

Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





Sonoko Prow (Thailand) in 'Bloom', created in collaboration with Citra Pratiwi (Indonesia) and Fadilla Oziana (Indonesia) for Dancing in Place 2018 at Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia, a partner project with WDAAP. Photo: Nazir Azhari

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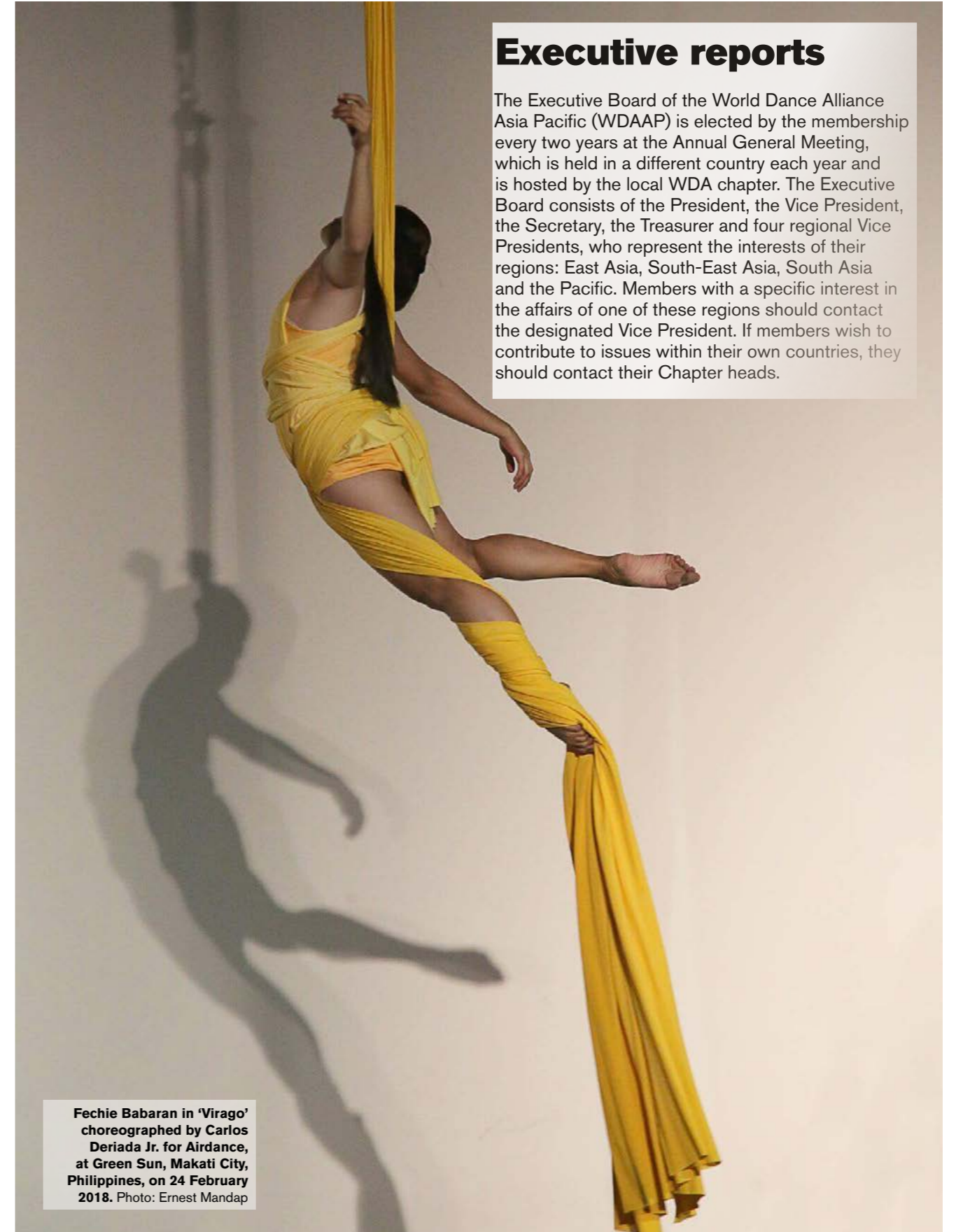


World Dance Alliance
Asia-Pacific

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Cover: Hua Chi-yu in *Lady White of West Lake* by Hong Kong Dance Company, awarded Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer at the 20th Hong Kong Dance Awards, established by Hong Kong Dance Alliance. Photo: S2 Production



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.

Fechie Babaran in 'Virago' choreographed by Carlos Deriada Jr. for Airdance, at Green Sun, Makati City, Philippines, on 24 February 2018. Photo: Ernest Mandap



President's report

by Urmimala Sarkar

As we come nearer to the end of the second decade of the twenty-first century, many things change in our lives. Our changing lives in a time of total dependence on the Internet, the increasing speed of communication, the adjustments to a globalized world, and the reducing funds and traditional patronage for the arts in general, and dance in particular, makes us realize how visionary the legendary dancer Pina Bausch was, when she said, "Dance, dance, otherwise we are lost."

29th April is designated as International Dance Day. This day was especially signified as a day to celebrate the power of dance: a reminder to all dancers as well as to governments, politicians, institutions and funding bodies of the value of dance as an intrinsic part of the society. Many of us lament that the potential of dance to be a cathartic, communicative, political and social tool has not yet been realised and recognised. Its potential for contributing to economic growth remains largely untapped.

