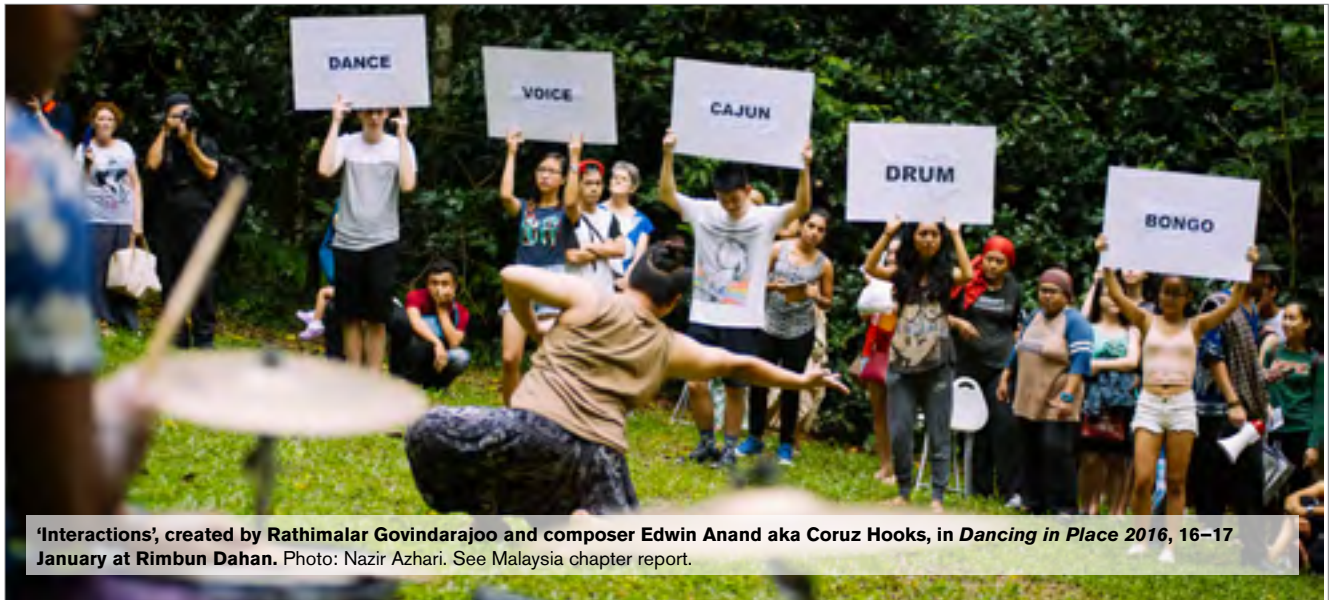


Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





Contents

Executive reports

About the Executive	1
President's report	2
Vice President's report	4
Secretary General's report	5
South East Asia report	6
East Asia report	7

Network reports

About the Networks	10
Research & Documentation Network	11
Education & Training Network	12

Chapter reports

About the Chapters	13
Australia	13
Aotearoa New Zealand	14
Cambodia	16
Hong Kong	18
India	20
Malaysia	21
Papua New Guinea	23
Philippines	24
Singapore	26
Taiwan	28

WDA announcements

2016 WDA events	30
About the WDA	31
Key contacts	32



**World Dance Alliance
Asia–Pacific**

Channels, No. 1 June 2016
 Newsletter of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific
 ISSN: 1328–2115
 Editor: Bilqis Hijjas (contact@mydancealliance.org)
 Publication: Rachael Jennings
 Publisher: Australian Dance Council—Ausdance Inc.
 Ausdance National, PO Box 45, Braddon ACT 2612, Australia
 www.ausdance.org.au



**Cover: Abu Nyeem
performing at Gati Dance
Forum's Ignite Festival of
Dance.**

Photo: Sangeeta Banerjee
 [One frame story]

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



Participants of the International Dance Day Forum on 29 April 2016, in Seoul, including WDAAP President Yunyu Wang (left of the banner) and WDA Korea president Professor Hong Jo Jun (right of the banner).

This will be my last year serving as President for WDAAP since accepting the position in 2011. I will continue working as a part of the Global Executive Committee, representing the Asia Pacific region, and will continue my efforts for WDA in the future. My presence in all WDAAP events will not be reduced but will take on a different direction. My six years as President and additional six years as Vice President of WDAAP has provided me with a great deal of valuable insight in serving both young and established professionals in the field of dance. Coming back to Taiwan after many years teaching in the USA has reaffirmed to others and myself where my heart is.

Our last WDAAP Dance Festival/Conference in Korea was thirteen years ago when the former WDA-Korea founding head directed the event. Coincidentally, my restaging of Doris Humphrey's 'New Dance,' using Labanotation, was also presented and performed at that event by Tsoying High School's Dance Group (Taiwan). The group was led by Suling Chou, WDAAP-Taiwan country head, and that event brought us closer together. After my last visit with Professor Hong Jo Jun, the country head of WDAAP-Korea, in April last year, I returned again this year. On 29 April, I represented WDAAP in the Opening Congratulations Ceremony for International Dance Day (IDD), held annually in Seoul, Korea. Both members of ITT and WDA Korea were gathered

to celebrate. In addition to the evening event, the afternoon offered an IDD Forum that brought many dance scholars, arts managers, choreographers and dancers to the same table for discussion.

I took the chance to visit the site of the upcoming 2016 WDA Korea event that will be held at Seoul Cyber University and SungShin Women's University. Many details were discussed and settled, and now we are almost ready for the July event, which is expected to bring around 300 members from the Asian Pacific area, some from WDA-Americas, and a few from the WDA-Europe Group. Thanks to the working team for preparing for this event. This team includes Urmimala Sarkar (India) and Cynthia Lee (USA/Taiwan) working on the symposium, Pecha Kucha, and plenary sessions; Teresa Pee (Singapore) and Suling Chou (Taiwan) in charge of master classes; Hong Jo Jun (Korea), Jeff Hsieh (Taiwan) and Yunyu Wang (Taiwan) organizing the showcase; and Nanette Hassal (Australia) and Jinwen Yu (USA/Taiwan) taking charge of the choreolab. The overall timetable includes four showcase programs, a spacing and theater technical schedule for the academic performance, the showcase performance and choreolab, as well as a daily schedule for master classes, the keynote speech, opening remarks, closing statements, AGM, network meetings and the plenary. Thanks to Bilqis for putting up the regularly updated



1-2. WDAAP President Yunyu Wang making her opening speech for the International Dance Day celebrations at the Grand Hyatt in Seoul, on 29 April 2016.

3. Korean House at Seoul Cyber University, to be used during the WDAAP July event for Korean Night performances.

4. A small outdoor performance space at WDAAP July conference site Seoul Cyber University.

5. One of eight lecture rooms at Seoul Cyber University.

6. Tchaikovsky Hall at Seoul Cyber University.



news on our website and thanks to Julie Dyson for putting the event on WDA's Facebook page upon request. Please check <www.wda-ap.org> to see updated news of the event.

While working on the Korean event, the members in WDA Global Executive Committee (GEC) have also been actively seeking the date and location for the global core member meeting this year. The meeting is designed to welcome our dance colleagues in the WDA Europe Group, which Cheryl Stock helped to create through our 2014 WDA Global Summit during the Angers event. Therefore, the WDA GEC has decided to meet in London from 24 to 27 November.

Please join us for the WDAAP annual gathering in Seoul, Korea, in July. Together we will witness the benefits of WDAAP's long-term work and will enjoy sharing the space with our friends and lovers of dance.



Vice President's report

by Urmimala Sarkar Munsri

The world seems to have gone crazy. Extreme fundamentalism, intolerance of different kinds, and the rise of unchecked globalized markets have all been working against the survival and flourishing of human creativity in general and the world of arts in particular. We may close ourselves up in our individual classes or studios, but the reality is striking us at every turn.

In this situation, dancers also do not remain unaffected. But dance must go on. We see countless examples of performances that try to overcome situations of crisis perpetrated by the withdrawal of support from governmental and non-governmental agencies. These stop-gap solutions may include site-specific choreographic works in the absence of large funding to work in proscenium stages, or workshop-based

productions in order to overcome the difficulties of time and distance. In this environment, social media sites emerge as powerful tools for facilitating such new ways of creative and collaborative work.

Those of us who have been debating and worrying about the crises are more convinced day by day that organisations like World Dance Alliance now needs to play its role as a support organisation even more efficiently than before. Let's therefore strategize and plan together. Write to us and share local and global news of workshops, residencies, exchanges, performance opportunities. I also invite all of you to our next event 'Dance Routes–Danced Roots: Connecting the Local and the Global'. Let's meet from 21 to 24 July in Seoul, Korea!



Maria Devonne Escobia and Dalila Samad in Nadhirah Razid's 'Madu', in *Dancing in Place 2016*, 16–17 January at Rimbun Dahan.
Photo: Nazir Azhari. See Malaysia chapter report.



Secretary General's report

by Cheryl Stock

This will be my last report as WDA Secretary General—after eight years as the first appointee I have served my maximum of two terms and it is now time to hand over to the new appointee who will be announced in the next issue of *Channels* after the 2016 Global Executive Committee meeting, to take place in London in early December. I would like to express my appreciation to the committee for their invaluable support and their ongoing contribution, and for sharing their considerable expertise in developing a whole organisation for WDA which has greatly increased our international profile and participation. This of course has occurred in tandem with the dynamism and growth of the Asia-Pacific and Americas regions, together with the re-development of WDA Europe which will be launched next year.

