

# Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





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**World Dance Alliance  
Asia-Pacific**

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Jess Liew Chui Ting in *Mask*  
 Dance, choreographed  
 by Lee Swee Keong, for  
 Dancebox April 2012 at  
 The Actors Studio Theatre,  
 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.  
 Photo: Wyman Wong

# Executive reports

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



## President's report

by Yunyu Wang

2012 is a special year for the dance world because of the upcoming 2012 daCi/WDA Global Dance Summit that will be held in Taipei, Taiwan. The major sponsorship is from WDA Asia Pacific, the most productive organisation among all three regions of WDA. The WDAAP team, including Anna Chan from Hong Kong, Urmimala Sarkar Munsri from India, Jeff Hsieh from Taiwan, Ralph Buck from New Zealand and Jeff Meiners from Australia, is the major force that has contributed to the success of the Summit.

Please visit the website at [www.daciwdaintaiwan.org](http://www.daciwdaintaiwan.org) to see the most up to date information published on 16 May. The website has details on up to 300 outstanding programs including paper presentations, workshops, and lecture-demonstrations as well as four performance programs: Showcase, Taiwan Night, International Festival of Dance Academia and Young People's Performance. All are displaying the best dance from Asia Pacific, America and Europe. This rich summit promises endless fun, and as of today 910 people have registered to join the Summit. Half of them are from Asia Pacific including Taiwan and other countries in the region and another half are from Europe and America.

In the Summit, *Identity, Hybridity and Diversity: Celebrating Dance in Taiwan*, co-edited by Yunyu Wang of Taiwan and Stephanie Burrige of Singapore/Australia, will be launched on 16 July in the TNUA Bookstore at the conference site. Ten out of eleven chapter writers as well

as 25 local artists who wrote in the Artist Voice chapter will join the launch to celebrate the grand opening of the dance book of Taiwan. WDAAP has proved again the possibility of the integration of theory and practice in dance.

Another wonderful piece of news from WDAAP is that Chinlin Foundation for Culture and Arts has formed a project called 'Bring Dance Artists to Southeast Asia' which allows young artists to have first-hand experience of dance in Southeast Asia and to share their own knowledge of dance at the site which is hosting them. At this moment, Cynthia Lee of Taiwan/USA has been sent to Cambodia and Singapore; I-feng Tung of Taiwan will be in Thailand with the support from WDAAP Thailand; and Ting-ting Chang of Taiwan will travel to Singapore sponsored by former WDAAP Singapore country head, Teresa Pee. The next step is to bring an artist to Malaysia from either Taiwan or any country in WDAAP. Fiji is in the process of planning an exchange artist for next year as well. After the July Summit, this special project will be expanded and will hopefully be able to reach more in the WDAAP area.

I hope to support all dance artists and scholars in the Asia Pacific region in as many ways as possible during my presidency. If you have any suggestions, please feel free to contact me and my partner, Vice President of WDAAP, Urmimala Sarkar Munsri. And please come to be with us this July and enjoy your summer with dance!



## Vice President's report

by Dr Urmimala Sarkar Munsri

Dear friends, as we get ready for the upcoming mega-event of the year for WDAAP in Taipei from 14 to 21 July 2012, we are also planning the next steps for WDAAP, as well as possible expansions. As a voluntary organization, WDAAP depends largely on generous contributions in terms of time from individuals who combine WDA work with their professional commitments and do a great job of it. Quite naturally, because of work load distributions, some years some chapters take it slow, while others have a more hectic time. Similarly, some networks have a busy schedule, while others are on sabbatical.

This year has been hectic for our friends from Taiwan, but they have been faring really well given the huge response as the Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) School Of Dance gets ready to welcome delegates of all ages to the 2012 joint summit by WDAAP and daCi: 'Dance, Young People and Change.'

A new development worth sharing before we all meet at Taipei is that we have been able to plan a meeting in Kathmandu, Nepal, with the help of our Vice President from South Asia, Lubna Marium, and with dancers of Nepal. Lubna Marium and I shall be projecting the WDA story to our new friends in Nepal in the beginning of June.

It is wonderful to see WDAAP members everywhere committed to facilitating the process of engaging and encouraging young dancers to be able to access the international world of dance, dance scholarship, dance exchange and community support. Wonderful examples come from different WDA chapters. But there is a lot more to be done to encourage network activities under different chapters and regions. It is also necessary to activate the new network, Support & Development, which replaces two of our previous relatively inactive networks (Management & Promotion and Welfare & Status).

To give two examples which fit the new network, I would like to mention the work done in Bangladesh and India by two organisations which are led by our members, Lubna Marium and Sohini Chakraborty. In Dhaka, Shadhona, an organization led by Lubna Marium, recently organized 'Shakti—A Feminist Capacity-Building & Performance Workshop' facilitated by feminist activist Kamla Bhasin and feminist choreographer/scholar Ananya Chatterjea. This not only addressed the issues of dance, but also addressed the issues of women's empowerment—and a woman dancer's capacity and position as a member of society and as a performer. It also helped young dancers relate to their milieu, and voice their concerns through dance.

In Kolkata, the organization Kolkata Sanved, led by Sohini Chakraborty, was invited to lead a team of nine performers/young advocates to perform at Sadler's Wells in March 2012. This was the result of a workshop with internationally renowned choreographers and videographers sent by Sadler's Wells in Kolkata which continued in London, where these young girls, helped and guided by the experts, could bring their short films and their performance together as a integrated whole in front of a huge audience to speak against sex-trafficking. Through the performance of *Transforming Steps* and the larger campaign, 'Stand with Survivors of Sex Trafficking, Stand Against Exploitation,' the dancers opened themselves up to a deeper understanding of the power of dance to transcend cultural barriers. This experience also enhanced their skills as dance movement therapy trainers working in Kolkata.

It is always a proud moment to share these achievements with our members all over the world, and especially those from Asia and the Pacific. Please keep in mind that you can share similar special achievements with me at [urmimala.sarkar@gmail.com](mailto:urmimala.sarkar@gmail.com), which I look forward to reporting in this magazine.



## South Asia report

by Vice President  
Lubna Marium

In October 2011,  
a South Asian  
Association for

South Asia

Bangladesh

India

Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Folk Dance Symposium was held in Dhaka, where dancers from Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka participated in seminars and dance performances. Very generously, the organizers allowed World Dance Alliance Bangladesh to give a short presentation to all the dancers about WDAAP. During that meeting, held on 24 October 2011, it was decided that WDAAP would visit, whenever possible, each of the South Asian countries to commence the operation of WDA in those countries.

Based on the meeting, Lubna Marium, WDAAP Vice President of the South Asian region, and WDAAP Vice President Urmimala Sarkar visited Nepal on 11 June 2012, and met several groups of dancers at the Yala Maya Kendra at Patan. Rajendra Sreshtha of the Kalamandapa organized the meet.

The October 2011 meeting also decided that a South Asian Dance Festival will be arranged in Dhaka sometime in 2013.

I do hope that our visit to Nepal will renew ties and will lead to further interaction between dancers in South Asia.



Representatives from Bangladesh, India, Bhutan, Nepal and Sri Lanka at the SAARC Folk Dance Symposium, October 2011, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photo: Sudeshna Swayamprabha



## East Asia report

Vice President Anna  
CY Chan

This summer will be  
an exciting and busy  
period for the East  
Asia region. The 2012  
World Dance Alliance  
Global Assembly

East Asia

Hong Kong

Japan

Korea

Taiwan

will be held at Taipei National University of the Arts from 14 to 20 July 2012 in partnership with dance and the Child International (daCi) for a joint conference and festival: 'Dance, Young People and Change'. WDAAP President Professor Yunyu Wang and her Taiwan team have been working really hard over the past two years and the festival is looking forward to welcoming up to 1000 young people, teachers, students and academics to attend an amazing program of keynote addresses, conference presentations, master classes, workshops, performances and cultural tours.

In China, meanwhile, the first forum co-presented by WDAAP and Henan Normal University will be held on the opening day of American Dance Festival (ADF) Henan 2012 on 6 August 2012 at Henan Normal University. This project is managed and coordinated by the Hong Kong chapter of WDAAP and eight scholarships to ADF Henan have been offered to members from Australia, Malaysia, Taiwan and Hong Kong to enable them to learn from ADF instructors, to share their choreography with Chinese audiences, and to experience the latest in modern dance development in China.

Reconnecting with the Japan and Korean chapters of WDAAP will be the main focus for the second part of this year.



### Pacific area

Australia

New Zealand

Fiji

New Guinea

## Pacific report

Vice President Dr Christina Hong

It is a typical autumn day here in Brisbane (located in Queensland on the southeast coast of Australia) as I settled down to write this report. The mornings and evenings are a little cooler now but the days are simply gorgeous. The locals will tell you that this is one of the best

times of the year. I feel fortunate to be able to gaze into the blue sky with its whispers of cotton-floss cloud and to feel the sunshine that is gently warming without the intensity of the summer heat. Nearby in the park I observe the brightly painted primary colours of playground equipment, the variegated foliage and lush green of the trees, and the rush of movement and the strident sounds of young children at play. In observing these youngsters and their families enjoying their weekend, my thoughts turn with anticipation to the forthcoming Dance and the Child International (daCi) and the World Dance Alliance (WDA) global summit in Taiwan and the excitement that I know will come as dance colleagues old and new, young and old, from across the globe gather together to share in the joy of dance.

I am also reminded of a Queensland state government function that I attended recently at which Jaran, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island dance troupe, performed. Jaran are an accomplished troupe who present a daily cultural showcase of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance entitled *Yanguwah* (which means welcome in Yungabeh language) at the Currumbin Wildlife Sanctuary on the Gold Coast. While the performance that I observed was presented outside of their more usual setting, what proved utterly captivating, entertaining and totally inspiring was the fact that the group were joined in their performance by a very young dancer. This youngest troupe member could not have been more than two and a half to three years old, and yet how magnificently she danced! While she was not formally part of the show, it became clear that she was a family member who had become so fully immersed in the dance activities of the group that she had absorbed by some wonderful osmosis the various female, male, and combined dance forms of these cultures. She was literally growing up enveloped in a world of dance.

The adult members of the troupe continued to entertain and educate the audience with their performance while at the same time including her impromptu participation without breaking stride or focus. The youngster moved in and out of the performance, sometimes dancing in perfect unison with her elders, sometimes sitting with the drummer/didgeridoo player adding rhythmic accompaniment by clapping and

swaying, and sometimes stepping into the space to retrieve and hand back to a dancer an inadvertently dropped dance prop or to quickly scoop a dropped feather from a headdress. At other times, she simply wandered off the performance space having become momentarily distracted by some off-stage curiosity. She proved to be a delightful focal point of attention for many audience members who revelled both in her abilities and in her nonchalant presence.

The point I want to make here is that not only was she totally comfortable to be under the gaze of an adult audience and thankfully permitted to join her family in the performance space, but that she actually genuinely inhabited the movement vocabulary, spatial patterning, and the rhythmic phrasing of the various dance forms. While audience members, myself included, initially expected her to perhaps merely mimic the movement, the surprising revelation was that she actually 'knew' the dances almost as well as the adult members of the dance troupe.

The memory of this occasion, and the coincidental sight I have (at this very moment of writing) of a mother with arms outspread and her toddler likewise, each running around the other, ducking and diving like birds in flight on the grass nearby, is what I believe lies quintessentially at the very heart of Dance and the Child International (daCi) and of the World Dance Alliance (WDA). Both associations believe in advocating for, and giving voice to, dance and dancers throughout the world regardless of age, ethnic, gender and cultural identity.

As our world continues to grow smaller and the issues that may once have been contained within country borders impact with increasing alacrity across the globe, our capacity to join together to give voice via social media not only in regard to socioeconomic and geopolitical issues but to advocate collectively for sociocultural change has become even more acute.

As border crossings, both literal and virtual, become the norm, so should we increasingly begin to examine and explore the greater opportunities for collaboration across the dance community and the mutually productive intersections that may be reached within and particularly across disciplines (our own and others) that may previously have been perceived as having little in the way of potential connectivity. We need to step outside of our dance borders to re-imagine possibilities and foster opportunities that might enable the development of a strong and potent global dance community and to further heighten and advance the ways in which dance as an art form and as a way of knowing can prove integral to shaping the sustainability of our cultures and to further adding value to the general education of young people.

I look to the forthcoming daCi-WDA Global Summit, 'Dance, Young People and Change,' to be hosted by the Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA) in Taiwan this July and to the continuation of our dance conversations at this important forum. See you there!