To celebrate the significance of dance as a common tool for communication all over the world, and also to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) this year, the Executive Council and the ITI International Dance Committee selected five message authors to write a message, one from each of the five UNESCO Regions: Africa, the Americas, Arab Countries, Asia Pacific, and Europe. They are Salia Sanou, from Burkina Faso; Marianela Boan, from Cuba; Georgette Gebara, from Lebanon; Willy Tsao, from Hong Kong; and Ohad Naharin, originally from Israel, representing Europe.

WDA executives from all over Asia Pacific have written in to describe the range of celebrations that have taken place in their countries. It is energising to know that all over the Asia Pacific region, members of WDAAP celebrate the day with vigour and love for dance, as the dance communities in all countries celebrate the power of dance by dancing, sharing dance and thoughts around it with the community, by holding workshops, performances, and lecture demonstrations, in official and public spaces.

Sal Murgianto, one of our senior members, writes from Indonesia:

In Indonesia, as before, this year IDD was celebrated at Indonesia Institute of the Arts,

Surakarta/Solo, with a 24-hour dancing performance. 185 dance groups from different parts of Indonesia and abroad took part. In the early morning of April 29th, 5035 girls and women danced the *gambiyong* at Slamet Riyadi Street, the 'Broadway' of the city of Solo. I launched my newest book *Membaca Jawa ('Reading Java')* at 13:00.

Different dance pieces – traditional, folk, classical, popular, and contemporary – were performed inside three theatre buildings as well as outdoors. I saw some of the outdoor performances and the dances of the three Javanese courts – Kasultanan (Yogya), Paku Alam (Yogya) and Mangku Nagaran (Solo) – and sent my students to observe the great event and write a report.

The celebration concluded in the early morning of the following day with a speech by Garin Nugraha, the Indonesian experimental film-maker. Meanwhile, choreographer Eko Supriyanto celebrated IDD 2018 in the North Moluccas (Eastern Indonesia) in the regency of Jailolo by putting together *Bala-Bala*, performed by different generations of dancers, and by restaging his earlier work *Sasadu on the Sea* with the open ocean in Jailolo as the background.

Came home very tired; slept almost all day.

One of our young and extremely active members, Bilqis Hijjas, writes from Malaysia:

MyDance held a Dancebox event on 1 May with 7 new works, mostly by young Malaysian choreographers. Penang Arts Link (who are also MyDance partners) in George Town, Penang, had their own Dance Day event, with workshops and a performance bringing many members of their local dance community together.

I myself had a gorgeous day filled with dance. In Bangladesh, on invitation from Lubna Marium, the Vice President of the South Asian region in WDAAP, we also conducted an early morning program on Bangladesh television channel Jamuna, on dance, dance education and dance research. We had a long and detailed meeting with the authors of the forthcoming Routledge publication *Multiple Rhythms: Dance in Bangladesh*, planned to be one of the first academic books in English from Bangladesh.

The most beautiful part of the day was the time I spent with young dancers from urban and rural areas, enthusiastically spending their day in and with dance. I have not stopped smiling since.



'Unmixed' choreographed by KT Yau (Hong Kong), featured in Hong Kong Dance Exchange 2017. Photo: Cheung Chi-wai



Vice President's report

by Stella Lau

It is my pleasure and privilege to be the newly elected Vice President of World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific.

The dance development in the Asia-Pacific region has attracted much attention in recent years. As the primary voice and support for the dance community, the WDA now needs to play its role even more proactively than before. It is key to keep abreast of the times and respond to challenges by offering choreographers and dancers excellent opportunities to present their works and collaborate with other talents.

This year, Hong Kong has encountered two professional dance festivals dedicated to contemporary dance: Hong Kong Dance Exchange (HDX) and City Contemporary Dance Festival (CCDF). HDX has empowered emerging talents from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan and South Korea by staging their extraordinary dance productions. CCDF, on the other hand, has presented a lineup of world-class dance troupes from Hong Kong and many other contributing Asian cities.

These international contacts explore multifaceted views for audience, facilitate networking among dance practitioners, and, most importantly, bring out the high quality of contemporary dance within the Asia-Pacific.

One highlight of the array of good news this year is no doubt the establishment of the Asia Network for Dance (AND+), initiated by the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority in Hong Kong. The Network gathers representatives from overseas counterparts, empowers contemporary practice in dance, and provides a comprehensive platform for knowledge exchange.

And to celebrate the 70th Anniversary of the International Theatre Institute, Dr. Willy Tsao, an influential figure in China's modern dance development, has been invited to be the International Dance Day Message Author representing Asia Pacific at the formal celebration of IDD 2018 in Havana, Cuba.

I look forward to supporting more upcoming events and projects to promote dance worldwide. Let us share our visions and contribute to the development of artistic works and the growth of the next generation of artists and cultural workers.

Dancers in front of the Adelaide Convention Centre, one of several venues in Adelaide hosting events of the Joint Dance Congress Panpapanalya 2018.

Photo courtesy of Panpapanalya.



Secretary's report

by Julie Dyson

Notice of Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The Annual General Meeting of the World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific will be held in Adelaide at the University of South Australia on Wednesday 11 July 2018 at 9.45am.

The reports included in this edition of Asia Pacific Channels will be tabled at the meeting, including reports from the Executive Board, the Secretary-General, and each chapter head in our region. There will also be discussion about the structure and future of the four networks: Research & Documentation, Education & Training, Creation & Presentation and Support & Development.

With a proposal from Bangladesh to hold the 2019 AGM in that country, there will be a short presentation for members to hear about the plans, and to endorse the proposal.