During those eight years all our policies and procedures have been updated and new ones written to reflect the changing environment in which we all operate. We have established international partnerships and convened four highly successful, vibrant and thoroughly enjoyable Global Summits (2008 in Brisbane, 2010 in New York, 2012 in Taipei and 2014 in Angers). All four summits published wonderful international proceedings which are still being uploaded and cited today. Significantly, editors Urmimala Sarkar and Linda Caldwell founded and established a peer reviewed academic publication *Journal of Emerging Dance Scholars* (JEDS).

Personally it has been a joy and a privilege to serve in this role, despite the many challenges we all face in continuing to provide quality service in a volunteer capacity. It has been a pleasure to make contact, and continue to engage, with hundreds of longstanding and new

colleagues and meet hundreds more passionate dance people at both regional and global events. There are so many individuals to thank but space precludes naming you all! I would like to also express my appreciation to the regional boards and the network chairs—I have always valued working with the many sub-committees on projects and events and especially the spirit of friendly collaboration which is a hallmark of WDA.

While I feel a tinge of sadness to be forgoing what has been almost daily contact with WDA friends and members and general enquiries from the public, I will of course continue my involvement with WDA in whatever capacity I can be useful. And of course connecting regularly via our active WDA Facebook pages keeps us informed whilst we wait for the wonderfully comprehensive *Channels* to be published twice yearly.

The two forthcoming regional WDA events are very inspiring and we hope to see you there with registrations now open for both. World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific's <www.wda-ap.org> annual conference and festival *Celebrating local and global integration through dance*, will be held in Seoul, Korea from 21-24 July. World Dance Alliance Americas General Assembly *Moving Interactions: dancing through in-between space* will be held 7-12 August in Cholula, Puebla, Mexico.

I look forward to supporting the new Secretary General and to continuing my involvement in WDA events and projects. With many thanks to all of you who shared your passion for dance with myself and each other in so many ways. My life and work has been enriched by working with you.



South East Asia

Cambodia

Malaysia

Philippines

Indonesia

Singapore

Thailand



South East Asia report

by Vice President Joseph Gonzales

2015 was an incredible year with a huge number of dance events and festivals across the region. For Malaysia, the largest was the inaugural Kuala Lumpur International Arts Festival 2015, with its dance element organized by Sutra Foundation working together with several other organizations including the Department for Culture and Arts, MyDance Alliance and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. It was very much a local festival, including music and stand-up comedy as well as dance, but not theatre. The buzz surrounding dance in Malaysia has sent very positive vibrations regionally.

In 2016, this continued with an international tour for Sutra Dance Theatre as well as performances for Malaysian companies in Macau (China), Singapore and the Philippines. In April 2016, Singapore was again able to gather regional artists and educators through the annual Singapore Youth Festival. This year there was a difference as the program began later and extended until 8 or 9pm to enable more audiences to witness the children's performances. While the response was not overwhelming, it was a sincere effort to encourage appreciation for the children. Dance judges were represented by Melina Surya Dewi from Institut Kesenian Jakarta, Joseph Gonzales and Suhaimi Magi from Malaysia, and Mohd Zaini and Som Said from Singapore for the Malay dance category. International Dance Day was celebrated regionally with several events including the 24-hour dance extravaganza at ISI Surakarta that included several regional players. The Ministry of Education in Thailand, too, has been incredibly active in organizing talks, seminars and workshops and investing in inviting regional practitioners.

The 3rd SEA Choreolab organized as a

WDA SEA Regional project will take place in Rimbun Dahan, Kuala Lumpur, from end of May to early June 2016, organized and supported by MyDance Alliance. The choreographer-in-residence/facilitator of the workshops will be Akiko Kitamura, supported by the Japan Foundation Asia Center. Several young artists were selected from eight member nations of ASEAN and they will participate in workshops for seven work days as well as two days of study tour, including live performance viewing, artist guest talks and informal socializing.

As Vice President of the region, I would like to thank the country presidents for their support and eagerness to communicate. I would also keep encouraging greater online presence and connectivity via social media especially Facebook. Physical travel for live performance is expensive, but social media could provide greater awareness of events and possibilities. One of the main agendas of the WDA meeting in Korea could be creating a stronger online community to support artists and thus creating a more vibrant SEA community. There are also serious issues to consider with a country like Brunei banning Christmas celebrations, and how this could impact future collaborations within an incredibly diverse region. Perhaps we can all ask the questions of the role of dance in our society and the relevance of our roles as artists, educators and arts workers. Much food for thought!



East Asia

Hong Kong

Japan

Korea

Taiwan



East Asia report

by Vice President Anna CY Chan

Dance beyond the chapters

The highlight of dance news from East Asia for 2016 will no doubt be the WDA AGM and international dance festival/conference hosted by WDA-Korea in July. My sincere gratitude and congratulations to WDA-Korea under the leadership of Prof. Hong Jo Jun and her team for organising the event from 21 to 24 July 2016 in Seoul, South Korea. WDA was first introduced to South Korea in 1994 by Park Young Gu (who sadly passed away on 6 April at the age of 102) who became the first WDA-Korea President and hosted the WDA international conference for the first time in South Korea the same year. Since then WDA-Korea has grown and transformed.

As the fantastic works from each country chapter can be read from their chapter reports, for this *Channels* report I decided to share what I encountered in East Asia outside WDA events, to attempt to spark meaningful dialogues for new projects, so that dance will be positioned strongly in this new era.

I had the opportunity to visit South Korea last October for PAMS (Performing Arts Market in Seoul) and SIDance (Seoul International Dance Festival). *ASIA Superposition*, the collaboration project of Asia Dance Company presented at SIDance, was a double bill of performances choreographed by Japan's Hiroaki Umeda and Korea's Hwang Soohyun for 22 dancers from 14 Asian countries during a six-week residency in Seoul. This project was initiated by The Asia Culture Center in Gwangju, South Korea, in 2010, and is focused on researching collaboration methods for Asian dance works and the discussion of strengthening cultural cooperation. After attending PAMS in Seoul, I also participated in the International Duet Dance Festival, a

showcase for duets, held in Seoul. What made the event intriguing was that traditional dance made up the core of the show and it was held in a theatre that can hold an audience of no more than eighty. Yi Chul-Jin, who initiated the festival five years ago, is a master of seungmu (one of the most famous Korean traditional dances which has been designated as an important intangible cultural asset of South Korea) as well as a PhD scholar. Meeting him and attending the festival reminded me how tradition encountering contemporary ideas triggers dialogues and reflections.

In February, I was also invited to Yokohama Dance Collection in Japan and met Yukihiro Yoshida, a dance and contemporary performance scholar and critic who used to contribute regularly to the reports of the Japan chapter in *Channels*. Though we attempted to discuss many different possibilities to revitalized the Japan chapter after Professor Miki Wakamatsu passed away in 2012, we failed to find a constructive solution. Yokohama Dance Collection, formerly known as Yokohama Dance Platform, started in 1996, as a well-known dance competition within a festival framework. The goal of the competition is to promote contemporary dance and to discover and foster promising young choreographers. This year, it added a new component of showcasing collaborative programs with other Asian dance festivals and provided more performing opportunities. In every year, there is an average of hundreds of entries for the competition, mainly from Japan and another Asian areas such as South Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Vietnam, Singapore and Hong Kong. A judging committee, which chooses about twenty finalists in two groups through video submissions, decides the procedure for the selection. Every February, the winning finalist pieces are presented in Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No. 1.

Last month in Hong Kong, I met Taiwanese

indigenous choreographer Bulareyaung Pagarlava. Former soloist with Cloud Gate Dance Theatre and resident choreographer for Cloud Gate 2, Bular will be the first artist-in-residence of the new National Taichung Theatre. His increasing awareness of his Paiwan tribal identity has led him to a new path of creation, focusing on his own indigenous culture. His company Bulareyaung Dance Company performed his work *La Song* at the Asia Society Hong Kong Center, which moved me and the audience greatly.

Dance in my home city of Hong Kong continues to be very vibrant with many interesting projects to support emerging choreographers and mid-career artists. The

5th Hong Kong Jockey Club Contemporary Dance Series presented a total of five mid-career choreographers and six emerging choreographers over three programmes. The Springboard Showcase 2016 presented by Hong Kong Dance Alliance was focused primarily on supporting mid-career choreographers from the independent scene.

My dialogues with the artists and producers mentioned above have truly inspired me to look for new possibilities of collaboration. I also constantly pondering the question: what do artists need *now*? And what should we do *differently*? So that we can contribute to the development of artistic work and the growth of the next generation of artists and cultural workers.

Resident artists and dancers at a lighting workshop during the project Creative Space: Residency for Mid-Career Choreographers, from February to June 2016, conducted by Hong Kong Dance Alliance.





Network reports

The World Dance Alliance works through four Networks, based on specific areas of interest and embracing the mandate of the organisation. Each network has a chairperson and co-chair who coordinate activities to advance the issues raised by these special interest groups.

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 Education and Training Network provides a forum for professional exchange to improve dance curriculum content and delivery, and opportunities for sharing information and resources.