## South East Asia report

Vice President Dr Joseph Gonzales

### South East Asia

Cambodia

Malaysia

Philippines

Indonesia

Singapore

Thailand

Vietnam

The last three months have been very fortuitous for me with trips to three Southeast Asian nations—Singapore (twice), the Philippines and Thailand—making it appear as if I am fulfilling my role as the Vice President of this region for WDAAP!

The first Singapore sojourn was on 31 March for Kavitha Krishnan

and Maya Dance Theater's *Release 2012* and Sri Warisan Som Said Performing Arts' production of *Bendahara* which I watched on the same day. *Release 2012* was presented at the Substation, an intimate space that seats about 120 people while the second was a more opulent dance drama performed in the Kallang Theatre. On a personal basis, I have had long relationships with these companies, and it was gratifying to see their continuing efforts to promote young talent, stage new works and develop audiences. *Release 2012* was a contemporary dance production that featured five new works by young choreographers (including two from Australia, two from Maya, and Ministry of Culture's Senior Dance Specialist Peter Gn) who were mentored by more established Singapore artists. *Bendahara* also featured ten performers from ASWARA (National Academy of Arts Culture and Heritage, Malaysia) taking on the role of the ensemble as well as students from Institut Kesenian Jogjakarta, Indonesia—a tri-national cooperation.

Then it was a four-day trip from 16 to 19 April for the Singapore Youth Festival 2012 for the Central Judging for Dance (Malay Dance category) which I have had the pleasure to attend for the last 5 years. Most unfortunately, work commitments prevented me from going for the Singapore Arts Festival's ConversAsians programme which featured Malaysian choreographer Marion D'Cruz's *Dream Country—The Lost Monologue* and a dialogue with the acclaimed Akram Khan. These very different events in context and scale serve as a testimony to Singapore's vibrant dance culture and commitment to becoming an Asian arts hub.

The Philippines is always abuzz with dance activities. April, being dance month, witnessed the Sayaw Pinoy National Dance Competition, and the 4th Dance Xchange 2012 between 27 and 30 April 2012, organized by the National Commission for Culture and Arts and the National Committee for Dance headed by the indefatigable Shirley Halili-Cruz. Hosted by the affluent Cebu City that is

challenging Manila as a financial hub, the activities included workshops, a simple dance dialogue and performances in the town center as well as in more provincial areas. Featuring 10 international groups and 17 local professional companies, groups, community-based centres and individuals, this was indeed a joyous explosion of dance that included more than 600 registered participants who were feasted with a myriad of cultures. From classical ballet and contemporary ballet by Ballet Philippines to exquisite folk dance by the renowned Bayanihan Dance Company, the event was a treat for all enthusiasts. Personally, I was most enraptured by the local group Kaagan Dance Theatre Collective Inc, a community-based cultural group from Lupon in Davao Oriental with incredibly high professional standards.

I was in Thailand from 14 to 21 April to attend the Forum on Music and Dance of ASEAN conducted by the Thailand Cultural Centre together with the Music Educators Association for about 700 music teachers from pre-primary to post-graduate levels. They invited two specialists from each of the ten ASEAN nations to present papers on the activities, structure, education systems and challenges in their respective countries. It was a hands-on learning experience since most of the presenters were also practitioners who gave simple demonstrations to the participants which made for a lively conference with the feeling of a jam session! I enjoyed the presentation of Myanmar music and dance, and with the release of Aung San Suu Kyi from house arrest, this particularly resonated with me. They have developed a highly systematic methodology for the teaching of Burmese dance. I found many of the papers extremely interesting and although so much information is now available on the web, there is nothing like live interaction. One of the most important lessons that I learned was how advanced some of the ASEAN nations were with documentation and propagation of traditional music and dance, and how proud they are of their indigenous cultures. This was seen by the fact that countless universities in Thailand, for example, provide courses up to PhD-level in traditional Thai music, and countries like Vietnam have a strong state-funded system with schools and colleges for the arts.

I am pleased to add that in the midst of this hectic forum, I managed to meet with Thailand WDA President Professor Emeritus Surapone Virulrak, and active members Suphanee Boonpeng and Pornrat Damrhung over a sumptuous meal! We discussed possibilities of building regional collaborations through small projects that were not taxing on finances. The SEA region is indeed a hub of activity and although western scholars are more familiar with Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines, there is so much more to be discovered in this region that is rich with history and maritime influences.

## Network reports

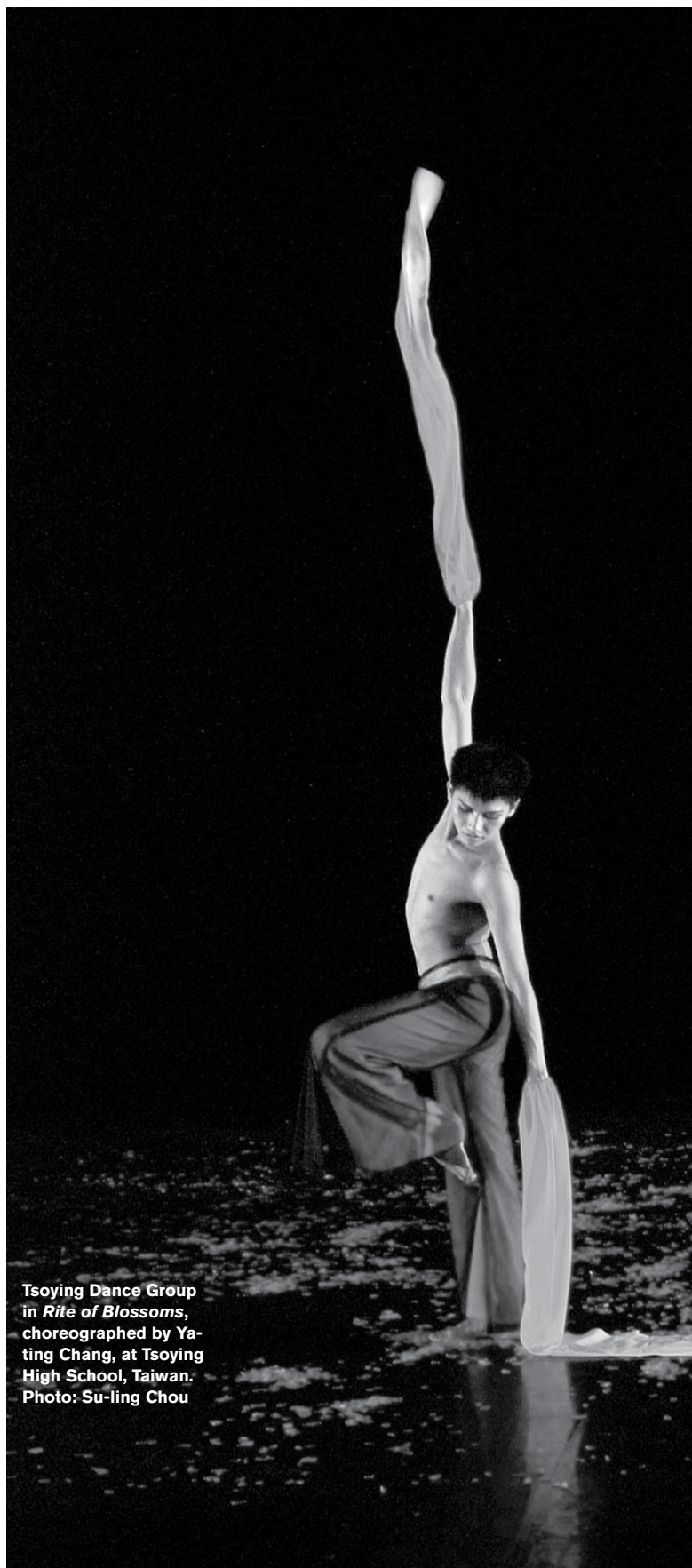
The World Dance Alliance works through four Networks, based on specific areas of interest and embracing the mandate of the organisation. Each of the networks has a chairperson and co-chair who coordinate activities to advance the issues raised by these special interest groups. These networks may also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

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

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

### About the Networks

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



Tsoying Dance Group  
in *Rite of Blossoms*,  
choreographed by Ya-  
ting Chang, at Tsoying  
High School, Taiwan.  
Photo: Su-ling Chou

## Education & Training

Co-chairs Dr Ralph Buck  
and Jeff Meiners

The World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific Education and Training Network Chairs have played a crucial role in advocating for the inaugural UNESCO International Arts Education Week, 21-27 May 2012. See below for more information.

The WDA and daCi Global Dance Summit at Taipei National University of the Arts, Taiwan, 14-21 July 2012, is entering the final stages of preparation. We have fantastic registrations and the programme is extremely engaging for young dancers, pre-professional dancers, teachers and academics. The team at TNUA led by Yunyu Wang will be finalising all details as this edition of Channels hits the streets. We look forward to meeting you in Taipei.

The Global Summit includes an important WDA planning day (Saturday 21 July). All WDA networks will meet and plan together for future network developments within and between the Asia-Pacific, Americas and European chapters. See [www.daciwdaintaiwan.org](http://www.daciwdaintaiwan.org) for conference and programme details.

### UNESCO International Arts Education Week

On 23 May 2012 the United Nations Education Science and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) will launch the inaugural International Arts Education Week (21 – 27 May 2012) at UNESCO Headquarters, Paris. This high profile event includes a symposium and official ceremony officiated by Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director General for Culture, UNESCO, and Mrs Park Jae-Eun, President, Korea Arts Culture Education Service (KACES). The World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) will be represented by Assoc. Professor Ralph Buck, Chair, Executive Council, WAAE, who will moderate one of the symposium panels. The symposia will focus on the implementation of the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education, and profiling cultural diversity in and through arts education.

International Arts Education Week was proposed to UNESCO in 2009 by the Executive Council of the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE). The WAAE is an alliance between the International Drama/Theatre Education Association (IDEA), International Society for Education through Art (InSEA), International Society for Music Education (ISME) and World Dance Alliance (WDA). Advocacy by the WAAE and the Korean Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES) was rewarded when the 36th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO agreed to three resolutions that recognise the importance of arts education in fostering cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion. The three resolutions were:

- Adopt and support the Seoul Agenda: Goals for the Development of Arts Education
- Designate the fourth week of May as International Arts Education Week
- Support a third world conference on arts education

Please go to the following website for further information regarding UNESCO arts education policies: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/arts-education/>.

[unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/arts-education/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/culture/themes/creativity/arts-education/).

International Arts Education Week aims to raise international community awareness of the importance of arts education. To be celebrated in the fourth week of May every year, International Arts Education Week will honour and celebrate arts education in diverse societies and cultures. Key stakeholders in arts education such as teachers, parents, children, arts education associations, artists, civil servants, researchers and government authorities may value this week for showcasing practices, traditions, innovations, projects and research highlighting the integral role the arts and arts education play in diverse communities.

The WAAE will value its vast international networks and annually advocate for International Arts Education Week. The WAAE calls upon all arts education stakeholders to celebrate the inaugural launch of International Arts Education Week, 23 May 2012, and to set the fourth week of May as a time for annual celebrations of arts education.



## Chapter reports

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



**Theatre8x8 in *Reincarnate***  
by Nikorn Sae Tang,  
at Democracy Studio,  
Bangkok, Thailand  
Photo: Amornthep  
Chotechuang

## Australia chapter

by Julie Dyson

While our professional dance companies have presented some innovative new work in the first half of this year, youth dance companies have also been in the news. Some gave mainstage performances in preparation for their tours to Taiwan for 'Dance, Young People and Change' in July, and others have spent a week in April at the Australian Youth Dance Festival (AYDF).

The AYDF is a rotating biannual festival presented each year by a different Ausdance

branch. This year it was the turn of Ausdance NSW, partnered by NAISDA Dance College, Australia's leading Indigenous dance training institution. Professional choreographers—Indigenous and non-Indigenous—were engaged to work with 170 young dancers to develop short site-specific works that were performed on the last day in the beautiful Mt Penang Gardens. It was a spectacular demonstration of creativity, innovation and story telling, and the setting was used to maximum effect by the young dancers and their choreographic mentors.

On the dance education front, the Australian Curriculum: The Arts (which includes dance) is heading for its final consultation phase before being trialled in Australian schools in 2013. Professional associations, teachers, state and territory education departments and subject experts have been consulted to make sure that every child will have experience of all five art forms in primary school, and a choice of all five—dance, drama, music, visual arts and media—in secondary school.

The Australia Council—the federal government's arts funding and advisory body—has also been in the news. A review of its operations was released in May, and if its recommendations are adopted, there will be radical reform of its structure and grant-giving processes. It is understood that these reforms will underpin the eventual release of the National Cultural Policy, due in a few months' time.

In the meantime, the Australia Council has announced the first of the Creative Australia Fellowships, providing \$60,000 over two years for emerging artists and \$100,000 for established artists. Choreographers Antony Hamilton and Lee Serle were among the first recipients.