Time has then been allocated for each network to have a separate meeting to hear reports of activities and to discuss projects and plans for the future. These meetings will run back-to-back so that everyone can participate, as we recognise many members have overlapping interests.

The Executive Board looks forward to welcoming all members to the AGM, and to hearing about your interests and suggestions for the future.

Venue: Room BH2-16, Barbara Hanrahan Room, City West Campus, University of South Australia, North Terrace, Adelaide.



Pacific

Aotearoa New Zealand

Australia

Papua New Guinea



Pacific report

by Vice President Anton Carter

There are two exciting events coming up involving dance groups from Fiji:

VOU Choreographic Intensive 2-7 July 2018, Fiji

VOU is a Fijian contemporary dance company, who specialise in the exploration of contemporising traditional Fijian knowledge through movement and performance. VOU offers their first dance intensive to the international dance community, bringing together Fiji's most up-and-coming choreographer Navi Fong and the UK's pioneering young choreographer Heather Walrond to lead this 6-day program.

This intensive program will bring dance technique and choreographic practice from both Fijian and British contemporary dance forms, to explore the potential of the human body in and around different spaces in the Fijian environment. It will be an opportunity for dancers from around the world to collaborate with the Fijian dancers of VOU Dance Company.

VOU, a dance company from Fiji hosting a new choreographic intensive.

Photo: Fotofusion

Rako Pasefika 21-23 June 2018, Pacific Dance Festival, Auckland

Being the world's largest 'Polynesian City', Auckland has long led the Global Pacific arts scene. The Pacific Dance Festival provides a platform to express Pacific dance across genre and format.

Marking the first international show to be programmed in the Pacific Dance Festival, Fijian performing arts group Rako Pasefika will be making their debut visit to Aotearoa. Rako Pasefika focuses on creating exceptional dance and music that respects cultural knowledge and renews practice while providing a platform for creativity, innovation and excellence.

Following their appearance at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in April, Rako Pasefika have performed across the globe to critical acclaim and will perform five festival shows from 21-23 June.

"We've travelled almost everywhere else in the world, but never to the capital of the Pacific – Auckland! It's an exciting moment for us to share our story with our Aotearoa family, and hopefully hear some stories ourselves," says Paul Dominiko, director of Rako Pasefika.





South East Asia

Cambodia

Malaysia

Philippines

Indonesia

Singapore

Thailand



South East Asia report

by Vice President Bilqis Hijjas

At this juncture, it seems to me that other people are very interested in dance in Southeast Asia. Why aren't we more interested in ourselves?

Our neighbours in the Asian region have started to look to Southeast Asia as a source of interesting developments in dance. Neighbouring countries with more established arts infrastructure, like South Korea, Australia, and Japan, have become interested in including Southeast Asian dance artists in their regional programming. An early example of this was the ambitiously titled Asia Dance Company initiated by the Asian Cultural Centre in Gwangju, South Korea. In its 2015 season entitled 'Asia Superposition', 8 out of 13 of the dancers selected were from Southeast Asia.

In another recent example, in the the solo

/duet challenge at the New Dance for Asia International Festival in Seoul this August, 5 out of 10 of the finalists were from Southeast Asia (the others were either from Korea or Japan). Elsewhere, SIDance, South Korea's largest and most reputable dance festival, is currently calling for applicants for its Asia-Africa-Latin America Dance Exchange 2018. Nations listed for priority included 6 Southeast Asian countries, out of 13 Asian countries and 24 countries worldwide.

Perhaps neighbouring countries view the Southeast Asian region as lacking in centralised arts leadership: an arts administration vacuum and an opportunity for stronger players to assert soft power through cultural diplomacy. It is in this vein, asserting itself as a cultural hub leading up to the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, that the Japan Foundation made provisions in its expansive Asia Center grants for Southeast Asian practitioners. Their flagship project, Dance Dance Asia: Crossing the Movements, uses street dance to support international collaboration. Of 23 artists involved, 8 were from Japan, and 14 from Southeast Asia.

International arts practitioners are also increasingly seeing Southeast Asian dancers as a market for their dance products. A number of international workshops conducted by outside dance practitioners occur in the region. Many of these, like those in 'exotic' locations like Bali and the beach towns of Thailand, may be designed to seduce foreign or Western practitioners into travelling on a learning holiday (see,



Otniel Tasman (Indonesia) in 'Escape', created in collaboration with Chai Vivan (Malaysia) for Dancing in Place 2018 at Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia, a partner project with WDAAP. Photo: Nazir Azhari



(L-R) Charlene Clyde, Sabrina Sng, Chloe Chotrani, Emmanuelle Martin and Hwa Wei-An during a masterclass by Arco Renz as part of ELEMENTS at Dance Nucleus, Goodman Arts Centre, Singapore, on 10 March 2018. Photo courtesy of Dance Nucleus.

for example, Goran Bogdanovski's Dance Improvisation Teacher Training session in Bali this December). Others – like Vangelis Lekakis' East Point West International Festival of Embodiment in Kuala Lumpur in July, which brings a largely Western faculty to teach disciplines like chi gong, kundalini yoga and cosmic dance, as well as Western styles of contemporary dance – are targeted to Malaysian or Southeast Asian dance practitioners, as an emerging market.

All of this shows an unprecedented interest in Southeast Asian dance, particularly in contemporary practices. You might argue that these are all purely incidental, the result of the Southeast Asian region containing so many countries (so that if you take one dancer from each Asian country, for example, you get a disproportionately high number of Southeast Asians, relative to size of land or population). But when you compare the presence of Southeast Asian participants with the relative dearth of South Asian or Central Asian participants, the trend seems clear.