The Research and Documentation Network supports and initiates projects that engage contemporary insights into dance as a vibrant part of diverse scholarly and artistic conversations. The network regularly publishes journals, books and conference proceedings and encourages members to participate in writing, editing and reviewing for these publications. It also encourages publications in differing formats and languages whilst maintaining English as the lingua franca for communication. Individual projects proposed by members addressing the heritage and future of dance, to include ideas for implementation, are encouraged and supported through this network.

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

The Creation and Presentation Network provides opportunities for choreographic development, presentation, networking and cultural exchange. It includes choreographers, dancers, designers, composers, filmmakers and other collaborators.



Dancing in Wheelchairs, performance by Dua Space Dance Theatre dancers and Shen Chiu Hsiang (centre), founder of Shuang Fu Disabled Independent Living Association. Dua Space's work is one of the case studies included in upcoming publication ***Dance, Access and Inclusion: Perspectives on dance, young people and change***. Photo: Dua Space Dance Theatre

Research & Documentation Network report

by Urmimala Sarkar, co-chair

JEDS (Journal for Emerging Dance Scholarship) No. 3 is getting ready to go online, and is already almost finalised, under the expert editing skills of Prof. Linda Caldwell. It will carry young scholars' papers from the Global Summit at Angers (July 2014), blind reviewed, including six vibrant papers from the Asia-Pacific.

We in the Research & Documentation Network of WDAAP have strived for academic excellence —carefully acknowledging but also strongly dealing with bias. The work goes on. Soon the double-blind reviewed scholarly papers from Angers will be published in an edited volume of conference proceedings.

by Stephanie Burridge, co-chair

Many writers from the R&D network and members of daCi are involved in contributing to this new volume:

Dance, Access and Inclusion: Perspectives on dance, young people and change. Editors: Stephanie Burridge and Charlotte Svendler Nielsen. Supported by the World Dance Alliance and Dance and the Child International. Publisher: Routledge, UK Launch: April 2017

The arts have a crucial role in empowering young people with special needs through diverse dance initiatives. Inclusive pedagogy that integrates all students in a rich, equitable and just dance programme within education frameworks are occurring alongside enabling projects by community groups and in the professional dance world where many high-profile choreographers actively seek opportunities to work across diversity to inspire creativity. Access and inclusion is increasingly the essence of programmes for disenfranchised and traumatised youth who find creative expression, freedom and hope through dance. This volume foregrounds dance for young people with special needs and presents best practice scenarios in schools, communities and the professional sphere.

This volume presents a unique opportunity to unite some of the best scholars, educators, practitioners and dancers working in the field to share their expertise, experiences and tell their stories. Of particular interest will be the international

perspectives from Australia, Brazil, Canada, Cambodia, China, Denmark, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Norway, Papua New Guinea, Portugal, Singapore, South Africa, Taiwan, Timor Leste, UK and USA.

The anthology will be of interest to many subject areas including pedagogy, choreography, dance therapy, community dance practice, social and cultural studies, aesthetics, inter-disciplinary arts and more. It will be an invaluable resource for artists in schools and communities working with special dancers.

Each section will include a number of chapters and case narratives. The chapter authors base their work on different theoretical perspectives approaching issues of dance and special needs through extensive research. Case narratives are situated within diverse social, cultural, philosophical and sociological frameworks and often represent a specific cultural perspective. Some recount particular projects and activities while others take a broader perspective; however a common thread to all contributions of the book is that they explore change, processes and transformations that come about in the lives of young people through special dance programmes.

Content sections of chapters and case narratives:

1. Inclusive dance pedagogy
2. Equality, advocacy and policy
3. Changing practice for dance education
4. Community dance initiatives
5. Professional integrated collaborations

Education & Training Network report

by Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners, co-chair

Currently Ralph and Jeff are focusing on organizing conferences in the Asia-Pacific region, so this report is timely in providing information and raising the profile of dance education in the region. Two conferences of particular relevance are:

- Dance and the Child International and World Dance Alliance (daCi and WDA) World Summit, Adelaide, 8–13 July 2018
- World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) 6th World Summit, Beijing, 3–6 December 2016

Both conferences advance WDA's strategic objectives of building international partnerships, raising the profile of dance education in Asia-Pacific and increasing access to professional development events.

The WDA Education and Training network partnered with daCi for the World Summit in Taipei in 2012. The success of this event prompted the WDA Education and Training Network to work with our colleagues in daCi again. In July 2016 the planning committees will gather in Adelaide to create the structures, committees and budgets that will drive the conference. The themes and topics of the conference include inter-generation teaching and learning, dance in community contexts, indigenous pedagogies and dance from the early years for lifelong participation.

An important feature of the daCi/WDA summit is the coming together of respective advisory boards. While daCi has had a global advisory board structure for many years, the WDA is only just developing such infrastructure networks. The freshly formed WDA Global Education and Training Network members include:

- Ralph Buck (NZ) Chair <r.buck@auckland.ac.nz>
- Jeff Meiners (Australia) <jeff.meiners@unisa.edu.au>
- Ann Kipling Brown (Canada) <Ann.Kipling.Brown@uregina.ca>
- Livvia Kate Pearce (NZ) <lpea038@aucklanduni.ac.nz>
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- Sara Murdock (USA) <smurdock@ucla.edu>
- Philip Channells (Australia) <philipchannells@gmail.com>

We are very excited to have this global network committee as it will help foster communication and growth.

Please save the dates of 8–13 July 2018 for the Adelaide event! And contact Ralph or Jeff if you need information or wish to be involved in the 2018 WDA/daCi Global Summit.

The second and more immediate conference is the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) 6th World Summit, to be held in Beijing, China, 3–6 December 2016. Partnering with the Beijing Board of Education and Ministry of Education (China) and E-Platform International Science and Technology (EPI) presents a very exciting and rare opportunity to work with Chinese arts educators in China.

The WAAE brings together dance, drama, music and visual arts educators within a network for global collaboration that UNESCO respects. The WDA is the lead dance organization within the WAAE. The WAAE conference in Beijing is focusing on the UNESCO and Chinese Government concerns surrounding sustainable development topics, and will include education equality, arts education in rural communities, arts across the curriculum and pedagogy partnerships.

Registrations are open for the WAAE conference and the website will be announced very soon. Please contact Mr Dequan Li via email (lidequan@epi.org.cn) for all registration details.

Other upcoming dance conference events of note in our region include WDA Asia-Pacific Seoul Korea Conference in July 2016; Undisciplining Dance at the University of Auckland, New Zealand, 30 June to 3 July 2016; and the Macau Youth Dance Festival, Macau, China, 30 July to 5 August 2016.

Dance education and training is a lively field of interest. We look forward to hearing of your events and interests and also to seeing you in Adelaide and/or Beijing soon.

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.

Chapters

Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh, Cambodia, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand.

Countries with representatives but no formalised Chapters: East Timor and Papua New Guinea.

Dancers of ASWARA in Syed Haziq Afiq's 'The Strip' in *Dancing in Place 2016*, 16–17 January at Rimbun Dahan. Photo: Nazir Azhari. See Malaysia chapter report.

Australia report

by Neil Roach
Acting CEO

Australian dance is fundamentally strong and creative, but recently it suffered a setback as government funding changes have left some 40% of all small to medium performing companies without core funding. This has included small to medium dance companies, where the next generation of innovative dancers and dance makers are nurtured and developed.

While the total amount of funding allocated to the arts appears not to have changed, there has been a diversion of substantial funds from the main funding body, the Australia Council, to a program managed directly by the Minister for the Arts termed 'Catalyst'. Early outcomes show that while some dance companies have been able to gain additional funds, which includes funding for tours to Indonesia and China, there is no replacement for core funding diverted from the Australia Council to this new program. Those left without core funding from the Australia Council, which includes the

Australian Dance Council—Ausdance, face an uncertain future or closure.

The new program has also seen a great proportion of the funds allocated to non-performance making outcomes and non-service outcomes, such as the purchase of a painter's house for heritage purposes. It is also regrettable that some half of the four years of funding has been allocated in the first six months in the lead-in to a Federal election, leaving little opportunity for the remaining years of the new program, and creating doubt about the rigour of the guidelines and political interference ahead of the election.

Australia's major dance companies continue to produce outstanding dance, and some of this will now be seen in Asia using the new funding. However, many small to medium companies will be left scrambling.

Aotearoa New Zealand report

by Anton Carter

**ReQuest Dance Crew at
SDNZ 10th anniversary
celebrations.**

Photo: Nina Gastreich,
NinaG Photography



New Zealand's inaugural Dance Week (NZDW) held 23–30 April 2016 created a platform for all to 'celebrate, elevate and participate' in all forms of dance. People were encouraged to become audiences, challenged to participate and enjoy the benefits dance has to offer, and to openly celebrate dance by having a dedicated week of dance.

The dance community throughout New Zealand embraced the concept, and highlighted a diverse programme with more than 50 events listed in the NZDW register including workshops, performances, exhibitions, and the screening of dance films, in the main centres as well as the regions.

Our nationwide dance video – *For the Love of Dance in Aotearoa* – was launched on International Dance Day. Groups from throughout New Zealand showed the joy, diversity and community of dance in Aotearoa to music provided by Wellington musician and disability advocate Pati Umaga, with his song *Siva*.