Coming up are several exciting events, including an Arts & Health Forum at Parliament House in Canberra, and the Australian Dance Awards in Perth on 1 September. The awards will be preceded by the MoveMe festival, a week of Western Australian contemporary dance performances.

Ausdance will also host a dance research forum in Melbourne on 4 and 5 August, with the Tertiary Dance Council of Australia (TDCA). There is great interest from both established and early career dance researchers, and it is expected that the TDCA will begin a new era by extending membership to individual dance researchers.

Indigenous dance was featured in Brisbane in June when BlakDance Australia invited First Nations artists from Canada, New Zealand and Australia to present performances, forums and workshops. BlakDance grew out of the Treading the Pathways project, and continues to profile independent contemporary Indigenous dance from across Australia. The BlakDance event came only a month after the celebration of Australian Dance Week in May, which had



**Dragon Garden,** choreographed by Sue Healey at the Australian Youth Dance Festival, April 2012, presented by Ausdance NSW and NAISDA Dance College.

Photo: Julie Dyson.

## Aotearoa New Zealand chapter

by Tania Kopytko

Kia ora and warmest greetings from Aotearoa New Zealand and DANZ.

The year to date has been buoyant with dance activity, beginning with a range of summer schools and master-classes early in the year which set the pace. We have now entered the period of professional development seminars and forums to develop skills for our dance people so that the 'business around dance' can support the art that that is made. The 2012 Pacific Island May dance Fono (congress) in Auckland has sustainability as its theme, a theme that concerns all performing artists in the current difficult economic times.

In the past few years DANZ has encouraged dance people to celebrate International Dance Day with the rest of the planet, remembering that in dance we all express our humanity and connectedness. Each year the recognition and celebration gradually grows here. This year the approaches were varied, from "have a go" community dance events such as a dance-around-the-world disco to school dance projects and private studio performances.

The South Island town of Dunedin, which, like Wellington, has celebrated IDD for over 10 years, this year connected with its mature and aging population and ran a series of short workshops under the banner of 'Dancing Makes You Smarter.' This was based on research that suggests that when you dance often, your mind is stimulated plus you reap the health benefits of physical activity, stress reduction and a sense of well-being.

Beginning with a quote from the 2012 International Dance Day message from Sidi Larbi Cherakhoui - "I wish everyone lots of dance... to engage with life as part of its never-ending choreography. Dance to find honesty and to transmit, to reflect and to celebrate it,"— sixty mature adults tried out the basics of contra dance, Indian classical, jazz and hip hop and had a wonderful warm and happy experience: the gift that dance can give.

Wellington Youthdance Education Trust ran a workshop and performance programme which reached over 600 people including people with disabilities. Dance groups ranging from theatre-based dance to the dance of the various ethnic communities, gave workshops and performances as varied as tap, jazz, capoeira, salsa, Afro-Cuban Yoroba, Indonesian, hip hop, morris and belly dance, Indian, Polish and Chinese traditional dance.

Such community programmes not only encourage the development of dance and audience development, but create an opportunity for understanding between the different cultures that make up New Zealand society and between dance cultures.

We now look forward to the dance festival season in Auckland and Christchurch in September/October. For information on NZ dance events go to <http://www.danz.org.nz/diary.php>

**The International  
Dance Day celebration,  
Sunday 29 April 2012 in  
Wellington.**

Photo: Julian Thomson



## Bangladesh chapter

by Sharmila Banerjee



ঐ মিলনায়তনে গতকাল পরিবেশিত 'বিন্দু রেখা বৃত্ত' নামের একটি কোরিওগ্রাফির দৃশ্য

—সকালের খবর

World Dance Alliance Bangladesh successfully conducted a week-long dance workshop named "Udayan," based on the life, works and dance style of the great Indian dance maestro Uday Shankar from 1-6 March 2012. The workshop was conducted by Urmimala Sarkar from Delhi who is a former student of a student of Smt Amala Shankar (Uday Shankar's wife) at Uday Shankar India Culture Centre. The workshop was greatly appreciated by all. Young dancers from all over the country participated in the workshop. The participants were overwhelmed and very excited to have come in contact with the new style and way of creating dance on their own which is the main theme of Uday Shankar's dance style. *Kalpana*, a three-hour feature film on dance and an immortal creation of Uday Shakar, was shown to the participants to give them an idea of the Uday Shankar style of choreography and also introduced various techniques used in film in the 1940's.

We had a show on the concluding day of the workshop in which Urmimala performed *Kartikeya*, a work choreographed by Uday Shankar himself, and the participants presented a glimpse of what they had learned during the workshop. The program started with an audio-visual presentation on the life and works of Uday Shankar by me as I am also an ex-student of Uday Shankar India Culture Centre. The pieces demonstrated in the show were choreographed by the participants themselves. At the end of the show a few glimpses of the film *Kalpana* were shown to the audience to give them an idea of

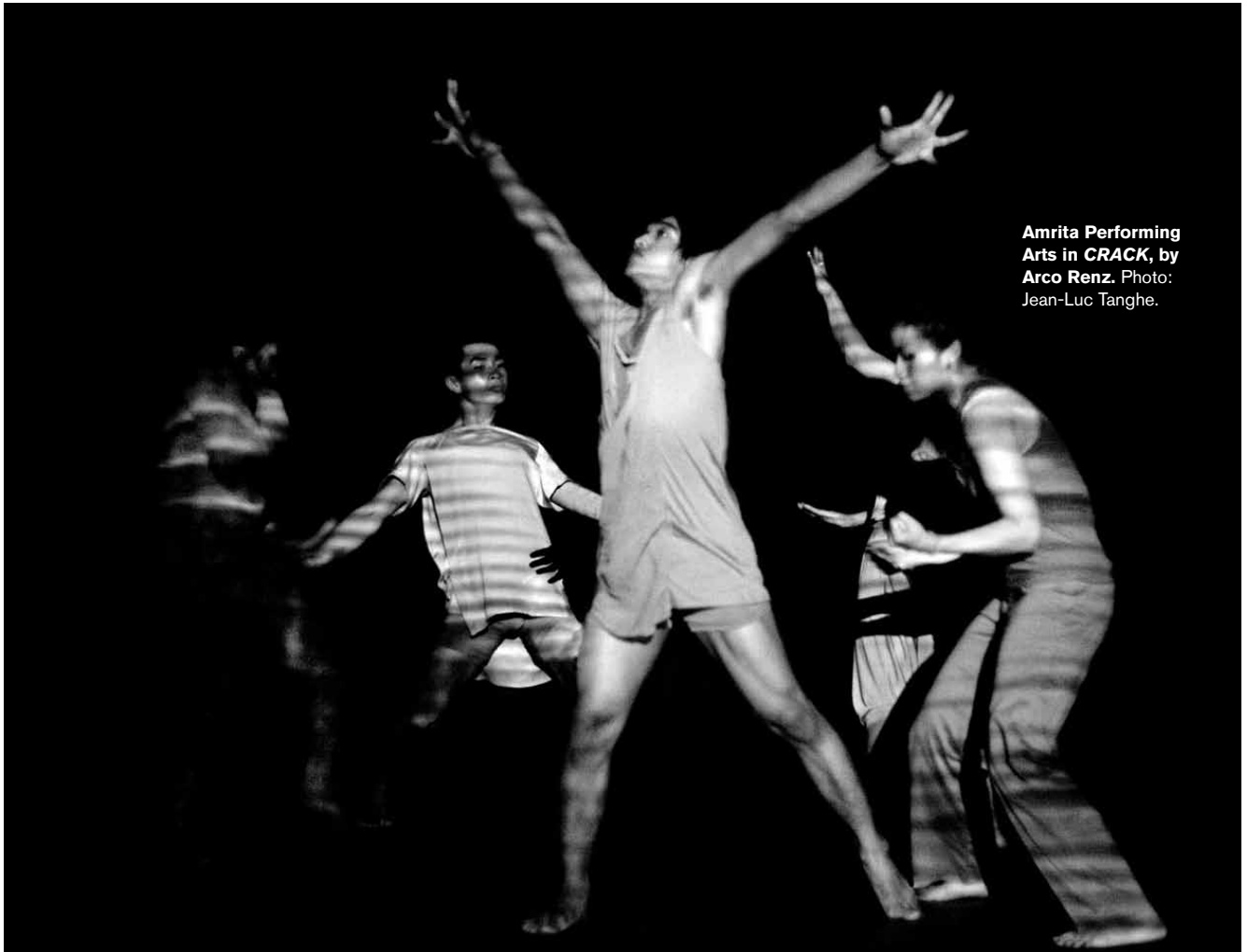


(C) Ridwan Adid Rupon | ridwan\_adid@yahoo.com

Uday Shankar's dance and choreography.

The performance was highly appreciated by the audience and the media who had never seen much of the maestro's choreography. It was a very helpful workshop for young dancers of the country who aspire to become choreographers in the future. The techniques taught by Urmimala will help them to think from a broader perspective while choreographing. We truly appreciate and thank Urmimala from the bottom of our hearts for being so generous and co-operative. We were very much pleased to see her patience and her lively interaction with the students as she is familiar to most of them from her previous visits to Bangladesh. The participants were equally fascinated by her innovative way of teaching and her sparkling ideas. We would love to have her again for longer period of time in Bangladesh, and we hope to organize more workshops and other events like this for the further development of our local dancers.

**Udayan dance workshop conducted by Urmimala Sarkar in Bangladesh, 1-6 March 2012.** Photos: Ridwan Adid Rupon (right), courtesy Shawkaler Khawbor (above)



**Amrita Performing Arts in *CRACK*, by Arco Renz. Photo: Jean-Luc Tanghe.**

## **Cambodia chapter**

by Fred Frumberg

### **Amrita Performing Arts**

Amrita Performing Arts is committed to creating contemporary Cambodian dance and theater for a new generation of artists passionately dedicated to ushering their country's ancient performing arts heritage into the future.

As our work in contemporary dance continues to evolve and be part of the global dance scene, we are very pleased to share information about some of our upcoming tours. *Crack*, by Arco Renz, recently completed a very successful four-city tour in Belgium with subsequent presentations in June at the Indonesian Dance Festival and in Phnom Penh. *Crack* will return to Europe in August 2012 with performances at dance festivals in Berlin, Groningen and Zurich.

Our new collaboration with Indonesian choreographer Eko Supriyanto entitled *Para-Human* will premiere at the Singapore National Museum on 26 July 2012 and we are honored to be part of the WDA Global Summit showcase series with an excerpt of our work inspired by the Bach Cello Suites, created by young Cambodian choreographers.

### **Khmer Arts Ensemble**

Khmer Arts Artistic Director Sophiline Cheam Shapiro served as a delegate from Cambodia at the ASEAN-Korea Cultural Summit in Seoul in February 2012 and attended the Asia Society's Women Leaders of the New Asia Summit in Shanghai in April. The Khmer Arts Ensemble celebrated the fifth anniversary of its founding by Khmer Arts, which was also celebrating its tenth anniversary as a dance organization, with a concert at the Khmer Arts Theater in Takhmao, Cambodia. The Ensemble completed principal videography for a short dance film in collaboration with Phnom Penh-based Studio Revolt. The organization is also putting the finishing touches on *Dance at the School of Fine Arts 1981-1993: A Photographic History*, which it will publish in the coming months.

## Timor-Leste chapter

by Colleen Coy



Ana Paula Cruz, Kirsty Hilson, Leigh-Ashley Lipscomb, Mariana Nobre Vieira, Debbie Katzman, Mia Thornton, Gemma White and Marta Henriques Pereira in *Flocking*, a dance for the video camera choreographed by Colleen Coy, April 2012. Photo: Hector Hill

on to younger generations. Some of these groups have existed for several decades. One group, Le Ziaval, creates contemporary fusion dances comprised of choreography

The free expression of cultural forms of social ritual and community events have been an important factor in the country's development in the ten years since Timor-Leste's independence was achieved in 2002. Indigenous social rituals are central to the everyday cultural life of Timorese people. Indigenous (pre-colonial) and traditional (post-colonial) forms of dance continue to dominate the various rituals and rites of passage in the lives of individuals and communities.

UNESCO has recently been conducting workshops with staff from the Timor-Leste State Secretariat for Culture as part of the preparation for the ratification of the UNESCO 2003 Convention on the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage. There has already been some inventory work conducted as part of these preparations and this in turn contributed to the conference that was held in July 2011 to launch and discuss the formation of a National Academy for Arts and Creative Industries. The formation of this Academy is one of the key strategies for cultural development in the Timor-Leste Strategic Development Plan (2011-2030) and is being led by the Timor-Leste Secretary of State for Culture under the Ministry of Education, the Prime Minister's Office, and Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia.