This leads me to several questions. Why are Southeast Asian practitioners being privileged now, in comparison to South Asia and Central Asia? Because we are cheap, close and well-connected by existing transport links to the developed economies of East Asia? Or because we have more diverse contemporary dance communities, often deeply influenced by the kind of pan-global/Western style of contemporary dance training, more easily adaptable to an East Asian contemporary dance context, unlike South Asian contemporary dancers who are often rooted in their own classical forms?

Or, more insidiously, is it because Southeast Asia is still viewed as the geopolitical field of influence for East Asia and other global powers, far more so than

South Asia or the relatively inaccessible Central Asian countries? Should we be wary of this new-found interest? As the Malay proverb goes, when elephants fight, the mousedeer gets crushed in their midst.

All of this makes it so much more important for Southeast Asians to mobilise *among ourselves*, to create our own regional networks, structures and encounters, which are not brokered by external powers. There is a great lack of such opportunities, and, I believe, a great need for them.

Aside from the projects that we run from WDAAP, like the Southeast Asian Choreolab and its add-on project at Dancing in Place, there are a few promising emerging structures in the region. One is Dance Nucleus, the centre for independent dance practitioners in Singapore. The new management team, headed by dancer-choreographer Daniel Kok, is actively embracing a more regional role, searching out participants and collaborators from neighbouring countries. Its upcoming curated residency and workshop program, called Element, will include Indonesian artist Ayu Permata Sari II and Malaysian artist Fauzi Amirudin, as well as Indonesian dance scholar Helly Minarti as guest mentor, in examining 'Bahasa Koreografi'.

Another promising platform is the Bangkok International Performing Arts Meeting, about to present its second edition in November this year. Its mission is exploring the performing arts scene in Thailand and Southeast Asia. This year, with the theme 'Traditional Performance in Contemporary Context', it has launched an open call for both performances and discussions from Southeast Asian arts practitioners.

In future, I hope to report on more such platforms, encouraged by the interest of others to look more deeply at ourselves.

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.



Judy Yiu (Hong Kong) performing 'Never Stop Blooming', at the World Dance Alliance Global Summit in Newfoundland, Canada, in July 2017. Photo courtesy of Hong Kong Dance Alliance.

Research and Documentation Network report

by Stephanie Burridge, co-chair

There is lots of exciting activity happening in relation to Panpapanpalya in Adelaide in July where new initiatives in scholarship and research will be presented through paper presentations, Pecha Kucha sessions, lectures and workshops. Embodied practice and shared investigations through collaborations across countries in the 'Twinning' programmes, situated practice across generations and more will ensure exciting projects and network connections opening up opportunities for further research.

WDA will once again partner with daCi for a third book in the Routledge UK series *Perspectives on Dance, Young People and Change* edited by Charlotte Svendler Nielsen and Stephanie Burridge. Titled *Dancing Across Borders: Perspectives on Dance, Young People and Change*, it will include formal and informal settings of education where dance takes place in different countries, including cross-cultural projects and examples of projects in which dance is collaborating with other art forms or other subject areas. It will include content that broadens the understanding of the concept of learning in dance incorporating a variety of theoretical approaches with an emphasis on cultural and experiential dimensions. This volume will assert that experiencing something in new ways and with new awareness, (becoming more empathic and open to

diversity) is also learning, and extends beyond the skills and knowledge basis that occurs in a more traditional concept of learning.

How collaborative initiatives across borders of different kinds can foster change in young people's experiences and their understanding of each other and the world will be the focus. The book encompasses a network of interwoven themes revolving around the key concept of 'borders'; for instance, cultural/national borders, subject borders (dance coexisting with other art forms or subject areas), borders of educational sectors (formal/non-formal education), borders of professions (academics, artists, community practitioners), and socio-economic borders.

Key themes suggest how cultural diversity, experiential teaching and learning involving social, cross-cultural and personal dimensions enhance student learning. This conceptually aligns with the current UNESCO protocols that emphasise empathy, creativity, cooperation, and collaboration alongside skills and knowledge-based learning in an endeavour to create civic mindedness and a more harmonious world.

This third book in the series will take the same form as the previous two, with chapters and case narratives from many countries. The rationale of including multiple countries to gain many points of view and perspectives from practitioners in the field is the essence of the series *Perspectives on Dance, Young People and Change*. We are still looking for case narrative examples, particularly from the Asia-Pacific region, that might fit within the aims of this volume.



International Dance Day celebrations of Bangladesh Nrittoshilpi Shongtha, in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Photo courtesy of Lubna Marium

Education & Training Network report

by Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners, co-chairs

Panpapanpalya 2018: 8-13 July, Adelaide Australia

Besides five full days of exciting dance workshops, presentations, performances and gatherings, the organisers of Panpapanpalya 2018 are excited to be sharing news of a number of other opportunities for you to experience dance during your time in Adelaide.

Australian contemporary dance artist Alison Currie along with the Human Arts Movement present *Creatures*, an exploration of human movement and repetition. For Panpapanpalya 2018, *Creatures* will be performed at Samstag Museum of Art in response to the exhibition *A Conversation with Jheronimus* by South Australian-based visual artist Aldo Iacobelli. As the dancers move among Iacobelli's site-specific installation, a cross-disciplinary dialogue emerges about what it means to be human. Entry is free but spaces are limited so check out the website to book a place.