NZ Dance Week has been successful in generating excitement, genuine interest and engagement from all parts of the dance community. It provided a platform that brought the dance community together to celebrate and share their love of dance. From students to professional dance companies, tots to teenagers to seniors, all got a move on. Hip hop, hula, salsa, mime, ballet and contemporary dance all featured in diverse spaces: the park, on screen, radio, art gallery, on the beach, at the museum, in studios and on stage.

It was fitting that New Zealand's inaugural national dance week coincided with UNESCO's celebration of Samoan and New Zealand choreographer, dancer, stage director, designer and artist Lemi Ponifasio (MAU Dance Company), and his work, with a special ceremony in Paris where he gave his message for International Dance Day on 29 April 2016.

Of his message, Lemi said; "Dance is life in the quiver. Like *karakia*, it interweaves the *whakapapa* of all existence, so my message is a dance *karakia*. I grew up in Samoa where dance is an uncontainable activation of joy. Dance is the personification of joy; the joy of life, the joy of being with each other. We are in the midst of dramatic changes in our world, religious and political fundamentalism, terrorism, economic crisis, technology overdrive, nuclear armament, climate chaos, mass migration and the colossal force of displaced people, refugees. People are divided. What is dance within this setting? What is humanity? What is dance on Earth? What is it to be with each other? My message carries the aims of my work and a perspective from Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific."

Other highlights in an active first half year of dance activity included:

Street Dance New Zealand (SDNZ) celebrated a decade of supporting street dance in Aotearoa. Created in 2007 in South Auckland to provide opportunities for young people to grow through a shared dance experience, this organisation has been the root of much success for

generations of New Zealand hip hop and street dancers, including Parris Goebel and dancers from The Palace Dance Studio.

Dance featured prominently in the Auckland Arts Festival, 8–26 March, with a programme that had diversity at its heart with inclusion of works that crossed time, cultures, border and art forms. The Asia Pacific Dance Project brought together choreographers to create and present work. Kuik Swee Boon of T.H.E. Dance Company (Singapore) collaborated with Neil Ieremia of Black Grace Dance Company to create *Changes*, a two-part work that brought two cultures together to co-exist and create side by side. The result was the world premiere of a two-part work; Ieremia's 'Another Letter from Earth' which explored themes of death, and Swee Boon's 'Change and Constancy' which looked at the parallels between Singapore society and the different cultures of the Black Grace dancers.

The New Zealand Dance Company (NZDC) completed a highly successful tour of *Lumina* to the Holland Dance Festival. NZDC Chief Executive and Artistic Director Shona McCullagh said that part of the Company's strategy was to participate in international collaborations to bring new voices and influences into a country. "The international co-production with the Holland Dance Festival was hugely thrilling for me to take Malia Johnston's and Louise Potiki Bryant's works to Europe. They hadn't been seen there before, and that is a great honour and a great service we can offer the New Zealand dance industry: the ability to take New Zealand choreographic works offshore." Also included in *Lumina* was American Dutch-born Stephen Shropshire's 'The Geography of an Archipelago'. "He didn't allow any of [the dancers'] perceived limitations to inhibit the vision that he had – and of course the dancers stepped up enormously and are now very proud of the work they have done. It has improved their technical skills enormously," says Shona.

We look forward to more dance activity in the second half of the year, with Matariki (Maori New Year) in June, our very first New Zealand Contemporary Pacific Dance Festival (13–18 June), together with the Tertiary Dance Festival (27 June–2 July). Dance students from around the country assemble for four days of workshops, seminars and performances. It will be exciting to see what our next generation artists come up with! Finally Tempo, NZ's Festival of Dance, returns in October, the

annual festival that celebrates dance in all its forms and styles. Auckland will be set alight with dance with a vibrant programme that will increase, enhance and support society's appreciation and experience of dance and how it relates to them.

NZ Dance Week 2016 poster.

Designer: Danica Prowse



Cambodia report

by Alicia Hamet

Khon Chansithyka in Emmanuèle Phuon's work *Brodal Serei* for Amrita Performing Arts.

Photo: Anders Jiras.



2016 has offered plenty of opportunities for international collaborations for Amrita Performing Arts. Amrita's Artistic Director, Chey Chankethya (Kethya), has lately been involved in a number of international projects. In our last report, we noted her challenge to respond to a digital version of Japanese choreographer Tsuyoshi Chirai's work, as part of the SIFA Dance Marathon "Open with a Punk Spirit" Archive Box Project. Kethya presented her first response to all the elements of the box with a solo in Singapore. She went further at a performance in Yokohama for TPAM where her work evolved towards a more personal story, while incorporating some of the original elements of the box. The journey continues as Kethya will further develop her piece for the sixth edition of Amrita's Contemporary Dance Platform on 3 June in Phnom Penh, with her work-in-progress dealing with refugees, immigration and uncertainty now named *Departure*. We believe this work is the outcome from collaboration with various international artists, and demonstrates how forging regional connections supports artistic development.

Kethya has collaborated on another project dealing with similar issues, *Soil*, an intercultural dance theater trio conceived and directed by Michael Sakamoto, and co-written and co-choreographed with the performers: Cambodian classical dancer Kethya, Thai lanna and contemporary dancer Waewdao Sirisook, and Vietnamese-

American contemporary dancer Nguyen. *Soil* explores crisis in three Southeast Asian cultures and transnational, East-West identity through the dancers' personal narratives. The piece will be further developed throughout 2016, to premiere in 2017.

On top of those collaborations, and as part of our artist development program, Kethya had the opportunity to invite renowned LA movement-based artist Laurel Tintendo to Cambodia, thanks to the support of the Asian Cultural Council. The choreographers worked deeper on their collaboration *Soma Path*, a journey in which they meet each other despite their differences. Our Amrita artists also had a chance to attend a two-day workshop with Tintendo.

Finally, Kethya was invited to perform *My Mothers and I* at Le Tarmac in Paris this February.

Japan witnessed various rich collaborations involving Amrita artists this year. Chy Ratana (Leak) travelled back and forth to Japan to perform in Akiko Kitamura's *Cross Transit Project*, which premiered at the end of March. Senior Artist Phon Sopheap collaborated once again with dancer Naim Syahrazad and dramaturge Lim How Ngean for the Dance Box Residency 2016 in Japan. The Dance Box lecture performance *What Price Your Dance* deals with topics of dance, work and money.

Last but not least, five Cambodian artists, among them Chumvan Sodhachiv (Belle),

Chy Lina, Khon Chansithyka (Mo) and Khon Chansina (Nan) from Amrita, collaborated with director Amon Miyamoto on his production, *The Terrace of the Leper King*, written by the iconic Japanese author Yukio Mishima. Their collaboration with Japanese actors revived the glamor of the Khmer empire through Apsara dancing, a classical style dating back to the Angkorean era. *The Terrace of the Leper King* premiered to full houses in Tokyo in March.

One of Amrita's main missions is to contribute to developing artist capacity as much as creating work in Cambodia. We were therefore delighted to see the premiere of work-in-progress *Brodal Serei*, 18-19 December in Phnom Penh, after two years of rehearsals, research and training with choreographer Emmanuèle Phuon for Amrita artists Nget Rady, Noun Sovitou and Khon Chansithyka. Through a series of engaging scenes weaving dance, drama and storytelling, *Brodal Serei* explores the personal history of a Khmer boxer, beyond the thrills and spills of the boxing ring, in present day Cambodia. The work was met with great interest from a very enthusiastic audience. Melissa Coade, one of *Brodal Serei*'s audience members, described it as "magnetic, raw and real – rather like Cambodia herself." The piece will be presented at the da:ns Festival in October 2016 in Singapore.

As Amrita looks towards further choreographic development for our artists, three of our choreographers will build on works-in-progress created at our Contemporary Dance Platform during a full-time ten-week residency at the end of this year. This Amrita Dance Residency is now the second stage of our Platform, and will be an opportunity for local and international communities to meet each other through a series of activities such as open rehearsals, workshops, educational activities, talks, screenings and more, so to engage with our audience. It will also be a chance for our artists to be given the tools to be of equal capacity, to have a voice on the international choreographic scene by going deeper into the creative process, and to have their pieces enjoy their world premiere in Phnom Penh.

Chey Chankethya, Waewdao Sirisook and Nguyen Nguyen, the performers of *Soil*, in their traditional outfits. Photo: Michael Sakamoto



Hong Kong report

by Stella Lau

Tang Ya, winner of Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards, in *L'Amour Immortel*.

Photo: Henry Wong



Creative Space: Residency for Mid-career Choreographers and Springboard Showcase

From February to June 2016, Hong Kong Dance Alliance conducted its distinctive project Creative Space: Residency for Mid-Career Choreographers. Inspiration, superb dance artists, time, and space are essential requirements for choreographers to create. With the idea of fulfilling these needs as a motivating factor, the Hong Kong Dance Alliance initiated Creative Space. In its second iteration in 2016, the five-month residency project provides recognized choreographic talents with comprehensive support – including time to create new work, dancers to work with, space to rehearse their creation, administrative and production support to produce it, and the stage to present audiences with the results. From 17 to 19 June, *Springboard Showcase 2016* presents the outcome of the residency project in a program featuring works from a trio of award-winning choreographers: the world premières of *That Day* by Lam Po and *Human Internship* by Justyne Li, as well as the Hong Kong première of *Cham's Soul* by Nguyen Ngoc Anh.