Whether Timor-Leste's indigenous and/or traditional dance forms and other aspects of indigenous cultural ritual should be placed on the UNESCO 2003 Convention's Representative List is a question that the Timorese will need to consider for themselves in the coming years, prior to the ratification of the Convention. In the meantime, there are a number of community-based groups and NGOs around the country that meet to rehearse regularly and provide performances at public occasions for the purpose of showcasing and celebrating elements of culture and welcoming visitors. In part, these groups have the stated objective of ensuring that dance traditions are passed

incorporating traditional dance steps from different geographic regions in the country. These dances are set to modern music that also fuses traditional rhythmic and melodic elements. There has been little formal study of indigenous and traditional forms of Timorese dance to the present time and aside from the above-mentioned groups there is almost no contemporary dance.

In this context there has recently been some exploration of dance hybridity, meaning composites composed of heterogeneous dance genres. As a World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific member and dancer/dance instructor/choreographer, I have been living in Timor-Leste for the past six years creating choreography for both live performance as well as dance for the camera. These pieces of choreography represent the beginnings of my efforts to explore composite forms of dance.

*ne'e ga?* was debuted at the launch of the National Academy for Arts and Creative Industries and combined a Timorese traditional instrument, the gong, with electronic music, and featured abstracted versions of commonly used Timorese gestures in contemporary western dance. *Flocking* was created for the camera and filmed on the airport runway. These pieces are among those intended to form part of a dialogue about globalization: east-west and north-south social and cultural relations, and the interactions between traditional, indigenous, modern, and contemporary influences in dance. These dance explorations endeavor not to be intrusive but to use dance to promote interest in participating and exploring hybrids and fusions between international and indigenous and traditional forms and styles of dance. They also create an opportunity for women involved to feel comfortable in and be able to occupy social and non-traditional public spaces and be treated with respect for their universal right to freedom of expression: the right to move.

## Hong Kong chapter

by Joanna Lee

### 2012 Hong Kong Dance Awards

Hong Kong Dance Alliance presented the 2012 Hong Kong Dance Awards gala ceremony on 4 May 2012.

The Hong Kong Dance Alliance Distinguished Achievement Award was presented to Mui Cheuk Yin and Yuri Ng. Starting her career as a professional dancer in the 1980s, Mui Cheuk Yin became an independent choreographer, dancer and teacher in the 1990s and is an internationally renowned solo artist and dance ambassador for Hong Kong. Her work focuses on exploring human emotions and relationships. Her choreography has a distinctive aesthetic voice and, while contemporary, often incorporates Chinese elements. Her unwavering commitment and passion to strive for the best in dance has earned her numerous honours from the Hong Kong community. Mui has given generously of her time and expertise to the development of dance in Hong Kong as mentor, teacher and leader. Passionate and dedicated, Mui is truly a model dance professional.

Yuri Ng started his career in ballet, becoming a successful dancer with National Ballet of Canada. In 1993 he returned to Hong Kong and quickly established himself as a choreographer of outstanding talent and originality. His work combines profound understanding of local culture with international sophistication. He is a committed mentor and teacher and has done much to develop and expand the dance audience in Hong Kong.

Dancer, choreographer, designer, director, teacher and photographer, Yuri is truly a Renaissance man. His unceasing creativity, adventurous exploration of new ideas and encouragement of other artists are an inspiration and all his work is distinguished by its passion, joyousness and outside-the-box individuality.

The Hong Kong Dance Award for Outstanding Dance Production was presented to Hong Kong Dance Company for *Two Swallows—Ode to Wu Guanzhong*, which brought to life some of the greatest paintings of contemporary Chinese master painter Wu Guanzhong. The superb score, spectacular designs and choreography of exemplary musicality created a multi-layered work of originality and power, performed magnificently by the entire company.

The Hong Kong Dance Award for Outstanding Choreography was presented to Noel Pong for the City Contemporary Dance Company production *Off Screen*. Long one of Hong Kong's most promising choreographers, Pong reached a new level of maturity in this, her first full-length work. The choreography was

refreshingly uncluttered, innately musical and showed an excellent command of space. Fresh, vibrant and full of humanity, *Off Screen* displays Pong's exceptional flair for comedy and her sharp yet sympathetic eye for the complexity of human behaviour.

The Hong Kong Dance Award for Outstanding Performance was presented respectively to Chen Jun of Hong Kong Dance Company, for his performance in *Two Swallows – Ode to Wu Guanzhong*; to Lam



Po of City Contemporary Dance Company, for his performance in *The Moment I Saw It*, and to Wu Fei Fei of the Hong Kong Ballet, for her performance in *Moments in Time—A Room of Her Own*.

The Hong Kong Dance Award 2011 for Outstanding Independent Dance was presented to Daniel Yeung for *Dan's Exhibitionist*, and to Li Yong Jing and Lam Po for *The Moment I Saw It*. *Dan's Exhibitionist* was packed with visual inventiveness and dazzling multimedia effects yet these were balanced by moments of simplicity when Yeung demonstrated his mesmerising ability to create sculptural forms with his body in a way which went to the heart of dance: feeling and form expressed in the purest fashion with nothing more than the human body. Tightly structured, skilfully choreographed and full of emotional resonance, *The Moment I Saw It* was a gem. Using the simplest of means, Li and Lam succeeded in producing a piece which was striking visually

and enhanced by an excellent choice of music. Original, moving and memorable, it was beautifully performed by its creators.

The Hong Kong Dance Award for Outstanding Service to Dance was presented to the E-Side Dance Company for their outstanding use of the venue partnership scheme to provide performance opportunities for independent dance artists, showcase new choreography and experimental work, create links between artists from Hong Kong and other countries and involve the local community on an active, ongoing basis.

The Hong Kong Dance Award for Design of Dance was presented to the whole design team for their stunningly imaginative and skillful work on Hong Kong Dance Company's *Two Swallows—Ode to Wu Guanzhong*. Tsang Man Tung's sets, Eddy Mok's costumes, Lin Jin Yao's video and Yeung Tsz Yan's lighting combined triumphantly to convey not only the visual impact of Wu's paintings but their emotional power. Filled with dazzling theatrical effects yet never overwhelming the dancing, this was an ideal example of design as an integral, organic part of dance production.

### Presence of WDAAP in ADF Henan 2012

ADF Henan 2012, presented by Henan Normal University and the Association of Dancers, Henan Province and organized by the School of Music, Henan Normal University, will take place between 6-24 August 2012 at Henan Normal University. The organizer has invited WDAAP to be the Festival's forum co-presenter. To be facilitated by WDAAP President Wang Yunyu, the forum titled "The Reflection of Traditional Culture in Contemporary Choreography" will take place on the Festival Opening Day (6 Aug). Three recognized independent artists from the Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong will be speaking at the forum: Wang Mei representing Mainland China, Gu Mingshen representing Taiwan, and Mui Cheuk Yin representing Hong Kong.

In the meantime, eight scholarship positions have been offered to independent dance artists from all over the Asia Pacific region through the WDAAP network. An open call for proposals took place between Nov 2011 and Jan 2012. Applications were first reviewed and endorsed by WDA country chapter heads. Recommendations were then submitted to a final selection panel made up of established practitioners. Upon careful review, the scholarships were granted to the following artists:

1. Annalouise Paul from Australia



2. Steve Goh Chen-fui from Malaysia
3. Teresa Chian from Malaysia
4. Hsu Chen-wei from Taiwan
5. Jay Peng Zhang from Hong Kong
6. Alice Ma Sze Ngae from Hong Kong
7. Vivian Chan Yee Ting from Hong Kong
8. Ivy Tsui Yik Chit from Hong Kong

Grantees will enjoy free access to all master classes, performances, lectures and forums during ADF Henan. We congratulate the grantees and wish them all the best at the upcoming Festival.

**1] Daniel Yeung, awardee of Outstanding Independent Dance, sharing the moment of honour with his design collaborators.**

Photo: Cai Ying

**2] In celebration of solidarity of dance: we all are dancers, regardless of what genre of dance we practice.**

Photo: Cai Ying

**3] Finale performance of the 2012 Hong Kong Dance Awards gala ceremony.** Photo: Cai Ying

## India chapter

by Dr. Sunil Kothari,  
in collaboration  
with Anuradha  
Vikranth and Ranjiita  
Karlekar

Along with the International Association of Theatre Critics (IATC) and India International Centre, Dance Alliance India felicitates Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, who has received the 4th Thalia Prize, instituted by IATC, for her contribution to cultural education, administration and artistic works. This function was held on 6 June, at the India International Centre, New Delhi.

The other important felicitation event was in honour of Shanta Serbjeet Singh, who was elected as Vice Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi. Shanta Serbjeet Singh is a distinguished writer, critic and cultural commentator and is associated with several cultural organizations. Both Dr Kapila Vatsyayan and Shanta Serbjeet Singh have been supporting and guiding the activities of the WDAAP South Asia chapter (India) and the Dance Alliance Delhi chapter.

During February 2012, distinguished dance critic Alastair Macaulay of *The New York Times* visited India. Dance Alliance

India and Sangeet Natak Akademi arranged a get-together and a meeting with him on 7 February at Meghdoot Auditorium of Sangeet Natak Akademi. Local prominent dancers, critics and scholars attended the reception in which a very stimulating conversation with Mr. Macaulay took place.

As the 150th anniversary of Tagore's birth draws to a close it is interesting to note that a huge amount of renewed research has been initiated on Tagore and his work. As a part of the same celebration, I gave a talk on Tagore's visit to China on 8 February 2012 at India International Centre, screening a rare documentary on Tagore's visits to China in 1923 and 1929. The film was made by Bivas Mukherjee, a journalist based in Shanghai and working for the *Shanghai Daily*. I also participated in a seminar on Tagore at Hyderabad University. On 29 February 2012, the 108th anniversary of the birth of Rukmini Devi, I screened a documentary made by the BBC on the dance academy Kalakshetra and the life

of Rukmini Devi for the Dance Department of Hyderabad University.

Dance Alliance India arranged a memorial meeting at India International Centre on 12 April 2012 for Manna Sinivasan, the renowned scholar and roving editor of *Sruti*, a monthly magazine devoted to dance and music. Dr Kapila Vatsyayan, who had known him for 50 years, paid him warm tributes in a written message for his contribution to Indian dance as a scholar and a critic. Leading dancers including Pandit Birju Maharaj, the doyen of Kathak dancers, as well as other senior critics, scholars, and institutional heads, spoke about his services and the void created by his passing away.

Dance Alliance India has proposed to India International Centre to hold a monthly lecture by a dance scholar, as well as conversations between dancers and scholars at the Centre.

A special and proud mention has to be made of the Gati Dance Forum which recognizes the urgent need for a space in Delhi where independent dancers can meet and use facilities such as safe rehearsal studios, a fitness room and resource library, and which would like to solicit support to make one of the most critical interventions in creating a nurturing and thriving environment for dance in this city! Anybody interested to contribute or learn more about this venture may visit the Gati Dance Forum website at [www.gatidance.com](http://www.gatidance.com).

The Gati Summer Dance Residency is a residency that offers six emerging choreographers the unique opportunity to work with experienced mentors in the field during a period of nine weeks to develop their own individual choreographic works. Held in Delhi between 21 April and 22 June 2012, the residency provides each choreographer with financial support, accommodation, individual mentoring, workshops experience, rehearsal space and production assistance. This year's residents are Divya Vibha Sharma (Delhi), Rakesh MPS (Bangalore), Sanjukta Wagh (Mumbai), Deepa Dharmadhikari (Delhi), Sunitha (Bangalore) and Debanjali Biswas (Kolkata). The mentors for GSDR 2012 are theatre director Sankar Venkateswaran, German choreographers Susanne Linke and Urs Dietrich, and Swiss sound artist POL. The special focus of this year's residency is sound design. The residents have worked intensively in collaboration with POL to create their own sound scores.

### WDA Karnataka

Since its inception, WDA Karnataka has initiated many activities which have been well attended and participated by artists and art



1] Felicitation of Sri Jayanth Kastuar by WDA Karnataka. Left to right: Veena Murthy Vijay, Vikram Vishwanath, Gowri Vishwanath, Jayanth Kastuar, Asha Gopal, Madhulitha Mohapatra, Deepa Shashidharan, Anuradha Vikranth. Photo: WDA Karnataka

2] Ronnie Shambik Ghose and Dr. Mitul Sengupta in *Swan Lake—Revisited* by Rhythmosaic. Photo: Rhythmosaic

lovers of Bangalore. It also has been working on bringing together people from different works of life to create a vibrant community around dance. The organization has a large number of members consisting of dancers, dance lovers, choreographers, master teachers and young students. The principal functionaries of the executive board are Veena Murthy Vijay (President), Anuradha Vikranth (Secretary) and Shama Krishna (Treasurer). At the moment it has one active network, Education and Training, headed by Madhulita Mohapatra.