Panpapanpalya is also thrilled to be partnering with the inaugural Adelaide Dance Festival happening at the same time as the congress. The Festival is offering Panpapanpalya delegates discounts



'Rritjarukar - Willy Wagtails' performed at Blak Nite 2013., Photo courtesy of Kurruru Youth Performing Arts. Kurruru is a partner organisation for Panpapanpalya 2018.

on tickets to Australia's leading dance companies including exclusive access to behind-the-scenes events to make dance your focus all day, every day! These include:

The Australian Ballet: *The Sleeping Beauty*
 Australian Dance Theatre: *The Beginning of Nature*
 Limasoni Projekts and AI Seed Productions: *The Spinners*

You are able to book these events directly with special discount codes.

In a collaboration between Australian Dance Theatre and The South Australian Museum, The Cubic Museum is a free performance installation featuring works by Adelaide-based choreographers Erin Fowler, Lewis Major and Jo Stone, performed in a large perspex cube.

We look forward to welcoming you to Adelaide in July!

Networking

We all have networks of colleagues, friends and professional associations. Our networks range from being informal and quite casual to being very formal with articulated goals, agendas, expectations and timelines. The World Dance Alliance depends on a diverse range of networks, but none as important as all the networks we have as dance professionals in our local regions. Our diversity of networks are valuable to us all,

and most valuable when we recognise the resource that they offer and share.

The World Dance Alliance Global Dance Education and Training Network has worked with the Dance and the Child International network to produce the 2018 Global Congress Panpapanpalya, Adelaide, Australia. Within this key partnership of international networks we included other networks, including (but not limited to):

Australian Dance Council (Ausdance)
 National office: <https://ausdance.org.au/>
 South Australian office: <http://www.ausdancesa.org.au/>
 University of South Australia: <https://unisa.edu.au/>
 Kurna Warra Pintyanthi: <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp/index/>
 Kurruru Arts and Culture Hub: <https://www.facebook.com/kurruru/>
 Cirkidz: <http://www.cirkidz.org.au/>
 Carclew: <https://carclew.com.au>
 Adelaide College of the Arts: <https://www.tafesa.edu.au/adelaide-college-of-the-arts>
 Centre for Creative Health: <https://www.creativehealth.org.au/>
 South Australia Tourism: <http://southaustralia.com/contact-us>
 Royal Academy of Dance: <https://www.rad.org.au/>
 South Australian Department of Education: <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/>
 Australian Dance Theatre: <https://www.adt.org.au/>
 and many more.

The WDA is part of diverse and vast networks. One large and important network for us is the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) (<http://waae.edcp.educ.ubc.ca/>) that connects us dance educators to music, drama and visual arts educators around the world. WAAE in turn networks with UNESCO and also the range of UNESCO Unitwin and Observatory Networks.

Most recently I have been working with the UNESCO Unitwin network for Arts



Kimowin and Isabel from Raven Spirit Dancers in Vancouver, Canada, during Stage 1 of the creative development of a twinning project with Wagana Aboriginal Dancers in Australia, part of the program for Panpapanpalya 2018.

Education Research for Cultural Diversity and Sustainable Development (www.unitwin-arts.phil.fau.de). At our recent meeting in Nuremberg, Germany, hosted by Friedrich-Alexander University Erlangen – Nuremberg, we discussed the role of networks and the resource that we have when we simply list and share our networks.

To this end Jeff and I aim to develop a list of relevant regional, local and international dance education networks that link us to the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. We therefore invite you to send to Jeff (jeff.meiners@unisa.sa.au) or Ralph (r.buck@auckland.ac.nz) a list of network addresses that we may then publish in Channels and on the WDA Website.

SO, please provide the following:

Network Name Website Key contact and email

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
- And so on.

This list is a great resource BUT it relies on ALL OF US contributing and sharing our networks.

Please add some key networks to this list before 1 September 2018.



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.

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.



OrphEus - a dance opera, by New Zealand choreographer Michael Parmenter and The New Zealand Dance Company. Photo: John McDermott

New Zealand Dance Week 2018 (21 – 29 April) is an annual platform to celebrate, elevate and participate in all forms of dance. Some of the events this year included; workshops, performances, exhibitions, film screenings, street activations, library talks, dance in libraries and various community dance showcases around the country.

One of the highlights of NZDW2018 was a showcase event in Wellington featuring JDK (Just Dance Crazy) Crew, a group of young people with disabilities who love to dance and have formed their own hip hop dance group. The showcase event featured JDK Crew alongside invited guests from the New Zealand School of Dance, Touch Compass Dance Company and PUMP Dance Studios. This was the first time for JDK Crew to host their own show in a public forum. The show was an excellent opportunity to showcase what they have been learning but also interact with other dances groups and inspire audiences with their personal stories and infectious enthusiasm.

Another exciting work being remounted and toured is *Meremere* by Rodney Bell. *Meremere* brings to you the incredible journey and story of Rodney Bell (Ngati Maniapoto) from an international career in integrated dance, through years of homelessness in America, to returning home to Te Kuiti, Aotearoa. The work powerfully layers movement, projected imagery and documentary footage to bring his stories to life in an hour-long work. The work is a beautiful and intimate experience that invites the audience inside this unique and inspirational memoir. Rodney is a founding member of Touch Compass Dance Company and recently performed at the True Colours Festival in Singapore and at the 2018 Commonwealth Games in Brisbane, Australia.

The premiere of a new dance work by New Zealand choreographer Michael Parmenter and The New Zealand Dance Company, *OrphEus - a dance opera*, at the Auckland Arts Festival and New Zealand Festival this year was significant for its size and scale. The following excerpt is from a review of the work:

'Michael Parmenter's *OrphEus - a dance opera* was a masterpiece. The multi-layered dance, music and dramatic epic merged classical and contemporary worlds in a challenging and inspiring journey of courage, temptation, forgetfulness - and eventually - harmony.'