18th Hong Kong Dance Awards

Organized by the Hong Kong Dance Alliance, the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards was presented on 22 April 2016 at a sold-out gala performance at Kwai Tsing Theatre. With the title *I Got Rhythm*, Artistic

Director Mandy Petty's vibrant show lived up to its name and thrilled the audience with a scintillating mix of dance, from ballet and contemporary, to tap dance and locking and popping, displaying the diversity and dynamism of the Hong Kong dance scene. One of the highlights of the evening was the newly-created Lifetime Achievement Award presented to Sin Yuen for his immeasurable contribution to Chinese dance in Hong Kong over the past four decades. His work with organizations and individuals across the spectrum of the Hong Kong dance scene has inspired audiences, students, and professionals.

Awards were also presented for:

- Outstanding Choreography—Helen Lai for *Soledad*
- Outstanding Production—City Contemporary Dance Company for *Soledad*
- Outstanding Independent Production—Unlock Dancing Plaza for *Boy Story. Reborn*
- Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer—Li Han in *L'Amour Immortel* and Shen Jie in *Romeo and Juliet*
- Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer—Tang Ya in *L'Amour Immortel*
- Outstanding Ensemble Performance—City Contemporary Dance Company for *Soledad* and Hong Kong Ballet for *Bolero*
- Outstanding Set Design for Dance—Tsang Man-tung for *L'Amour Immortel*
- Outstanding Youth and Community



Above: Poster for the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards.

1. Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Sin Yuen at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: Mark Lam

2. *Soledad*, by City Contemporary Dance Company, winner of Outstanding Choreography, Outstanding Production and Outstanding Ensemble Performance at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: CCDC

3. Awards recipients with Stella Lau, Hong Kong Dance Alliance Chairperson, Kevin Wong, Vice-chairperson, and Tom Brown, Chairman Emeritus, at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: Mark Lam

4. *Boy Story. Reborn* by Unlock Dancing Plaza, winner of Outstanding Independent Production at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: KW@light Photography

5. Hong Kong Ballet in *Bolero*, winner of Outstanding Ensemble Performance at the 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: Kitmin Lee.



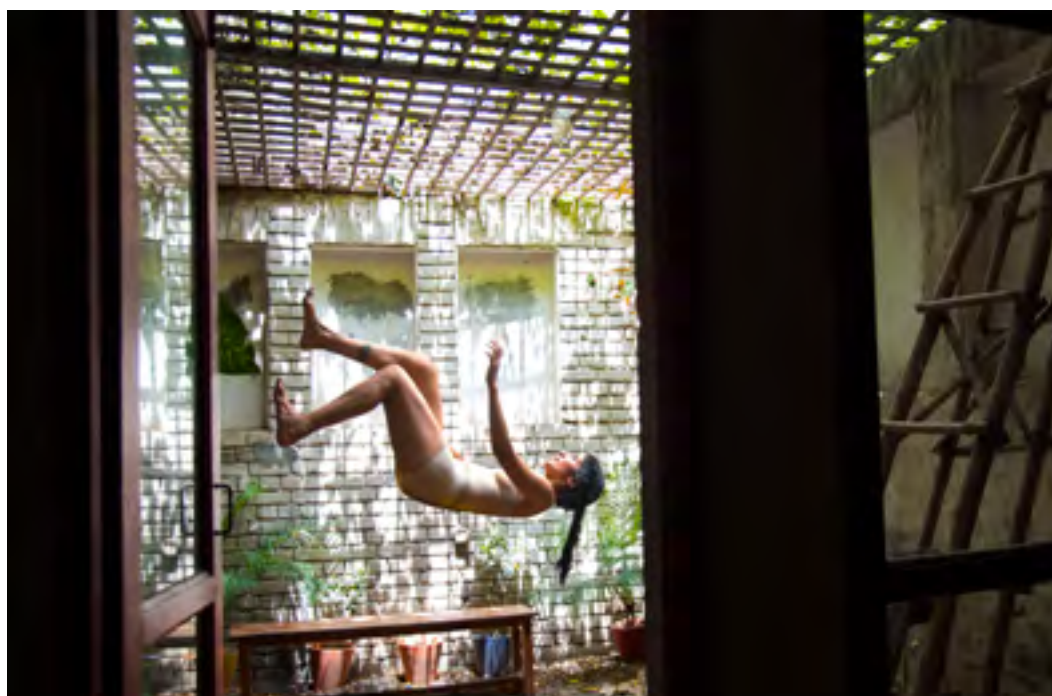
Dance—Passoverdance and the Office of the Arts Administrator, Chinese University of Hong Kong for *In Search of Space in a Cramped City: A Moving Exhibition - Urban Bottling*

- Outstanding Service to Dance—Lo Wai-luk for 《尋找香港舞蹈》 (*In Search of Hong Kong Dance*) and Natasha Rogai for her work in dance criticism

India report

by A. P. Rajaram

Archana Kumar,
performing at Gati Dance
Forum's Ignite Festival of
Dance. Photo: Sangeeta
Banerjee [One frame story]



The term 'dance' in India connotes different meanings in different geographical localities as it extends across the vast length and breadth of the country. The meanings of dance encompass community dances as well as the classical dances, and a newly emerging scene of contemporary dance. Dance in India is a vibrant scenario, as now the focus is on the aesthetics and the growth of classical and the community dances. Dancing conditions and facilities have been given much emphasis in recent years and new initiatives are being taken up by non-governmental agencies (while the government policies focus more concern over all available forms in India). These initiatives include the important festivals held regularly, focusing on all dance forms available in India all over the country. Festivals specifically focusing on classical dances folk forms, dance theaters and contemporary choreography in India are spaces where one can experience the vibrant range of dances. Out of the large number of festivals, the noted contemporary dance festivals are Ignite Festival of Contemporary Dance, organized by Gati Dance Forum in New Delhi, Interface, organized by Sapphire Dance Company in Kolkata, and Attakkalari India Biennial Festival by Attakkalari, in Bangalore.

There are a number of universities that have dance studies as a curriculum in India. Prominent examples include Delhi School of Arts and Aesthetics in Jawaharlal Nehru

University, Art Design and Performing Arts in Shiv Nadar University, Center for Culture and Creative Expressions in Ambedkar University in New Delhi, Department of Performing Arts in Pondicherry University in Pondicherry, Department of Dance in Hyderabad University in Hyderabad in Hyderabad, Faculty of Fine Arts in Dance in Rabindrabharati University and Sangit Bhavana in Vishwabharati University in Kolkata. There are still newly-opening departments commissioned to offer dance studies; among them is Presidency University, Kolkata.

Information about research work related to dance studies in India can be obtained from Sangeet Natak Academy, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, and Gati Dance Forum in New Delhi. And a few scholarships for students to learn dance are available from the Sanskriti Foundation. Numerous dance schools run by established and well-recognized dancers also draw large number of students as dance remains a very popular hobby to pursue.

Malaysia report

by Bilqis Hijjas

Seow Yi Qing in her solo site-specific performance, at the end of the (Time)(Place)(Body) workshop at Rimbun Dahan, 24 January 2016. Photo: David Lim



MyDance Alliance started the year once again with *Dancing in Place*, the site-specific dance platform at Rimbun Dahan. To present 13 new and restaged works, both local and international, we needed to engage many members of our volunteer committee in creative or administrative tasks. But it was worth it to see the public roaming about the gardens, enjoying the performances in the glorious sunshine.

Among the international participants of *Dancing in Place*, we were grateful to WDA-Philippines for coordinating the participation of Airdance, with a work choreographed by Jed Amihan. Also, Nitipat 'Ong' Pholchai from Thailand, one of the participants of last year's Southeast Asian Choreolab, returned to Rimbun Dahan with his collaborators to stage two improvisational works.

This year, the *Dancing in Place* format has been taken up by our committee member Wong Jyh Shyong, artistic director of Damansara Performing Arts Centre, as part of his arts festival in the middle of the year. The *Dancing in Place: City Site* edition will feature a collection of dance works around DPAC's lobby, corridors, staircase and studios. Scotland-based choreographer Janis Claxton, facilitator of our first SEA Choreolab in 2014, returned to Malaysia this month to work with the DPAC dancers on new duets, one of which will be presented in *City Site*—another fabulous continuing international connection!

In other international collaborations,

MyDance Alliance provided some promotional support for Japan Foundation Kuala Lumpur's project with choreographer Un Yamada, with a performance in Kuala Lumpur in January of two of her works. One was performed by Yamada's company from Japan, and the other by five selected male Malaysian dancers, who rehearsed in Tokyo. We were privileged to be part of such a unique project, and were excited to see our dancers reach even greater heights of technique and performance.

Since that promising start to the year, we have concentrated on supporting other dance projects in the community, utilising funds raised from our *Tepak Tari* showcase production last year. We formalised our guidelines for dispensing small grants (of RM500–1500) in support of Malaysian dancers travelling overseas for performance or professional development, and productions and other capacity-building projects at home. In the last few months, the small grants have supported two dance productions (by Khairulazhar Mohtar and Jack Kek), subsidised several members to attend American dance practitioner Daniel Davis' 5-day site-specific dance workshop at Rimbun Dahan in January (organised by committee member David Lim), and also provided airfares for six Malaysian dancers to take part in the WDAAP event in Korea in July.