One very important recent event was the WDA January Festival which featured a Kuchipudi Recital by Smt. Vrata Chigateri (England), and a lecture demonstration on kathak by Sri Jayanth Kastaur, a renowned kathak exponent.

The next event planned is on 27 May at Smriti Nandan Auditorium, Bangalore. WDA is very proud to present 'Maya to Matter', an event to commemorate the contribution by the living legend in the field of dance in Bangalore, Dr Maya Rao. 'Maya to Matter' is an initiative of the members of WDA to create a gateway that passes on Dr Maya Rao's vast experience.

### **Dance Alliance Kolkata**

Dance Alliance Kolkata has planned a four-day event, Dance Dialogue, to be held sometime between 7 and 15 December 2012, which will bring together dancers, choreographers, scholars, critics and students through various shared experiences during a three-day seminar, 'Moving Spaces: Women in Dance'. This will also be the time in which Dance Alliance Kolkata will host the Annual General Meeting of Dance Alliance India.

The Members of Dance Alliance Kolkata have been working with exciting projects in the last six months. Sapphire Creations presented two pieces, *Incompleteness* by Dibyendu Nath and *Fuel*, a collaborative piece by Paromita Saha and Anusuya Mazumdar, as part of their Patton Quarterly Series initiative in promoting new talent. Paromita Saha, co-director of Sapphire, was invited as special guest to the British Dance Edition in London.

Sapphire Creations and Artsforward have planned their sixth edition of INTERface (International Festival of Alternative and Contemporary Expressions) to be held from 21 to 30 September 2012 in three cities: Kolkata, New Delhi and Bangalore. The proposed artistes are Champloo Dance Company (UK), Theatre of Rhythm and Dance (Australia), Shadhona (Bangladesh) and Idan Cohen (Israel). Artistes from India are Priti Patel, Vyjayanti Kashi, Aruna Mohanty, Samudra

Dance Company, Geeta Chandran, Anusha Lall, and the theatre company Swapnasandhani. The festival will also include seminars, workshops, film screenings and an Emerging Choreographers' Forum to showcase new talent.

Ranan's dance-theatre production *Crossings* featured as one of only seven international productions in the NEW! program of the Tbilisi International Theatre Festival, Georgia. December 2011 saw the second phase of 'The Edge', a collaborative project between Ranan and Transport Theatre, UK. Members of both companies spent three weeks in workshops and field trips. Vikram Iyengar and Anubha Fatehpuria represented Ranan at the India Theatre Forum Seminar on 'Spaces of Theatre' at Ninasam, Heggodu in March 2012. Ranan explored Tagore's *Muktodhara* during a two-week workshop in April with around 50 students at a Sunderbans school. As a part of the year-long celebrations of the 150th year of Rabindranath Tagore, Ranan performed *Chitra* at the ongoing Rabindra Janmotsav in Kolkata in May. Vikram Iyengar will conduct a series of workshops at the International Student Drama Festival in Sheffield, UK, in June 2012.

Rhythmosaic Dance Company presented an Indo-French dance production commissioned by Indian Council for Cultural Relations named *Swan Lake—Revisited* by Dr. Mitul Sengupta, Ronnie Shambik Ghose from India and Gianin Loringett from France, choreographed by blending dance forms like classical ballet, jazz, tap, flamenco and the classical Indian dance kathak.

Kolkata Sanved has launched an international campaign in both Kolkata and London, 'Stand with Survivors of Sex Trafficking, Stand Against Exploitation', in collaboration with Sadler's Wells and Living Lens, UK. The collaboration resulted in a performance which incorporated choreography and a video edited from works by the Sanved dancers. The awareness-raising film will be screened across London as the city gears up to host the Olympics in 2012. The performance was received with great appreciation in UK and India.

Another project, 'Platform Beat: Dance Transforming Lives,' is designed to promote the performing arts as a means of self development and self expression for children living on railway platforms of West Bengal. The program, which will span 16 months from October 2011 through January 2013, seeks to nurture the creative potential of adolescent girls and boys and provide a holistic method of rehabilitation.

## Japan chapter

by Yukihiro Yoshida

### Practical Collaborative Research in Dance with Global Networking Research Nodes after the Disaster

After the disaster in Japan in March 2011, both Japanese society and the Japanese dance community were greatly changed. Many young Japanese artists left Eastern Japan, and some moved overseas. For example, Toshiki Okada, the leader of chelfitsch, moved to Kumamoto, Kyushu Island, where the artistic community has become more active. The impact of the disaster can be seen in the scripts of many new plays, and it has initiated charity performances by dancers in all genres of dance, from ballet to flamenco, especially in Northern Japan.

Japanese artists have been working and thinking about dancing in the context of this new situation. This has led many to start collaborating with international networks, in pursuit of globalism and mobility.

In August and September, Isabel Valverde from the Institute of Humane Studies and Intelligent Sciences and VIMMI/INESC-ID, Portugal, Todd Cochrane from Wellington Institute of Technology, New Zealand, Jun Makime, a film artist and advisory board member of film festivals, image forums and butoh, butoh artist Yumi Sagara and I organized the Senses Places workshop at the Digital Hollywood University in Tokyo. The team will conduct a subsequent session at the Digital Resources in Humanities and Arts Conference 2012 in September in Ningbo, China.

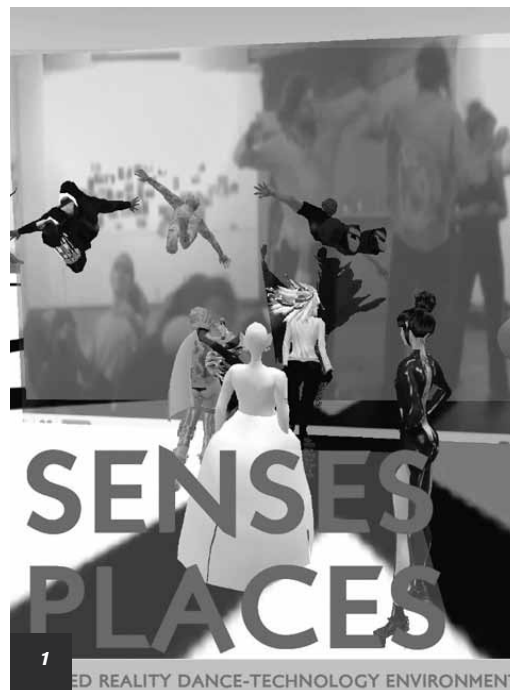
Additionally, Isabel Valverde performed with Jun Makime and Yumi Sagara in the art project 12 *Shinsho*, a 12 Buddhas Project, at Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo.

The project was administered with three cultural collaborative nodes: New Zealand/Taiwan, Portugal and Japan. Pei-Jung Lee from the University of Auckland, New Zealand, performed in Tokyo on 15 December 2011, and with Chung-Fu Chang from Colorado State University in March 2012 as part of the Japan Theatre Arts Network Festival in Tokyo.

Through these processes, the team members are constructing networks between Portugal, New Zealand, Taiwan and Japan, centred on a collaborative research node in Japan. Occasionally, such networking projects provide opportunities for young artists to leave Eastern Japan. In this way, Japanese artists invent and analyze new methods of expression in dance performance using cross cultural collaboration as practical research.

3] The poster for the presentation at the Digital Resources in Humanities and Arts Conference, September 2012, in Ningbo, China.

Image: Yukihiro Yoshida. 2 – 3] The art project 12 *Shinsho* by 12 Buddhas Project at Meguro Museum of Art, Tokyo. Photo: Yukihiro Yoshida.



## South Korea chapter

by Chiwon Ha

WDA Korea celebrated International Dance Day on 28-29 April at Busan National University located in Busan, the second largest city of Korea, and at the outdoor stage of the Seoul Art Center in Seoul.

This year's theme was 'Everybody has a right to dance—from sneakers to toeshoes.' No matter how old you are, no matter what type of dance you prefer, this day was designed to be enjoyed by everybody and was conducted by the Chapter Head of WDA Korea, Kui-in Chung.

WDA Korea put all its efforts into staging the best performances, which were attended by 5000 spectators each. The first day of the event started at 6pm, so audiences and spectators were able to enjoy the performances and the beautiful sunset at the same time. Twenty-two different teams from various genres showed their talents, including ballet, contemporary, modern, jazz, Latin and hip hop. We created a very interesting flash mob video clip to encourage the spectators to participate. The video clip, which is still available on YouTube, was played at the end of the performances, which helped people to be the part of the performance. It was a successful 2 hour show.

On the second day, 23 different teams made up of modern dance, Korean folk dance, yoga-inspired dance, contemporary dance, hip-hop and so on were put on stage, featuring a number of respectable choreographers and

dancers. Audience and press members filled the Seoul Art Center. After the performance, everybody danced to the lead of Yook Wan Soon Line Dance Team, which was the highlight of the whole festival.

People who participated shared the enormous amount of positive energy generated by the 2012 International Dance Day, and while WDA Korea is now stronger after this successful event, we will continue working hard for the future of dance in Korea.



1] Kim Young Sil Dance Company from Soowon University in *HunsunDo*, choreographed by Kim Young Sil, for International Dance Day in Seoul.

2] Hal Dance Company of Pusan National University in *Pung Ryu*, choreographed by Kang Mee Ri, for International Dance Day in Busan.

3] BADA Contemporary Dance Company of Pusan National University, in *Enter Point*, choreographed by Kui In Chung, for International Dance Day in Busan.

4] Kim Keung Soo Ballet Theater from Chung-Ang University in *Mask*, choreographed by Kim Keung Soo, for International Dance Day in Seoul. All photos: Kim Min Sung

## Malaysia chapter

by Bilqis Hijjas



MyDance Alliance was at the centre of the notorious 'Tutu Incident' in early April of this year. On behalf of MyDance, I had sent a letter to the editor of an online newspaper expressing my disappointment that visiting performers from Singapore Dance Theatre (SDT) had had their visas denied because the Malaysian government agency that handles such applications considered their costumes indecent. The news that the Malaysian Ministry of Culture thought the tutus for *The Nutcracker* and Balanchine's *Serenade* too saucy was considered a real scoop, and the following day I was deluged by calls from international media. Friends as far away as the United Kingdom, the US, Australia, and Czechoslovakia reported reading about the incident in their local newspapers. Meanwhile, local Malaysian ballet lovers were up in arms.

Our Minister of Culture then publicly stated that he loved the ballet and welcomed SDT, and the visa agency denied that they had ever received a visa application, much less rejected it. However, the producers of the show and I took this for usual bureaucratic obfuscation and stuck to our guns. Unfortunately for the fate of SDT, it was too late to issue the visas and reinstate the performance.

In the final reckoning, however, I take this to be a positive incident for the Malaysian performing arts community. In anticipation of national elections before the end of this year, the Malaysian government is eager to promote its reformist agenda. The public embarrassment suffered by the Ministry of Culture over the

Tutu Incident will ensure that visa applications for international touring shows in the future will receive more sympathetic treatment. We also hope that the Tutu Incident will expose the need for more serious attention to be given to the performing arts in Malaysia, and there have recently been small signs from the government that this is indeed occurring.

The drama of the Tutu Incident aside, the ongoing projects of MyDance Alliance have been proceeding well. Our Dancebox program in partnership with The Actors Studio theatre continues. The one-night performance in April featured four solos by emerging Malaysian dancers as well as a narrative dance-gymnastics performance by children from a local gymnastics studio. We were also very pleased to present a solo by visiting Japanese butoh artist Katsura Kan.

As Malaysia does not have an established international dance festival, informal visits from international choreographers and dancers are a valuable introduction to new ideas, skills and choreographic trends. MyDance Alliance is happy to organise workshops for visiting dancers to enable them to share their art with the local dance community. In March, Malaysian choreographer Ng Teck Voon, who has been based in the Netherlands for many years, returned to Malaysia for a short visit, during which time he created and presented a new full-length work with two outstanding Malaysian dancers, and also conducted a workshop at Rimbun Dahan. In May, Indonesian dancer and choreographer Agung Gunawan, who



was visiting to participate in a performance by MyDance member organisation Nyoba Kan, also conducted a workshop at Rimbun Dahan, giving participants a taste of his classical Javanese dance training, and various approaches for working with masks. French contemporary circus troupe Chabatatz d'Entrar will give a workshop in June, sponsored by Alliance Française de Kuala Lumpur.