'Four large rectangular shapes were suspended above the stage and once lowered were dextrously used as beds, boats, rafts, and walls. A trickle of performers crossed the stage in dark full-length garments building to a 24 strong movement chorus of diverse extras. This group played a pivotal role throughout the work, at times performing simple movements to heighten the action or creating the wash of humanity that witnessed and responded to the events.'

'The nine New Zealand Dance Company dancers animated what was mostly a dark world with extraordinary skill and passion. Parmenter's own movement methodology produced a unique weightless, outward reaching vocabulary. This extended from dancers' bodies into the space with arcs, legs and arms reaching upward. The partnered sequences created spiralling pathways which either energised or disrupted. In tender moments, conversely, muscles appeared to dissolve as bodies folded softly into one another.'

'It was an outstanding production with every element supporting and adding to Orpheus's journey, old and new. This tour de force deserves a national and international audience,' writes Francesca Horsley in *DANZ Magazine* Issue 51.

Aotearoa New Zealand report

by Anton Carter

1. *Meremere* by Rodney Bell.
2. JDK Crew, one of the highlights at New Zealand Dance Week 2018. Photo: Sean Aickin



Australia report

by Julie Dyson

The first half of this year has seen final preparations made for the Joint Dance Congress 2018, to be held in partnership between dance and the Child international (daCi) and the WDA Education and Training network. Panpapanpalya will be presented in Adelaide from July 8–13, and is being planned with the assistance of several Adelaide sub-committees led by WDA Education & Training network co-chairs Dr Jeff Meiners in Adelaide, and Assoc. Professor Ralph Buck in Auckland.

Their teams include artists, teachers, youth and community dance practitioners, medical professionals and a range of institutions led by the University of South Australia as the presenting organisation. Panpapanpalya has been more than two years in the making, and the organisers have been successful in obtaining welcome funding and in-kind support from many organisations, including UniSA, Arts SA, the City of Adelaide, the Adelaide College of the Arts, the South Australian Premier's Department and the Centre for Creative Health based at the new Royal Adelaide Hospital – an amazing achievement!

In a multi-layered program, Australian dance at its best will be presented by a range of companies, independent artists, community groups and youth dance companies, complemented by a range of artists from the Asia-Pacific region. Check the full program on the Panpapanpalya website. The Dance Congress will coincide with the Adelaide Dance Festival presented by Australian Dance Theatre, and Panpapanpalya attendees are being offered discounted tickets to all performances.

Ausdance National has received project funding from the Australia Council, and has appointed a new Executive Director, Kerry Comerford, to lead the organisation through its new priorities. "Kerry is an exceptionally experienced senior executive and CEO who has worked for more than 30 years across the global arts and entertainment industries. She brings a broad range of experiences to the role, having worked extensively with small-to-medium arts organisations in Australia through to Andrew Lloyd Webber's The Really Useful Group Asia

Pacific." Kerry has now started work with the Ausdance National board and long-time communications manager Rachael Jennings to begin her new leadership role with the organisation.

Current priorities for Ausdance National include contributing knowledge to three issues that impact healthy growth in Australia's creative economy:

1. Access to professional mental health support for those who work in the entertainment industry.
2. Access to education and training resources to prevent discrimination, sexual harassment and bullying.
3. Sustainable access to international expertise that transfers skills to Australian organisations and creatives.

The Australian Dance Awards will be held on 8 September at the Brisbane Powerhouse this year. In a first for the ADAs, it will be an afternoon presentation to enable audiences to attend both the presentation of the Awards and the launch of the Brisbane Festival, an exciting time for Queensland. Sandi Woo had been employed as producer, and she will work with local and interstate companies, independent dance artists and Ausdance Queensland to create a diverse program for the event. The ADAs selection panel has also started work on the shortlisting process, to be announced at the end of July.

Finally, Australian Dance Week was one of the biggest ever, with the launch on 29 April – International Dance Day – across the country. Ausdance Victoria introduced the concept of Big Dance into Australia (originally a UK initiative), and commissioned two high-profile choreographers, Frances Rings and Craig Bary, to create a short dance learned by Australian communities and performed en masse at 2pm (Eastern Standard Time) on IDD. It was a huge success and it will be repeated at Panpapanpalya at the closing ceremony on 13 July. Celebrations that week included performances, forums and classes, a truly diverse representation of dance in Australian Dance Week.



Ausdance ACT's Big Dance, choreographed by Frances Rings and Craig Bary, being performed in Canberra at the National Portrait Gallery on International Dance Day 2018. Photos: Lorna Sim



Bangladesh report

by Lubna Marium

International Dance Day, April 29, has been celebrated by the entire dance community of Bangladesh for quite a few years. This year too was no exception. The largest community of Bangladeshi dancers is the Bangladesh Nritya Shilpi Shangstha (BNSS). BNSS, in association with Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy (BSA), organized a week-long programme to mark this year's International Dance Day, at the premises of BSA in the capital, Dhaka. As a part of the celebration of International Dance Day, a daylong program was chalked out featuring a seminar, a rally, discussions, dance shows and the honoring of veteran dance artists. The organizers brought out a colorful early-morning rally from the BSA premises. In the evening, veteran journalists and cultural personalities attended the Dance Day festivities.