One of our small grants went to committee member Alla Azura Abal Abas, to attend

the International Conference on Bajau-Sama' (Sea Gypsies) Diaspora and Maritime Southeast Asian Cultures in Semporna, Sabah, in April this year. The conference was organised by our National Advisor, Professor Mohd Anis Md Nor, with his Nusantara Performing Arts Research Center (NusParc). Prof Anis writes: "Convened through a joint effort of collaborative synergies between three major institutions namely NusParc, Department of Sabah Museum, and the KadazanDusun Chair at Universiti Malaysia Sabah, the conference was designed to facilitate tangible activities for the Bajau-Sama' communities within the aegis of Tun Sakaran Museum in Semporna, and to initiate the establishment of the Centre for Bajau Knowledge and Culture for the development and perpetuation of Bajau-Sama' dance and music traditions, in line with the conference themes on performing arts (dance and music), language and literature, migration and politics, identity, ritual and sacred spaces.

More than 200 local and international participants (including more than 80 students) and 21 paper presenters attended the five-day conference, inclusive of two field trips to the Archaeological Museum at Bukit Tengkorak (Skull Hill) and Ormadal (Umaral) Island. The former was the largest pottery-making factory in Southeast Asia during the Neolithic Age, ethno-archaeologically connected to present-day pottery-making practised by the Bajau-Sama' of Semporna.

The latter is a small island southeast of Semporna, home to the first established Bajau-Sama' seafarers' village before they eventually established themselves in neighbouring islands and on the mainland. Since the conference was part of the annual Regatta Lepa (Sea Gypsies' boat regatta), participants were privileged to witness many dance (*igal*) and music (*tagunggu*) performances, and took part in dance and music workshops run by local master-teachers. The well-attended workshops were very popular with student participants. It is hoped that the next conference will be held at the same place during the Regatta Festival in April 2017."

Finally, another ongoing project this year is the online contemporary dance periodical *Langkah*, edited by David Lim. A grant from the Royal Arts Gala Fund enabled David to pay small fees to the many writers, editors, photographers and translators who contributed to the first two editions. Thanks to his hard work, the publication is emerging as a colourful, diverse and valuable archive of contemporary dance practice in Malaysia. The third edition is currently in production; you will be able to read it at <langkah.mydancealliance.org>.

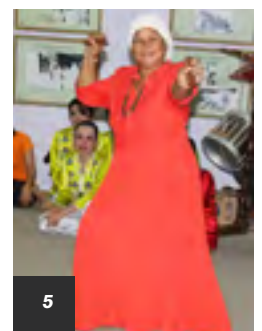
1. Daniel Davis (right) teaching his (Time)(Place)(Body) workshop in Axis Syllabus and site-specific choreography at Rimbun Dahan, 19–24 January 2016. In the background, Nitipat 'Ong' Pholchai and Kien Faye. Photo: David Lim

2. 'Haste' Sompong and Kien Faye in the studio at Rimbun Dahan, during the (Time)(Place)(Body) workshop at Rimbun Dahan, 19–24 January 2016. Photo: David Lim

3. Male *igal* dance workshop, at the International Conference on Bajau-Sama' Diaspora, Tun Sakara Museum, Semporna, Sabah, 19–23 April 2016. Photo: Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu

4. Female *igal* dance workshop, at the International Conference on Bajau-Sama' Diaspora, Tun Sakara Museum, Semporna, Sabah, 19–23 April 2016. Photo: Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu

5. An *igal tabawan bola' bola'* dance workshop, at the International Conference on Bajau-Sama' Diaspora, Tun Sakara Museum, Semporna, Sabah, 19–23 April 2016. Photo: Sabah Museum, Kota Kinabalu



Papua New Guinea report

by Naomi Faik-Simet

Theatre Arts students from the University of Papua New Guinea in red and white costumes, and master teachers Lubi Giwale and Markham Galut in traditional attire, leading the showcase performance of the *obo tatarie* dance, 29 April 2016, at the University of Papua New Guinea. Photo: Naomi Faik Simet



Papua New Guinea is currently facing economic and political challenges, thus support to the art and culture sector is minimal, causing a decline in dance activities. Nevertheless, efforts by individual artists and organizations concerned with dance worked together to produce a recent workshop which coincided with the 2016 International Dance Day celebrations. Through the ongoing support of the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and the National Cultural Commission, dance artists collaborated with teachers and students of the Theatre Arts Section, University of Papua New Guinea, on the two-day workshop held from 28 to 29 April.

The workshop targeted the theme 'Passing on Dance Knowledge' and advocated for the development of a dance curriculum in Papua New Guinea. Featuring the performance and teaching of the traditional *obo tatarie* which is part of the *taibubu* dance repertoire of the Kiwai of Western province, the practical workshop was taught by two master teachers – Lubi Giwale and Ivan Kesa – who are one of the few remaining traditional/contemporary dance artists. Theory presentation was delivered by myself and emphasized the historical connection of the *obo tatarie* with the Torres Strait Islanders of Australia and the Rotumans of Fiji. Using archival material from the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies, the presentation educated and informed workshop participants of the significance of dance

knowledge embedded in the *obo tatarie* which identifies the historical heritage of Papua New Guineans and the Pacific. More workshops will be carried out in schools to strengthen the teaching and application of dance knowledge and practice.

Another highlight is the participation of Papua New Guinea at the 12th Festival of Pacific Arts and Culture in Guam from 22 May to 3 June. Despite the current economic situation, Papua New Guinea was fortunate to attend the festival with a hundred participants consisting of traditional dancers, artists and government officials. Its participation at the festival is important as it maintains the country's regional ties with the rest of the Pacific, and a commitment to preserve and promote the region's diverse cultural and artistic heritage.

Other developments for the year include the hosting of the FIFA World Cup for the Womens' Under 20 in November this year. The Sports Foundation office is working closely with the Theater Arts Section, University of Papua New Guinea, to engage artists for the opening ceremony, and dance activities that will be staged during the event. This is another great opportunity which engages dance artists. The next *Channels* will share developments from these activities.

Philippines report

by Angela L. Baguilat

Unwrapping Culture
by Alvin Tolentino
and Pichet Klunchun.
Photo: Myra Beltran

February Arts Month was a celebration of all sorts of dance in the Philippines. UP Dance Company's *A Wanderer in the Night of the World* happened on 22 February at the University of the Philippines Theater stage. It paid tribute to National Artist for Literature NVM Gonzalez, with original music by Toniliz Munoz. A poetic movement exploration and interpretation of Gonzalez's rare poems, the work celebrated one's journey in life, its triumphs and its struggles. Commissioned by the University of the Philippines' Office for Initiatives in Culture and the Arts as part of UP Diliman Month's Panahon ng Luwalhati (A Time for Tributes), *A Wanderer in the Night of the World* brought together four young and driven choreographers – Al Bernard Garcia, Sarah Maria Samaniego, Michael Barry Que and Gebbville Ray Selga – to tell a poignant story of journey, wandering and coming home.

A special collaborative performance by Fil-Canadian Alvin Tolentino and Thai

independent artist Pichet Klunchun was seen 19-20 February at the Dance Forum Space. Entitled *Unwrapping Culture*, Tolentino and Klunchun presented the output of their months-long movement exploration, and collaborative questioning of their choreographic and performance processes. This was presented and brought to the Philippines through the efforts of Co. Erasga and Klunchun Dance Company, and hosted by Dance Forum M.B.

The main companies had their own celebrations. Ballet Philippines' *Opera* was seen on 13 and 14 February at the CCP's Tanghalang Nicanor Abelardo (Main Theater). A three-act ballet based on Gabrielle Barredo's installation art of the same name, *Opera* is choreographed by French choreographer Rheda. Ballet Manila premiered *Rebel*, a full-length ballet by British choreographer Martin Lawrence, on 26-28 February at the Aliw Theater. Based on the Roman slave Spartacus, *Rebel* is Ballet Manila's tribute to the 30th anniversary of the EDSA People Power.

March marked the 3rd C-MAP National Dance Workshop. Held from 27 March to 3 April at the Dance Pull Studio in Bacolod City, C-MAP, or Composition Analysis Program, is an eight-day workshop on technique and dance composition. A brain child of WDA member Dwight Rodrigazo, C-MAP hosted 13 young and aspiring choreographers: Gillianne Therese Gequinto, June Blanche Saagundo and Prince Paltu-ob from Luzon, Ajani Alicia Rose Marie Limuaco, Bernie Mailla, Emmanuel Bajala, April Jay Banquil, Romyr Gabon and Nielrex Castil from the Visayas, and Jasmine Llenas, Donna Cabalfin, Jemmar Azucena and Benhur Abulencia from Mindanao. A culminating activity to present their works was an output of the workshop.

International Dance Day celebrations are spread out in the month of April. The Contemporary Dance Network Manila had two offerings. Airdance's *Gunita* (Memory) on 15 and 16 April featured works by Rhosam Prudenciado, Mia Cabalfin, Avel Bautista and Jed Amihan. Showcased at the company's quaint dance studio, the choreographers delved into their memories of their childhood, past loves and relationships. On 27 April, Dance Forum M.B.'s *With Martha* also went down memory lane. With the guidance of Myra Beltran, the show was curated through inquiries into Martha Graham's motivation and process of creation. These were the premises with





1. *A Wanderer in the Night of the World*, choreographed by Al Bernard Garcia, Sarah Maria Samaniego, Michael Barry Que, and Gebbville Ray Selga, performed by UP Dance Company.
Photo: JM Macapagal



2. The poster for Dance Forum M.B.'s *With Martha*. Photo: JM Macapagal

which choreographers Al Bernard Garcia and Sarah Maria Samaniego experimented.