MyDance Alliance is also moving ahead with its audience development program. In partnership with local theatre collective Five Arts Centre, we have just launched our first season of free screenings of dance films this year, which commenced with a very popular screening of Wim Wender's *Pina*. We had over 60 people in attendance, including a number of visual artists, one of whom commented, "This experience will feed me for many, many years." Our first screening program will show one film every week, followed by a second screening program in September.

I have also quietly started working on the Malaysian Dance Archives, a project inspired by my visit to Ausdance in January this year. Ausdance director Julie Dyson generously gave me a tour of Canberra and introduced me to the curators of dance at the National Library and the National Film and Sound Archive, where they hold impressive collections of Australian dance material. In an effort to preserve Malaysian dance ephemera, I have since distributed collection boxes to major local dance companies with instructions for them to fill them with programs, posters, flyers and

DVDs from each one of their performances. How this collection will be filed, stored and made available to the general public is yet to be determined, but hopefully the next six months will suggest some solutions!

Dr Mohd Anis Mohd Nor, head of the MyDance Research and Documentation network, reports that the network successfully achieved two targeted projects for 2011 with the assistance from MyDance members and three major institutions/organizations, namely the Cultural Centre University of Malaya, the National Department for Culture and Arts of the Malaysian Ministry of Communication, Information and Culture, and Rimbun Dahan.

The first project was the publication of a new book on dance in Malaysia by Routledge edited by Mohd Anis Md Nor and Stephanie Burridge. The book, *Sharing Identities: Celebrating Dance in Malaysia*, is the first large-scale collaboration of Malaysian dance writers and scholars to produce the first most comprehensive anthology on dance in Malaysia with short essays and interviews with dance artists who shared their stories on their struggles in grappling with the diversities of a multicultural nation while pursuing their sense of identity in Malaysia.

The second project was a collaboration between the three institutions to host and organize the Asia Pacific International Dance Conference 2011 (APIDC 2011) in September 2011 at the Royal Bintang Kuala Lumpur Hotel in Kuala Lumpur. 300 participants from Europe and the Asia Pacific region attended this conference, which was held in tandem with the WDA-AP 2011 Annual General Meeting.

In 2012, the Research and Documentation network of MyDance Alliance, in collaboration with the Cultural Centre University of Malaya and the National Department for Culture and Arts, will be launching a new publication in 2012 entitled *Dancing Mosaic: Issues in Dance Hybridity*. This volume will contain selected papers from the APIDC 2011 Conference, which have gone through an exacting blind-review process.

**1] Hoi Cheng Sim and Steve Goh in *Seriously, No!*, choreographed by Ng Teck Voon, at The Actors Studio Theatre.** Photo: Wyman Wong  
**2] z, choreographed and performed by Katsura Kan, for Dancebox April 2012 at The Actors Studio Theatre.** Photo: Wyman Wong

## Philippines chapter

by Basilio Esteban  
S. Villaruz

**UP Dance Company in  
Bilang 1,2,3,4,5/Count  
1,2,3,4,5, choreographed  
by Sarah Maria  
Samaniego, for the  
International Dance  
Day celebration by  
Contemporary Dance  
Map. Photo: Mimille  
Guzman**



The Philippines was one of the first Asian countries to celebrate UNESCO's International Dance Day (29 April). It started with Julie Borromeo, followed by me as member of the Dance Committee of International Theatre Institute-Unesco. It has since been marked every year by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts. In 1993, its Dance Committee convinced President Fidel V. Ramos to proclaim a National Dance Week. By 1997, the NCCA finally brought IDD to the regions—coincidentally to the same place where it was celebrated this year, Cebu. Since 2009, this celebration has become international, with the advent of NCCA's Dance Xchange in April.

Cebu's governor, Gwendolyn Garcia, lent Dance Xchange her full support. It opened at Cebu Convention Centre with local and international delegations. There were also fora, workshops, and performances in various places, including at Sugbu Cultural Centre.

Among the local groups were dance chair's own Halili Cruz/Quezon City Ballet, Ballet Philippines, Powerdance, Hwa Yi Ethnic Dance Centre, university and ethnic dance groups led by Bayanihan Philippine National Folk Dance Company.

Foreign countries represented were Indonesia, Hong Kong/China, Korea, Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and Britain.

Also in April in Metro-Manila, the now durable Contemporary Dance Map celebrated IDD at Myra Beltran's Dance Forum in Quezon City. World Dance Alliance-Philippines president read the IDD message for 2012 from Moroccan-

Belgian choreographer Sidi Larbi Cherkaoui. With Manila's Contemporary Dance Network chair Angel Lawenko Baguilat, the production was directed by Ava Maureen Villanueva and Ma. Elena Laniog. Both provided a highlight in their playful yet demanding duet in *Waltz to Chopin*. Groups involved were UP Dance Company, Airdance, E-Dance, Chameleon Dance Theatre, Seven Dance Company, Lyceum University Dance Troupe and Ea Torrado. These groups have long sustained IDD in the Philippines.

In May, Philippine Ballet Theatre opened its season at the Cultural Centre with *Coppelia*, staged by its artistic director Ronilo Jaynario, and I witnessed a performance where Veronica Ylagan fully distinguished herself as Swanilda. For July, Ballet Philippines has announced its gala opening with international works and artists. Among its interesting revivals is the BP's founder Alice Reyes' (with Eddie Elejar) original rock-opera ballet *Rama Hari* in November. From September to November, the National Music Competition for Young Artists (Namyca) holds its eighth national ballet competition, with candidates from the regions converging on Manila's Cultural Centre.

## Papua New Guinea

by Naomi Faik-Simet

Markham Galut dancing during International Dance Day Celebrations 2009, pictured on the cover of *A Focus on Dance in Papua New Guinea*. Photo: Naomi Faik-Simet

The Music Department of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies recently launched its latest book, *A Focus on Dance in Papua New Guinea: Papers from the 2010 International Dance Day Symposium, Held at the University of Goroka*, edited by Naomi Faik-Simet and Don Niles. The book contains contributions by John T. Doa, Naomi Faik-Simet, Jennifer L. Jones, Michael A. Mel, Geno Momo, Robert Natera, Gabriella Ova-Ah'chee, Nicholas Rowe, Jacob L. Simet, Martin Tonny, and Yori Yei.

The launch took place at the IPNGS on Thursday 16 February. The book discusses issues relating to the study and practice of dance in Papua New Guinea. It highlights concerns about the role of dance as an important tool in education and at the same time a medium for cultural preservation. The publication consists of papers that were presented at the first National Dance Symposium held at the University of Goroka in 2010 from the 27 to 29 April. The symposium was jointly organised by the Expressive Arts

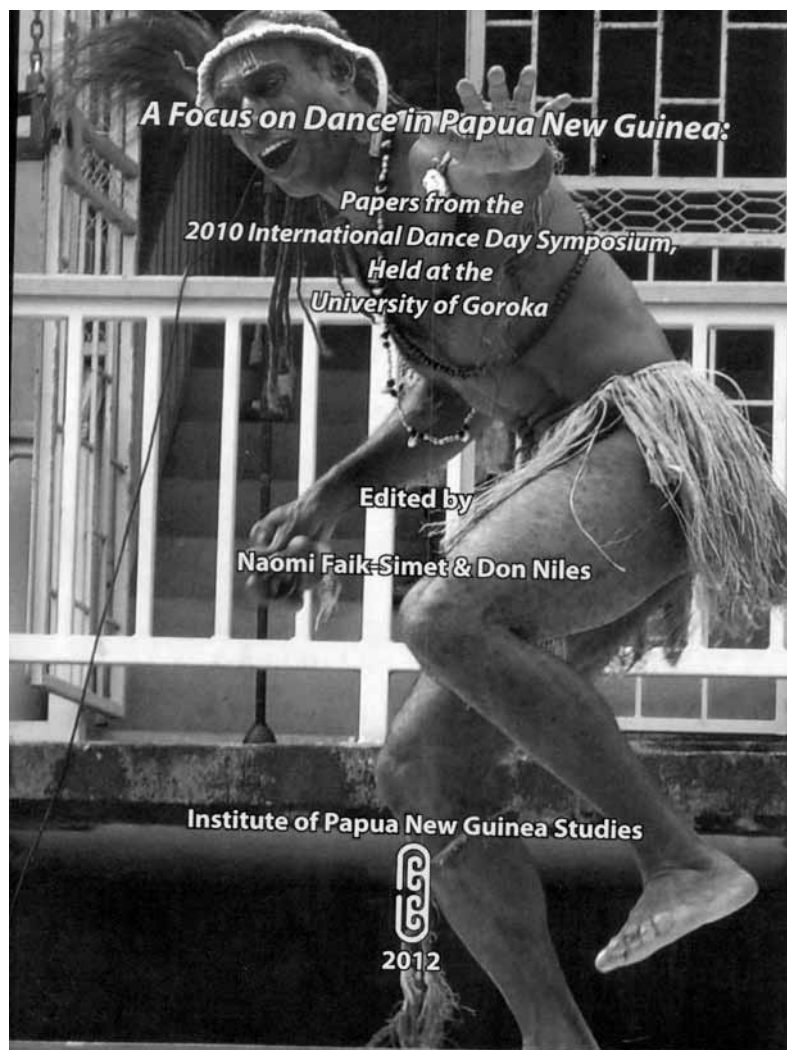
Department of the University of Goroka and the Institute of PNG Studies.

Given the rich and diverse dance traditions in the country such publication is timely where Papua New Guinean dance is undergoing many changes to its dance forms. The need remains for more research and documentation work to be carried out on dance in Papua New Guinea, as the publication is the first of its kind for the country.

Papers in the publication addressed the theme 'Sustaining Dance as an Important Art Form through Education' under the various topics of education, advocacy, traditional dance protection, preservation and safeguarding, contemporisation, the United Nations Educational and Scientific Cultural Organisation's 2003 convention on Intangible Cultural Heritage and dance in the Church.

The publication is important to the understanding of dance in Papua New Guinea. It also contains resolutions that were adopted by participants at the three-day symposium which were based on three main areas: research, advocacy and networking for dance education. At present Papua New Guinea lacks the necessary human resources and the required facilities to teach quality dance education. This is a great concern for all concerned with arts and culture education in the country. There is a need for all government and non-government organizations, tertiary and research institutions and the business community to network and advocate for the development of quality dance education. Therefore it is important for such publications to be released to generate and stimulate interest from the public on the importance of dance education to human, social and cultural development in Papua New Guinea.

*A Focus on Dance in Papua New Guinea: Papers from the 2010 International Dance Day Symposium, Held at the University of Goroka* is available from the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and is priced at K25 per copy.



## Singapore chapter

by Dr Siri Rama



This year saw many artists in the Singapore chapter zooming ahead with their performing careers and adding their might to the diverse arts scene of Singapore. Some of the artists and their organisations also offered opportunities of working with their organisations and giving discounts for their performances and activities to members of the Singapore chapter.

This year's production of *Crossings*, produced by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts at the Lee Foundation Theatre on 27 and 28 April, featured exclusively contemporary dance works, unlike previous seasons. Under department head Dr Caren Carino, vice president of WDAAP Singapore, this year marked the dance department's move to focus on contemporary ballet, while continuing explorations in contemporary dance (i.e. from a primarily Western perspective) as well as contemporary Asian dance (from an Asian lens). This year's programme exemplified each of the contemporary focuses and included two pieces by faculty from NAFA's degree partner, the Conservatory of Dance at Purchase College, USA: *Aglaiia Turns Her Cheek*, a contemporary ballet choreographed by Director of Dance Wallie Wolfgruber, and *Beyond Time*, a contemporary dance work by Associate Professor Larry Clark. Contemporary Asian dance works included *Krouw Nai* created by Thai dance artist Pichet Klunchun and *Running Bamboo* by Elizabeth Sarah Lee Huixing, a third year dance student at NAFA, mentored by Lim Fei Shen.

Maya Dance Theatre, under the leadership

of Kavitha Krishnan, travelled across Asia from January to June 2012. In January, a 20-man team comprised of Maya's young dancers and members of DIAN Dancers, a local Malay performing arts group, with Indonesian artist Ariff Mahendra and Artistic Director of IVANN Theatre, Nara SNV, performed at the Pongal festival in Thanjavur, South India. Maya Dance Theatre with IVANN Theatre and DIAN Dancers performed in April at the Harihara Kala Bhavan, Secunderabad, India, as part of the Singapore Cultural Festival organized by Hyderabad Mahanagar Tamil Sangam and Singai Tamil Sangam (Singapore) with support from Singapore International Foundation, National Arts Council, Apsara Asia and Lee Foundation.