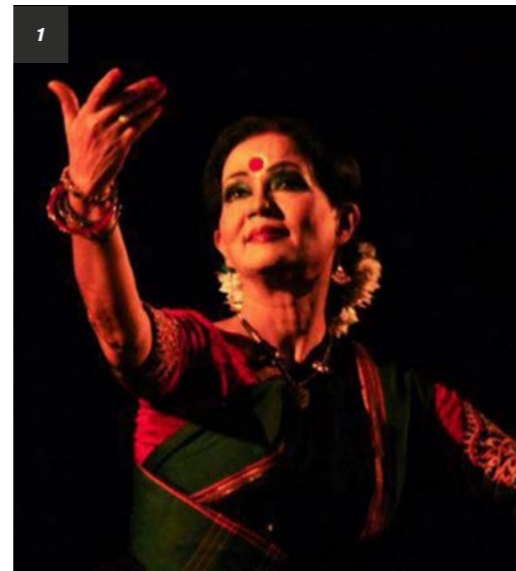
Newly-elected WDAAP President Dr. Urmimala Sarkar, too, was in Dhaka to conduct 'Writing Dance' workshop for dancers and theatre activists recently contracted by Routledge India to publish a book on dance in Bangladesh. Later Urmimala attended a performance by dance students of Dhaka to celebrate International Dance Day.

Amongst seven personalities from different arenas who have recently been awarded the Shilpakala Padak 2017 by BSA, the apex body for cultural policy making in Bangladesh, is Sharmila Bandopadhyay who has been long associated with the Bangladesh chapter of WDAAP and who has attended WDA events in Delhi and Kathmandu.

Sharmila is a renowned classical, folk and creative dancer and choreographer in Bangladesh. A graduate from the Visva-Bharati University at Shantiniketan with a Bachelor of Music degree in Dance,

she completed a postgraduate course in Manipuri dance from Manipuri Nartanalaya, Kolkata, under the renowned Manipuri teacher Guru Bipin Singhand Srimati Kalavati Devi. She is also trained in creative dancing at the Uday Shankar India Culture Centre in Kolkata under the renowned composer Amala Shankar. Sharmila is currently teaching as the head of the dance department at Chhayanaut, a reputed school of music and dance in Bangladesh and runs her own institution of dance, Nritya Nandan. Over the years, Sharmila has been highly appreciated both at home and abroad for her performances. Sharmila has been much accoladed and praised with many prestigious recognitions and awards both within and outside the country.

Dance, therefore, thrives in Bangladesh and Bangladeshi dancers are looking forward to hosting the next WDAAP annual event in Bangladesh's prime beach and tourism city of Cox's Bazaar.



1. Dance practitioner Sharmila Bandopadhyay who was honored at this year's International Dance Day event in Bangladesh.
2. Participants in this year's International Dance Day event, with WDAAP President Urmimala Sarkar and Bangladesh chapter president Lubna Marium.

20th Hong Kong Dance Awards

Established by Hong Kong Dance Alliance, the Hong Kong Dance Awards recognizes outstanding achievements by Hong Kong artists and organizations, raising public awareness of local dance scene excellence. The Awards celebrated its 20th anniversary on 20 April 2018 at Kwai Tsing Theatre.

With the theme 'dance, dance, dance', Artistic Director David Liu's vibrant show showcased a scintillating mix of dance performance, from ballet, Chinese dance, to contemporary, tap and ballroom dance, displaying the diversity and dynamism of the Hong Kong dance scene.

The Distinguished Achievement Award was presented to Anna CY Chan for her indefatigable work in dance education, promotion of local dance and innovation in ways to create, present and sustain dance in Hong Kong. In addition, the newly-created Emerging Choreographer Award was presented to KT Yau Ka-hei to recognize up-and-coming choreographic talent.

Full list of awardees:

- Emerging Choreographer: KT Yau Ka-hei
- Outstanding Choreography: Lai Tak-wai for *So Low*
- Outstanding Large Venue Production: Hong Kong Ballet for *Le Corsaire*
- Outstanding Medium Venue Production: City Contemporary Dance Company for *Why Not Kill Us All...*
- Outstanding Small Venue Production: Leisure and Cultural Services Department, Rex Cheng and KT Yau Ka-hei for *Solitary and Unmixed*
- Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer: Xia Jun in *Le Corsaire*
- Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer: Hua Chi-yu in *Lady White of West Lake*
- Outstanding Ensemble Performance: Hong Kong Ballet for *Le Corsaire*
- Outstanding Visual Design: Sue Healey and Maurice Lai for *ON VIEW: HONG KONG*
- Outstanding Set and Costume Design: Hugo Millán for *Le Corsaire*
- Outstanding Sound Design: Leung Po-wing for *Why Not Kill Us All...*
- Outstanding Dance Education: Leisure and Cultural Services Department (General Education in Arts Programme for Tertiary Students) and Passoverdance for *Grey Area*
- Outstanding Services to Dance: City Contemporary Dance Company for City Contemporary Dance Festival
- Distinguished Achievement Award: Anna CY Chan



World Dance Alliance Global Summit – Hong Kong Delegation

Hong Kong Dance Alliance led a delegation to the World Dance Alliance Global Summit in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada from 23 to 28 July 2017. The Hong Kong delegates presented two dance productions: 'Babel 3.5' choreographed by Iris Lau and 'Never Stop Blooming' by Judy Yiu. Hong Kong delegates Rex Cheng and Judy Yiu also conducted workshops in Tai Chi Movement and Contemporary Dance with Gymnastics. The Summit provided a wide-range of networking opportunities for delegates to explore opportunities for collaborations and to promote dance in Hong Kong to international participants.