According to tradition, the Contemporary Dance Network Manila announces all successful finalists of the Wifibody.ph Contemporary Dance Competition (New Choreographer's Competition) on the last day of the network's April celebrations. This year, 13 finalists were successful in their bid: Jemmar Azucena, Marielle Joy Baylocon, Byuti Balaga, Christopher Chan, Jovie Ann Domingo, Kenney Kent Garcia, Cir-Anthon Paolo Garing, Minette Maza, Mi Barry Que, Minette Caryl Maza, June Blanche Saagundo, Gebbville Ray Selga and Danny Vale. WiFiBody.ph happens on 20 August at the Tangahalang Huseng Batute.

Ballet Manila, in cooperation with the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, celebrated International Dance Day by gathering 30 dance schools, clubs and companies on 29 April at the Aliw Theater in three separate shows. The 2nd BM NCCA International Dance Day Festival featured Ballet Manila, Philippine Ballet Theater, UP Dance Company, Airdance, BULSU Dance Troupe, Dance Theater Arts, Hampton Court Ballet, Pink Toes, Lahing Kayumanggi Manananayaw ng Marikina, The Dance Conservatory of TDC Pampanga, ACTS MANILA, Ballet Baguio, Dancespace Manila, IDMM Ballet School, UST Salinggawi, LPU Dance Troupe, The PNU Balinsasayaw, Anova Defino, Daloy Dance Company, Katutubo Exchange Philippines Performing

Group and Korean Cultural Center.

Notable in April's Dance Day celebrations was Teatro Ambahanon's workshops and showcases to hundreds of participants in commercial establishments in General Santos City in Mindanao. Through its director, Leonardo Rey Carino, the objective of this celebration is to teach all folks that 29 April is International Dance Day. But perhaps one of the most memorable events in April was the conferment of the nine National Artists on 14 April. One of the them is the founder of Ballet Philippines, Alice Reyes.

Participation in conferences, meetings and forums kept some of the members of WDA Philippines busy. Peter de Vera, NCCA dance committee vice chair, attended the general meeting in Singapore, Steve Villaruz was in Kuala Lumpur in October 2015 to give a lecture on Benesh Notation to dance teachers, and Angela Baguilat delivered her paper 'Nasalapu-an, A Philippine Traditional Dance as Rendered in a Contemporary Form' at the 2016 Annual Conference of the Association of Asian Studies in Seattle, USA, on 31 March to 3 April.

Singapore report

by Siri Rama

WDAS members are still talking about last October's Asia Pacific Bridge in Singapore, but have since plunged directly into 2016 with many activities. We have had a new infusion of members which augurs well for the future. Many of our members are enthusiastically looking forward to participating in the conference in July 2015 in South Korea.

The dance department of Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), with its well-established curriculum, presented a very successful 'Crossings 2016', 21–22 April, at NAFA's Lee Foundation Theatre. Dynamic faculty member Jamaludin Jalil reports that 'Crossings' presented an entirely contemporary programme that showcased the signature conservatory dance technique training of the NAFA Dance Programme. The students tackled the contemporary repertory with finesse and professionalism. The works ranged from the mellow *No Excess Baggage* by Gillian Tan (NAFA Senior Lecturer) to the ballistic non-stop freneticism of 'Perforated Heartbeat' by Kevin Wynn (Associate Professor, Conservatory of Dance, SUNY Purchase, USA). In between these were the technical exuberance of *Onwards* by Ezekiel Oliveira (part-time lecturer, NAFA and Artistic Director, FiveLines) and the cerebral theatricality of *Innocent Until Proven Guilty (1)* by Lee Mun Wai (independent choreographer, former artist with T.H.E. Dance Company). Sharing the platform was *Discrete Elements* by Emily Kessler

(exchange student from SUNY Purchase).

Another NAFA event was Dancers@Work on 6 May, a platform to showcase student works and works-in-progress. The recent edition featured the works of students from the Composition Final Works module mentored by Lim Fei Shen. These were *Greetings!* by Rochanavibhata Supawalee, *Bound* by Gao Jingyi, *Rum Thai Prayook* by Piyapan Panyaporn and *INK* by Sandra Leong. The show opened with a short pas de deux from the Specialised Ballet Module and was followed by *The Natural Order*, a short study by Eugenia Lau from the dance Compositions Explorations module.

Letters—A DMT Finale on 11 May 2016 at NAFA was a project that arose from the Dance Movement Therapy module in collaboration with I'mSoullnc (a social enterprise whose mission is to 'enable everyone to harness the power of music, whatever their age, language, abilities or disabilities'). The finale showcase was put together by module lecturer Dr. Filomar Tariao, involving the students and three special needs individuals. The performance hoped 'to shed light on the joys and sorrows in working for inclusivity'.

Odissi, the Indian classical dance style, has come to stay and has flourished in the last decade in Singapore. Pallavi Panda, a student of WDAS treasurer Jyoti Unni, showcased odissi at Utkal Divas celebrations organised by Odia Society of Singapore at Singpost Auditorium on 23 April. WDAS member and odissi artist Indu Vijay reports that in the last 6 months she has had wonderful opportunities, beginning with the Shantanjali Festival of Arts in November 2015, in which her Taal School of Odissi collaborated with Temple of Fine Arts and Ethos: Exploring the Odissi Spirit. They choreographed and presented *River Ramble*, the story of the Singapore River. In April, Indu and Soumee De (co-founder of Ethos: Exploring the Odissi Spirit) presented 'Anima—The Divine Feminine' at *Kalavaibhavam*, Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society Festival 2016. The Spotlight series at the Library@Esplanade in April saw Indu present a lecture demonstration on odissi.

Kavitha Krishnan received a wonderful tribute through the production *KA—The Knowledge Possesses the Soul of the Man* by Shahrin Johry, 15–16 January 2016 at the Drama Centre Black Box. He worked with dancers Bernice Lee and Eva Tey, music composer and National Arts Council's Young Artist Award recipient Bani Haykal, and

Kavitha Krishnan and Shahrin Johry in Shahrin's work *KA—The Knowledge Possesses the Soul of the Man*, 15–16 January 2016 at the Drama Centre Black Box. Photo: Joseph Nair



music director Kailin Yong. KA also featured choreographer-performers Susan Yeung (lecturer at Lasalle College of the Arts), Guo Xiaoxing (Star), Gigi Gianti (Artistic Director of Gigi Art of Dance, Jakarta, Indonesia) and Shahrin's teacher and mentor, Kavitha Krishnan.

RELEASE 5.0 was presented by Maya Dance Theatre in March in two stages. Stage 1 was at the Auditorium@10Square and Stage 2 at The Substation. The main performance of *RELEASE 5.0* featured an array of both local and international dance makers from Denmark, Germany, USA, Portugal, Indonesia and Israel. Four mentors were attached to this programme: Susan Sentler, Ezekiel Oliveira, Shahrin Johry, and Kavitha Krishnan, who oversaw the development of the young artists.

Resist, Resurge: Traces of Hope, staged by Maya Dance Theatre from 19–21 May 2016 at the Drama Centre Black Box, was a contemporary dance theatre production that 'highlighted women's empowerment in a male-dominated world'. Direction was by Kavitha Krishnan with co-direction and choreography by Olivier Tarpaga (USA/ Burkina Faso).

Dr Siri Rama had a very creative start to the year with a bharatanatyam solo performance 'Silk Roots' which was specially conceptualised, choreographed and performed by her on different stories that emerge from the silk textile traditions in South Asia, at the Mylapore Fine Arts Festival in Chennai, India, on 6 January. Takshma Patel, Siri's student in Singapore, presented a bharatanatyam arangetram at the Canadian International School Auditorium on 6 February. Siri's students from the institution Kanaka Sabha Centre of Performing Arts (Mumbai, India) presented a Kuchipudi dance recital, *Vishwatma—The Universal Soul*, for the Kala Ghoda Festival on 9 February, and *Ramayana* at the Baba Atomic Research Centre auditorium under the aegis of Anushakti Tamil Manram in Mumbai, on 26 March.

The School of Arts (SOTA), a WDAS institutional member, had its first cohort of students graduate from the International Bacclaireate Career-Related Programme (IBCP), with dance students currently pursuing higher education at institutions such as the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance in London and the John Cranko Schule in Stuttgart.

The Year 4 to 6 students at SOTA recently took to the stage in *Rapport 2016*,

presenting a mixed bill of works to showcase the diversity and talents of the student dancers. Featuring new work by guest artists alongside restagings of Silvia Yong's 'not my place', *Rapport* saw the students stretch their physical and artistic limits.

SOTA Dance students have also had the privilege of learning from renowned local dance practitioners, such as Cultural Medallion recipients Santha Bhaskar and Som Said. They also attended masterclasses by visiting artists such as certified Gaga instructor Shahr Biniamini and former Paris Opera Ballet artist Alexis Saramite. SOTA Dance also hosted character dance masterclasses for local dance teachers and their students by Isabelle Herouard, acclaimed professor of character dance at the Paris Opera Ballet School since 1993.

Many more events are in the pipeline by our members, which we hope to update in the next report. WDAS members look forward to reconnecting with everybody in South Korea.

