually raped by unplanned cheap and dirty construction. Where India's population at Independence was 350 million, it now stands at a staggering billion. There are constant shortages of water and power cuts that last up to eight hours at a time, a constant threat of violence in New Delhi, because of the discrepancies of wealth distribution. Corruption and selfishness is rampant in Indian politics. Deteriorated standards of arts are increasingly being globalized. The crisis for those senior educated activists, who knew another gentler India, is a crisis of shattered hopes — a death of nationalism.

This interview took place amid several phone calls to various government officials, including one protesting against a television program aired the same morning. Kapila was contemplating resigning from her position as Academic Director of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA) to protest government interference in autonomous institutions of culture.

CALL FOR PAPERS
CORD 2001, New York University October 26–28, 2001
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Abstracts of papers and proposals for panels, performances, or workshops should be submitted by February 1, 2001. Applicants for the Graduate Research Award Panel must submit the full text of their papers.

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