Maya Dance Theatre celebrated its fifth year anniversary in 2012 with a series of dance productions to usher in the celebrations. As an inaugural celebration, Maya Dance Theatre presented RELEASE, the first of its scheduled anniversary performances. The performance presented the artistic endeavours of five choreographers: Abby Johnson (Australia), Sheriden Newman (Singapore-Australia), Khairul Shahrin (Singapore), Sufri Juwahir (Singapore) and Peter Gn (Singapore). RELEASE was presented at the Substation Theatre on 30 to 31 March 2012. Maya Dance Theatre once again embarked on another colourful event in Xiamen, China, representing Singapore at the 3rd Nanyang Culture Festival 2012 from 28 April to 2 May in Xiamen, China. The ensemble consisted of seven Maya Dance Theatre dancers who collaborated with two



dancers from DIAN Dancers, with choreography by Abdul Yazid Juhuri from DIAN Dancers, and Khairul Shahrin and Kavitha Krishnan from Maya Dance Theatre with artistic direction by Kavitha. Maya Dance Theatre will be embarking on a collaboration with ODC/Dance (San Francisco, USA) in a new dance production based on the concept of 'conversations', entitled *55 Minutes*, to be presented at The Drama Centre Black Box in association with the Singapore Arts Festival 2012 from 1 to 2 June 2012 at 8pm.

Dr. Danny Tan's Odyssey Dance Theatre's 5th Biennial DanZn which lasts for six months (9 May to 6 Nov 2012) features Prof. Kurt Koegel (USA) in 'Location Series: Urban' - International Choreographers' Platform 1. ODT's biennial festival aims at getting creative international artists to reside in Singapore, promoting international cross-cultural exchanges via contemporary dance under Danny Tan.

Sri Warisan, under the direction of veteran artist Madame Som Said, were seen conducting master classes in the 'Asian Feel' in dance to Disney's *Lion King* musical cast in Hamburg, Germany from 1 to 4 Feb 2012. Sri Warisan also performed at many local events including 'Drum up our imagination' from 9 to 18 March 2012 at the Raffles City Shopping Centre.

Established Indian classical dance artist and instructor M.S. Srilakshmi, who is one of our members, performed a solo bharatanatyam performances for Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society festival on 4 April, at the Indian New Year Celebration on 13 April organized by LISHA and Hindu Endowment Board, and at the Vasantha Utsavam Spring Festival on 5 June 2012.

Jyoti Unni, secretary of WDAAP(S), who is also an odissi dancer and instructor in Singapore, was invited to perform under the established artist category at the Second Odissi International Festival, held at Bhubaneswar, Orissa, on 20 December 2011.

Contemporary dance artist Joey Chua continued her international circuit with a performance of *Truth or Dare* in Kiina,



1] Sri Warisan dancers with artists from *The Lion King*. Photo: Sri Warisan  
 2] Joey Chua in *How ta tawk and dans rite*, February 2012 in Helsinki and Tallinn, Finland. Photo: Anders Kähkönen  
 3] *Aglaia Turns Her Cheek*, choreographed by Wallie Wolfgruber. Photo: NAFA

Sweden, with the support of Rydal Design Center Residency, and taught Chinese ethnic Dai dance at primary schools in Sweden in December 2011. She had a performance of *How ta tawk and dans rite* in Helsinki and Tallinn in Finland in February 2012, with the support of National Arts Council Singapore and Ptarmigan Residency.

Dr Siri Rama was awarded the 'Nrithya Jyothi' title for her work in the field of Indian classical dance by the Mayor of Cuttack and the committee of the Cuttack International Festival in January 2012. On 12 May, Siri Rama performed a special solo work *Buddha Meets Ganesha—in Dance* choreographed for, and inspired by, a painting exhibition on the same theme at the Gnani Arts Gallery, Singapore.

The Singapore chapter is planning various activities not just related to dance or performing arts in conjunction with local organisations in an attempt to promote the idea of dance being viable in various platforms. One such successful venture was a collaboration with the established Photographic Society of Singapore where WDAAP(S) members were invited to model for their workshops. This first-time venture which was welcomed by the Photographic Society had two dancers (MS Srilakshmi and her student) featured in the workshop on 20 April 2012. Many more such collaborations are in the pipeline and we again welcome any WDA members across the world to contact us for collaborative efforts.

## Taiwan chapter

by Su-Ling Chou

In the first half of 2012, members of WDAAP have been especially active in preparing for the 2012 daCi/WDA Global Summit which will be held from 14 to 21 July at Taipei National University of the Arts (TNUA). It is the first time WDA has cooperated with daCi, and the first time the Global Summit will be held in Asia since daCi's establishment in 1978.

It is estimated that there will be over 1000 participants from around the world getting together for this conference. This conference connects six schools in Taiwanese higher education including Taiwan University of the Arts, Taipei Physical Education College, National Taiwan College of Physical Education, Chinese Culture University and Tainan University of Technology working together with TNUA, the conference host, to build stronger communities and foster closer integration. Each school has also designed its own associated programs before or after the main activity of the summit.

In addition, individual dance participants and many organizations are joining to provide support for this event. Tso's Dance Association, located in Kaohsiung in the southern part of Taiwan, will hold a joint outdoor concert with

the support of the Preparatory Office of the Wei Wu Ying Center for the Arts. The dance performance, *Carnival in Kaohsiung 2012*, will be held in Wei Wu Ying Center for the Arts on 25 July. It will be performed by two local dance groups from Tsoying High School and Lin-ya Junior High Schools as well as three international dance companies from Danstheater VOS of the Netherlands, University of the Philippines, and Shenandoah University, USA. It is expected to share a cross-cultural learning experience among these groups as well as to give the audience a taste of the local culture and hospitality of Kaohsiung. We sincerely welcome all participants and guests in Taipei to move down to the south part of the island to enjoy the event.

The International Young Choreography Project (IYCP) will not chore this year due to the heavy responsibilities of everyone involved in the Global Summit.

We are honored and proud to present Taiwan's dance atmosphere to dance participants from around the world. It is our hope that everyone will return in future to this land of dance, arts and culture.

### WDA-AP Taiwan members activities, January – June 2012

#### Performances

##### Century Contemporary Dance Company

*Dangerous Breath*, 2-6 May at Huashan 1914 Cultural and Creative Park, Red Brick Building A

##### Kaohsiung City Ballet

*2012 Dance Shoe*, 18-19 February at Kaohsiung Municipal Cultural Center Jihshsan Hall, 7-8 April at The Experimental Theater of National Theater

*2012 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival - The Third Prince Noja*, 4-5 April at Da-Dong Arts Center of Kaohsiung

##### Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company

*The Keyman Double*, 27-29 April at The Concert Hall of Wu's Garden, Tainan

*Miss Jin*, 23 June at Tainan Municipal Cultural Center Auditorium

##### Sun-Shier Dance Theatre

*Running into Mr. T*, 13-15 April at Wenshan Theater

*A Delighted Day*, 24 April at Cheng Shiu Hall of Cheng Shiu University

##### Jade & Artists Dance Troupe

*An Encounter in Time*, 5 May at Cultural Affairs Bureau Auditorium of Hsinchu

*County Government*, 11 May at Taipei Zhongshan Hall, 8 June at Ilan Auditorium

#### Dance Forum Taipei

*Will There Really Be a "Morning"*, 24-26 February at Experimental Theater, 22 March at Dansoir-Karine Saporta de Paris

*YogeeTi*, at Taiwan International Festival of Arts, 2-4 March at National Theater, a NTCH & CCN de Creteil / Cie. Kafig production

*YogeeTi*, at the 2012 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival 10 March at Jihde Hall, Kaohsiung Cultural Center

*Like an Olive Tree & Will There Really Be a "Morning"*, 15-16 March at Théâtre Louis Jouvet de Rethel, 20 March at Théâtre de La Madeleine

*Different Power*, 5 May at Jong-Jeng Gallery and Music Hall

#### Assembly Dance Theater

*Premiere 2.0*, 8-10 June at Experimental Theater, 29 June at Cultural Affairs Bureau Auditorium of New Taipei City Government

#### Tsoying Dance Group, Tsoying Senior High School

*2011 Tsoying Dance Troupe Performance*, 22 February at Jhungshan Hall of Cultural Affairs Bureau of Taichung City, 16 March at Kaohsiung Municipal Cultural Center

#### Yi-tzy Folk Dance Theatre

Luerhmen Cultural Ceremony Festival, 26 February at Matsu Temple, Luerhmen

#### Sponsorships

2011 Annual Plan of Tso's Dance Association by CLFCA and its memberships



**Tsoying Dance Group**  
in *Rite of Blossoms*,  
choreographed by Ya-ting  
Chang, at Tsoying High  
School. Photo: Su-ling  
Chou



## Thailand chapter

by Pornrat Damrhung

1

### No Fringe Here? Looking in Nooks and Crannies for New Dance in Bangkok

"There's new dance in Bangkok?" some people say. "I don't believe it. Where?"

Some dance is open to view, free and fresh in public settings, while others are harder to find, hidden in corners and niches, charging a ticket price but worth the cost. In short, you have to want it to find it.

It may be hard for tourists and even the general public in Thailand to find dance performances in Bangkok. But are they really looking? Every evening at 6pm thousands of people dance for health in parks across Bangkok and in towns and cities around Thailand. There are even more dance rehearsals and dance practice in the heart of Bangkok shopping malls, in vacant areas like Center Point Central Plaza, and around MBK (Maboonkrong Shopping Center). It is all there and all free. Many young high school boys and girls practice Korean b-boy dance and Asian hip hop together. They are very disciplined and really work hard to improve their 'mad skillz.' Every day and especially on weekends, the kids seem to have their own way of arranging for the DJ, the management, and the venue, all done in their own network and circle.

More conventionally, a new space for new Thai dance has just opened. The Chang Theatre, under the direction of Pichet Klunchun Dance Company, is located across the Chao Phraya from Central Bangkok, in Thonburi. The tiny 30-seat site recently had its first performance, a solo by Sunon Wachirawarakarn called *Home*, which alternates his memories of growing up in Phuket with his life as a guest artist in New York missing his current life back in Bangkok. This auto-dance-ography used light, sound, silence and his body in different costumes to move around in time, thought and feeling.

Other dance pieces in small spaces occur at Democracy Arts Studio and Pridi Banomyong Institute's auditorium. Nikorn Sae Tang wrote, directed and performed in the work *Reincarnation* with a group of well-known performers in the 8X8 Company, using a mix of dance-theatre and physical theatre to move independently, interacting with each other and the audience, and aiming to relate the sense of flowing souls or spirits repeatedly moving in and out of life. Using words, sounds, and movements, the work discussed passages from the world of the living to the dead and back again.

B-floor Theatre continued its series of strong ensemble physical performances, using a mime troupe to perform and stage the *Lear & His Three Daughters* project, released to the audience through their unique way of moving to multimedia sound and visual installations with an emphasis on slowness.

Moving on to local universities, with the end of the school year there is always new work to be seen on campus, as senior students who want to find a new language and to clear the way for their future in dance stage projects feature young dancers. Burapha University in Bangsaen, 90 minutes south of Bangkok, staged many senior projects from its Dance and Theatre Department, with a mix of exciting and innovative performances and competent re-enactments of old standards. We also see students of Thai classical dance working in hip hop. The piece *Makanaree* directed by T. Julasri used a mixture of hip hop and lakorn to relay several Aesop's fables.

By looking around in hidden corners, you will be able to see many new forms of dance in Bangkok. Contemporary dance in Thailand might seem hard to find, but you have to look in new places to see how people trip the light fantastic in the City of Angels. It is there, fresh and vital, so keep looking, and keep asking.



1 – 3] Theatre8x8 in *Reincarnate* by Nikorn Sae Tang, at Democrazy Studio. Photo: Amornthep Chotechuang  
4] *HOME*, by Sunon Wachirawarakarn, in the tiny Chang Theatre. Photo: Wayla Amatathammachart



# **A Successful Celebration of Dance at Dance Xchange in the Philippines**

by Rosario Granada

April is always a month of celebrating dance in the Philippines. From 27 to 30 April 2012, the Philippines played host to Dance Xchange, an international dance festival. It was a very successful and colorful sharing, celebration and exchange of culture and creativity. Dance Xchange brought together 35 local and foreign dance companies (more than 1000 dancers and 35 directors/choreographers), 700 dance teachers, resource persons and experts, and thousands of dance enthusiasts.

Dance Xchange was conceptualized by Shirley Halili-Cruz, the overall festival director and chairman of the National Committee on Dance last 2009, in solidarity with the global dance community in celebrating International Dance Day. Moreover, the Philippines has also declared the last week of April every year as National Dance Week under Presidential Proclamation No. 154, mandating the National Commission for Culture and the Arts to organize activities in line with the proclamation. Shirley Halili-Cruz is a prime mover of dance in the Philippines, making the dance sector in the country more dynamic and vibrant.