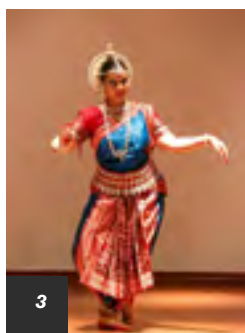
1. Onwards by Ezekiel Oliveira, in the NAFA showcase Crossings 2016, 21–22 April, at Lee Foundation Theatre.

2. Siri Rama performing 'Silk Roots' at the Mylapore Fine Arts Festival in Chennai, India, on 6 January 2016.

3. Pallavi Panda showcasing odissi at Utkal Divas celebrations organised by Odia Society of Singapore at Singpost Auditorium on 23 April 2016.

Photo: Jyoti Unni.

4. Indu Vijay giving a lecture demonstration on odissi, for the Spotlight series at the library@esplanade, April 2016.



Taiwan report

by Su-Ling Chou

When spring comes, the members of WDAAP—Taiwan usually present their annual achievements in the form of dance recitals, especially at the university and high school levels. Each university not only presents their spring concerts, which are produced and choreographed by their faculty members and local and international invited guests, but they also take the chance to promote their graduate students' creative works. For high school levels, the students who are going to graduate in June are eager to present their creativity to show their achievements after three years of training. The young generation challenges themselves in presenting works with various styles as well as individual characteristics.

Tso's Dance Association, one of major organizational members of WDAAP—Taiwan, was honored to be invited again by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government, to produce a full-evening production in 2016 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF). Following the 2015 production *Peter and the Wolf* and *Carnival of Animals*, the main goal of this year is to bring more talented dancers to join the project, not only from the dance programs of elementary, junior high and senior high schools but also from the students in the general education class. They worked together for eight months with the shared aim of presenting their best for the final production. Accompanied by Kaohsiung Youth Symphony Orchestra, this year's

production, titled *Some Little Things About Growing Up*, was composed with three pieces: 'Moments of Life', 'Dream', and 'Rhapsody'. The guest choreographer, Francesco D'Astici, focused on preparing young dancers in supporting them to be ready professionally on stage. He tried to explore the young dancers' passion and encouraged them to develop to their highest potential. It is amazing to see these young dancers showing great progress throughout this production. Hopefully, the plan to cultivate these artistic seeds in this city will continue to help such dance talents to challenge themselves in building up their future professional dance careers.

The International Young Choreography Project (IYCP) will not be held this year. Still, seeking the possibility of international connection, more than 130 Taiwanese members are ready to join *Dance Routes—Danced Roots: Connecting the Local and the Global* in Seoul, Korea, in July. There are eight groups selected to perform in the afternoon showcase programs, and the semi-professional Focus Dance Company of Taipei National University of the Arts has been invited to perform in the Academia Performance scheduled on 23 July during the event. Besides the performing groups, there will be nine dancers and one choreographer selected from Taiwan for the choreolab, while two teachers from Taiwan will give masterclasses. In the symposium, there are 18 presenters from

'Moments of Life' in *Some Little Things About Growing Up*, choreographed by Francesco D'Astici, 2016 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival, produced by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government.
Photo: Su-ling Chou



Taiwan including nine individual presenters, eight in Pecha Kucha and four dance faculty members from Tainan Technology University in a panel session. This WDAAP event is believed to be this summer's dance highlight, in terms of getting so many dance scholars and artists together. WDAAP-Taiwan members are working hard to promote themselves and keep on moving forward.

WDAAP-Taiwan Members' Activities, January–June 2016

Performances

Kaohsiung City Ballet

- *2016 Dance Shoe*, 16-17 January at Experimental Theater of National Theater & Concert Hall, 23-24 January at Jhihshan Hall of Kaohsiung City Arts Center, 30 January at Native Theater of International Hall of Tainan Municipal Cultural Center

Scarecrow Contemporary Dance Company

- *2016 TNAF City Stage-Incident Today*, 27-29 May at Today Theater

Tso's Dance Association

- *2016 KSAF-Young Generation*, 23-24 April at Kaohsiung City Dadong Arts Center

Horse

- *Kids*, 13-15 May at Cloud Gate Theater

Sun-Shier Dance Theatre

- *The Place: a Puppet, a Closet, a Fantasy*, 16 April at Arts Hall of Taoyuan County Government Cultural Affairs Bureau National Theater, 22-24 April at Wenshan Theater, 21 May at Jhihshan Hall of Kaohsiung City Arts Center

Wally Dance

- *Breeze*, 23 April at Future Lab of National Theater & Concert Hall

Century Contemporary Dance Company

- *Wild Butterflies X Transitional Space Wedding*, 6 May at Arts Center of Taitung County Cultural Affairs Department
- *Lost in the Lust*, 20-22 May at Song Yan Creative Lab.

Scholarships

- The Development of Young Artists Grant by Chinlin Foundation for Culture and Arts [CLFCA]
- Chin-Lin American Dance Festival Scholarship by CLFCA

Sponsorships

- 2016 Annual Plan of Tso's Dance Association by CLFCA and its memberships
- 2016 WDAAP-Taiwan Annual Planning by CLFCA



1. 'Dream' in *Some Little Things About Growing Up*, choreographed by Francesco D'Astici, 2016 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival, produced by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government. Photo: Su-ling Chou

2-4. 'Moments of Life' in *Some Little Things About Growing Up*, choreographed by Francesco D'Astici, 2016 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival, produced by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government. Photo: Su-ling Chou

5. 'Rhapsody' in *Some Little Things About Growing Up*, choreographed by Francesco D'Astici, 2016 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival, produced by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government. Photo: Su-ling Chou

2016 WDA events

2016 WDAAP Symposium, Choreolab, Showcase and Masterclasses

Dance Routes—Danced Roots: Connecting the Local and the Global
Seoul, Korea, 21–24 July 2016

The Korean chapter of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific will host this year's WDAAP Symposium and surrounding activities at the SungShin University (SSU) from 21 to 24 July 2016. The WDAAP Annual General Meeting and Network meetings will be held on the final day, Sunday 24 July.

Registrations are now open for *Dance Routes—Danced Roots: Connecting the Local and the Global*, the 2016 symposium theme which focuses on the idea of global and local connectivity through dance. It will look at roots as well as routes that dance and dancers negotiate in the different cultures of the contemporary world.

While dance traditions remain an important area of dance research, the emerging and ever-changing routes like migration and diaspora, inter-culturalism, technology, media, and the role of dance as a tool for wellness and somatic wellbeing, are becoming essential focuses of dance research.

Scholarly and performative presentations and PechaKucha style presentations will discuss some important questions, e.g:

- How does dance connect global and local communities? How is the dance community connected to important global issues and trends such as the environment, global economy, public health, international conflicts, understanding and embodiment of gender, wellness?
- What does the dance community have in common with other communities around the world, e.g. resources (natural, economic and social), and differences of ethnic and cultural diversity, geographic location?
- What are some of the common aspects of dance in all cultures, and how are they addressed in communities around the world?
- How are local culture-specific experiences connected to universal experiences? These could include issues such as violence, poverty, migration and homelessness, or positive experiences such as artistic traditions, rituals, festivals and celebrations.
- Where do dancers find connections between the local and the global concepts of space and time?

In addition to the Symposium, an international Choreolab will run for the week leading into the

symposium, from 14–20 July, with a final showing of work in progress at the ARCO Theatre on 22 July.

Showcase performances will take place over two days, on 22 and 23 July, and there will be daily Masterclasses running parallel with the Symposium program. A 'Korean night' opening and reception will be held at the end of the first day, on 21 July.

Notice of Annual General Meeting and WDAAP Network meetings

The AGM of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific will be held at 9am on Sunday 24 July 2016 at SungShin University (SSU).

Network meetings (Research & Documentation, Education & Training, Creation & Presentation, and Support & Development) will be held between 1.30 pm and 5.30 pm on 24 July, also at the SSU.

Please ensure that you are already a member of your WDA country chapters before registration and meeting attendance. It's important that you support dance in your country, but for those without a WDA chapter there will be an opportunity to pay individual membership at the symposium.

We encourage all those registered for the symposium and surrounding events to attend these meetings – the future of WDAAP is in your hands!

UNESCO International Arts Education Week 2016 Message

The fourth week of May (23–29 May 2016) is International Arts Education Week, which aims at increasing the international community's awareness on the importance of arts education and at reinforcing its cooperation by promoting cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue and social cohesion.

The World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) announced the theme for 2016: Arts Education for Sustainable Development. The 2016 message is provided by Li Cunxin, author of *Mao's Last Dancer* and artistic director of Queensland Ballet.

Read the full message here: <ausdance.org.au/news/article/2016-international-arts-education-week-message-by-li-cunxin>

Read more about International Arts Education Week here: <waae.edcp.educ.ubc.ca/?page_id=350>

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 regional centres with an overarching Global Executive Committee, and a Secretary General, bringing the regions together in matters of policy and global projects. The current regional centres are

- WDA Americas
- WDA Asia Pacific
- WDA Europe (being re-formed)

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 the regional centres that make up WDA. The other is WDA Americas <www.wdaamericas.org>.

Membership

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

Membership benefits

- Biannual newsletter *Channels*
- Annual regional assemblies
- Triennial global assemblies
- Participation in the WDA Asia Pacific Networks
- Discounts to certain member events
- Privileged access to WDA Americas 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.org
www.wda-ap.org

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