In one of my conversations with Ms. Halili-Cruz, I asked her about her initial impetus for Dance Xchange. She replied, "The enriching experiences I gained through the regular participation of my dance company in different dance festivals and competitions in Asia, America, Europe and Australia, and the broad international network I had established had been my inspiration to launch the idea of Dance Xchange in the Philippines. I believe that our very rich culture deserves appreciation by other nationalities and that there is a great reservoir of creativity that Filipinos can share with the world. I am convinced that Dance Xchange can be the window of the Philippines to the world. This is an opportunity to harness the potential of the Philippines to be a cultural destination in Asia. It is my dream to make the Philippines a byword in the international arts scene. Through this friendly international dance festival, different countries can showcase their culture and everyone can learn from each other."

Dance Xchange exemplifies the strong partnership between the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and the local government. The successful implementation of Dance Xchange illustrates to the culture and arts community the potential of working in collaboration with local political leaders to sustain the artistic programs and activities of the local community.

Undeniably, Dance Xchange has become one of the grandest and most outstanding international dance events in the Philippines.

It has also been evolving to be an international destination for dancers and dance groups from different parts of Asia, Europe and America, and illustrates the discourse among the different forms of dance.

Dance Xchange provides a platform for young dancers and dance lovers from around the world to cultivate creativity, friendship, exchange cultures and display diverse dances. On the basis of the past success, the National Dance Committee of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts will continue to hold the Dance Xchange every April in solidarity with the celebration of the International Dance Day.

Dance Xchange 2012 had various activities including the following:

The Opening Program, conducted on 27 April 2012, included presentations of the 635 workshop participants from the different regions they represented, an introduction to all the activities in the festival, house rules for the workshops and dance fora, presentation of the performing groups both foreign and local, and the sharing of experiences, impressions and insights by the director from previous Dance Xchanges.

Two dance fora were conducted and attended by more than a thousand participants from the performing groups and workshop participants. Six authorities on dance and the arts were invited to speak: Chairman Felipe de Leon, Debbie McRitchie, an Australian international examiner and the Director of the Commonwealth Society of Teachers of Dancing, Joseph Gonzalez, a Malaysian dancer, choreographer and researcher, who is the Chair of the Asian Dance Committee, Steve Villaruz, a University of the Philippines professor and dance researcher, Nestor Jardin, former President of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, and Jaime Antonio, an art critic and arts management expert. All provided the participants of Dance Xchange with substantial content on the role of dance in the continuing development of arts and culture.

Ten dance workshops were conducted by outstanding foreign and Filipino dance masters and were well attended by almost a thousand dancers, choreographers and dance educators. The participants learned various forms of dance and the hall was filled with much enthusiasm and fun while learning. Two masterclasses were conducted by two foreign experts in dance and choreography with participation by almost 500 dancers.

The Welcome Dinner and Program was an evening of formalities, heart warming speeches, expressions of warm welcome to Cebu and of gratitude for the hospitality of Cebu, and



**1] Kagan Dance Theatre Collective, with artistic direction by Jemael Jatico, at Dance Xchange, April 2012. Photo: Marvin Alcaraz**  
**2] Bayanihan, The Philippine National Folkdance Company, with artistic direction by Suzie Benitez, assisted by dance master Ferdinand Jose, at Dance Xchange, April 2012. Photo: Marvin Alcaraz**



of unending media interviews and more importantly of colorful displays of culture and creativity through dance, music and costumes.

Ten dance performances showcased the different cultures and artistic excellence of the dance groups. As there are not many theatres in Cebu, groups performed in gymnasiums and multi-purpose halls, including malls, but the shows were outstanding. Outreach Performances were attempts by the National Committee on Dance to bring these outstanding

shows to as many people as possible, especially those who cannot usually access them.

The Closing Program was an opportunity to see all the 35 dance companies perform on one stage. It was indeed a memorable night of excellent performances in beautiful and colorful costumes depicting different cultures.

## Report on 'Arts Education, From Diversity to Sustainability' Symposium

by Ralph Buck

The first UNESCO International Arts Education Week was launched on 20 May this year at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris. At the heart of the launch and celebration was a one-day symposium on 23 May, 'Arts Education, from Diversity to Sustainability', which reflected on the current state of arts education around the world as well as on pathways for the future. The Symposium began with opening addresses by Francesco Bandarin, Assistant Director-General for Culture, UNESCO, and Mrs Jae-Eun Park, President of Korea Arts and Culture Education Service (KACES). Bandarin spoke to the importance of arts education and acknowledged UNESCO's commitment to supporting arts education. Park outlined KACES' progress in implementing the Seoul Agenda and the world-class status of arts education in Korea.

The first panel focused upon the implementation of the Seoul Agenda for developing arts education. After a brief introduction by Larry O'Farrell of Queen's University, Canada, who is currently the holder of the UNESCO Chair in Arts and Learning, five panellists – Mohammed Al Amri (Oman), Simone Dudt (Germany), Wilma Kuiperi-Jansen (Aruba), Samuel Leong (Australia/China) and Robert McLaren (South Africa/Zimbabwe)—presented the issues involved with implementing arts education in different regions around the world.

One of the most salient common issues was how to make sense of the Seoul Agenda in local contexts. There is a need to align such a global document with regional, national and community-specific practices, rhythms, needs, interests, and politics, while acknowledging that not all arts, age levels, and interests will be attended to in an ideal fashion. The discussion reminded us to value local knowledge and practices, and also to establish local strategies inclusive of local stakeholders in implementing the Seoul Agenda.

All speakers raised the need for plans of approach and how the Seoul Agenda provides a framework and beginning point for establishing 'local' discipline-specific and systemic/institutional plans. Several speakers discussed why we need to advocate for arts education and then how to use the Seoul Agenda document. It was apparent for several speakers that the three main goals of the Seoul Agenda are

interrelated and that, while each provides a focus, they cannot be dealt with independently from each other.

The panellists agreed that the biggest challenges included the need to shift people's attitudes about arts education and to improve motivations for engaging with arts education. It remains a misperception that arts education is a 'nice extra' to be included in the curriculum as opposed to being a necessary ingredient for a quality education.

The second panel of the symposium shifted the focus to cultural diversity in and through arts education. As President of World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE), I moderated this session. In my introduction, I drew attention to the role of NGO arts education organisations and the importance of partnerships between NGOs, institutions and corporate sectors.

The five panellists—Emily Achieng' Akuno (Kenya), Zahia Ziouani (Algeria/France), Beng Cabangon (Philippines), Elise Longuet (France), and Itziar Rubio (Argentina/Spain)—then shared their perspectives.

All of the panellists reflected that, while cultural diversity is a given across the globe, the reality, especially in low socio-economic urban environments, is complex. The attractive nature of arts activity makes them a prime method to engage youth in understanding their own and others' cultures. Building respect for one's own culture was seen by the panellists to go hand in hand with building respect for others' cultures, and many examples of projects and pedagogies were given to illustrate how cultural understanding was developed.

All the speakers focused on children, and stressed that arts educators must not underestimate young people's creativity, skill and capability. The discussion also focused on other key stakeholders, especially the different roles played by public (school) and private (studio, church, community) sectors in educating for change. The influential position of parents and religious leaders as gate keepers allowing children access to arts activities should be kept in mind, as well as the clear roles and interdependent position of artists and arts educators.

Judging by the examples raised by the panellists, projects that have clear and 'owned' philosophical beginning points are the best in terms of sustainability and quality outcomes. This reflects the ongoing need for evaluation of projects, as well as increasing the quality of teaching. How arts educators construct learning environments, tasks and activities is important in educating for cultural understanding. Pedagogical skill, therefore, is vital if UNESCO's

goals for peace are to be realised.

The symposium concluded with questions and a reception. In celebratory speeches, Irina Bokova, Director General of UNESCO, Jang Ki Won, Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of the Republic of Korea to UNESCO, and Choe Kwang Shik, Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism of the Republic of Korea, reiterated UNESCO's commitment to arts education.

The evening performance programme featured young musicians and dancers from Korea, providing the perfect finale for a day of arts education advocacy.

The launch of the inaugural UNESCO International Arts Education Week was an outstanding success. The launch and symposium, and indeed the realisation of International Arts Education Week, modelled how NGOs (such as WAAE), institutions (such as UNESCO), governmental agencies (such as the Republic of Korea Ministry of Sport, Culture and Tourism) and civil society organisations (such as KACES) can form partnerships, each providing vital parts to make a bigger and important whole.

Looking to the future after the success of this symposium, I would like to draw some recommendations:

First, partnerships between organisations provide invaluable models for international and national progress. This way of building alliances needs to be continued.

Second, the power of sharing projects and research is ever valuable. A third UNESCO World Arts Education conference must happen, to share the value of arts education beyond arts education advocates, to policy makers, politicians, parents, religious leaders, and business leaders.

Again, we must never underestimate the ability and impact of children's voices on arts practice, and must therefore strive to better include their perspective in future events.

Finally, we should value and use International Arts Education week as a tool to reach the wider public and to celebrate the work that arts educators undertake. And we should also foster research that aims to better understand the impact of arts education in diverse classrooms, streets, villages, communities and regions across the world.



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

Photo: Kelab Shashin  
Fotografi Kuala Lumpur

# Upcoming WDA Events

## Notice of World Dance Alliance meetings

Taipei, 14–21 July 2012  
Taipei National University of the Arts  
International Conference Hall

### Saturday 14 July

8.30 – 9.30 am: Annual General Meeting  
of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific  
10.00 am – 4.30 pm: World Dance  
Alliance Global Executive meeting

### Wednesday 18 July

8.30 am – 9.30 am: World Dance Alliance  
Global Assembly meeting

### Saturday 21 July

Network meetings, Room C402

8.30 – 10.30 Research & Documentation  
11am Morning tea  
11.00 – 1.00 Education & Training

Lunch

2.00 – 3.00 Creation & Presentation  
3.00 – 4.00 Support & Development

Agendas and minutes of previous  
meetings will be circulated to chapter  
heads in advance.

## International Association for Dance Medicine and Science 22nd Annual Meeting

Date: 25-28 October 2012

Venue: Novotel Singapore Clarke Quay, Singapore

Are you interested in dancers' health, training and performance? Do you want to hear the latest research in dance medicine and science, and how it can be applied to dancers' well-being? Do you want to learn from international leaders in these fields?

The International Association for Dance Medicine and Science (IADMS) enhances the health, well-being, training, and performance of dancers by cultivating educational, medical, and scientific excellence. IADMS is an association formed in 1990 by an international group of dance educators, physicians and allied health professionals who treat dancers, dance scientists, and dancers. The IADMS membership base currently represents 35 countries.

IADMS will be holding its 22nd Annual Meeting in Singapore this October. This marks the first time the meeting has been held in Asia.

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

In addition to many research and poster presentations, highlights of this year's meeting include a clinical symposium on the surgery and rehabilitation of a spinal cord injury which resulted in the dancer returning to a performance career by Dr. Julian Widdowson, Lead Practitioner for Sports Medicine at CircleBath in Bath, England, UK; new strategies for stretching and strengthening in a variety of movement sessions; and psychological and nutritional information for maximizing health and performance for dancers.

Numerous social and cultural events will also be available to meeting participants, including a welcome reception followed by a performance by international dancer/choreographer Mavin Khoo, guided tours of the city, and a gala party focusing on the Asian arts renaissance complete with transportation to and from the gala on a traditional junk boat. Khoo will also deliver the opening keynote address.

This activity is jointly sponsored by IADMS in collaboration with Paradigm Wellness Pte Ltd, a company offering programmes and events in wellness, with a focus on movement methods. Paradigm Wellness believes that the arts, particularly dance, need time to grow and develop, and that all practitioners should be nurtured and cared for during this process.

For more information, including opportunities to advertise, support or exhibit, visit [www.iadms.org](http://www.iadms.org) or email the Annual Meeting Producer at [AnnualMeeting@iadms.org](mailto:AnnualMeeting@iadms.org). Registrations open on 1 June.

# About the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific



## Our Mission

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

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

- WDA Americas
- WDA Asia Pacific
- WDA Europe

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

## Our Goals

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

## Our Founder

Carl Wolz

## Our Background

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

WDA Asia Pacific is one of three regional centres that make up WDA. The other two are WDA Americas [[www.wdaamericas.org](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.

## Membership

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

### Membership benefits

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

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

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

### To join

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

### Visit our websites

[www.worlddancealliance.net](http://www.worlddancealliance.net)  
[www.wda-ap.org](http://www.wda-ap.org)

# World Dance Alliance key contacts

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