2nd Collaborative Creative Lab

From 4 to 22 December 2017, the 2nd Collaborative Creative Lab was conducted. Co-curated and facilitated by veteran artist Dick Wong and arts critic Joanna Lee, the Lab fostered research and development capabilities of dance and performing artists through 3 weeks of intensive group research workshops. The participants showcased their experimental work-in-progress and shared collaborative experiences and inspirations gained in a sharing session on 21 December 2017.

'New Force in Motion' Series

To offer a professional platform for young choreographers to showcase their new works, the Alliance presented the New Force in Motion Series for the first time. The double-bill featured premiere of 'Solitary' by Rex Cheng and 'Unmixed' by KT Yau. The Series encourages research and development, as well as enhancing artistic levels through mentoring and collaborative research.



Hong Kong report

by Stella Lau

1. The Distinguished Achievement Award at the 20th Hong Kong Dance Awards was presented to Anna CY Chan. Photo courtesy West Kowloon Cultural District Authority
2. *Le Corsaire* by Hong Kong Ballet, winner of Outstanding Large Venue Production at the 20th Hong Kong Dance Awards. Photo: Conrad Dy-Liacco.

India report

by Meghna
Bhardwaj



Beast Mode Crew.

With the usual focus on classical and folk dances in India, there is very little written or known about subversive forms of dance that exist in the margins within the country. Through this write up, I am motivated to focus upon the Mumbai-based street dance community, mainly two hip-hop dance groups known under the names Slum Gods and Beast Mode Crew.

Slum Gods, founded in the year 2009 by Akash Dhangar, has already caught considerable attention from international media like CNN and The Guardian. The group originates in Asia's second largest slum, Dharavi, and comprises rag-pickers, electricians, and tailors who happen to be fantastically trained hip-hop dancers! Dhangar, 26, is also one of the residents of Dharavi, and comes from a settlement of a once-nomadic community, the Kunchikurve. In the year 2012, Delhi-based Khoj Artists Foundation invited members from this crew to train dancers from the slums in Delhi, and set up a similar community.

Unlike Slum Gods, Beast Mode Crew is not yet a tourist attraction and does not have impressive press coverage to its credit. A group of 12 founded six years ago in 2012 by b-boys Arif, Sumeet and Shailesh, Beast Mode Crew comprises young boys both from difficult and not-so difficult social backgrounds. However, just like Slum Gods, the crew is made of notable individual stories and the dancers' approaches hold some serious reflections for dance and youth in 21st century India. For instance, as 27-year old Shailesh shared with me, the initial thought to create Beast Mode Crew was

not only to bring together a group of hip-hoppers, but a realisation that "together they could survive anything". That realisation had been the result of a robbery that Shailesh, Arif, and Sumeet suffered while they were returning on a flight from a hip-hop battle in another city.

When I ask Shailesh why he started dancing hip-hop which is a 'foreign' dance form, he responds: "The culture in which hip-hop emerged in the US – the culture of the Blacks who have been suffering atrocities for so many ages – is motivation enough for all of us to know this form of dance, to learn it, and to commit to it. A lot of hip-hop movements actually emerged as a result of an accident! We keep working on those movements to make them our own. We keep looking for our identity in them, that is, those accidents that begin in our bodies."

Rajan Rathore, 34, another member from the crew, expressed that it is the 'energy' of hip-hop that he thinks really matches with his own energy as a dancer. Having trained himself via YouTube videos, Rajan says that he could never find the sense of 'freedom' in a more formal dance-training setting as he could while dancing hip-hop with this crew. "You are allowed to dance it in your own individual style. There is no right or wrong rhythm as long as you can exhibit the required amount of control and pull off what you are trying to do. When you dance hip-hop, your body is always at risk and you are always on your own, dependent on no technique but entirely on yourself," Rajan shared with me.

Both Rajan and Shailesh, like most other

dancers in the crew, face similar challenges in their daily lives: a lack of financial stability and parental support. I have known Rajan personally, and he comes from an extremely modest family background. He has barely finished his schooling and began to work at age 16 to support his family. Yet despite these challenges, these boys refuse to give up and continue to dance hip-hop simply for the love of it. An absence of proper funding and studio space leaves them with no other option but to rehearse in open public spaces such as parks and beaches.

Given this reality, it is worthwhile to acknowledge that the term BEAST in the name of the crew happens to be an abbreviation that stands for 'Born Ethical Abilities of the Street', that Shailesh told me about while sharing how 'being-on-the-streets' has contributed to these dancers' sense of connection with each other as well as with an audience they never really have to 'invite'. "When on the streets, we are all equal," argues Shailesh. And, at this moment when the notion of 'equality' is being related with this crew's dance practice, the crew is soon to organise a fundraiser for their only female team-mate, and first-ever Indian b-girl, Deepa Singh, who has been invited to Germany for a hip-hop battle but is not in a position to financially support her tour.

Susan Leigh Foster, in her essay 'Choreographies of Gender' (University of Chicago Press: 1998) has provided an incredible analysis of the *subversive* potential embedded in a break-dance body in reference to the Black urban US street-as-stage of the late 1970's. And with reference to Foster in whose writing I see the drive for me to write this report at all, I add that both Slum Gods and Beast Mode Crew are aware of the distance they need to maintain from the mainstream as they constantly maintain that they participate in 'underground' battles never advertised on Facebook.

But the question that inevitably arises given the specificity of hip-hop-in-the-Indian-context: are we talking of an 'aping' of a form

of dance? I want to counter-question that and ask: doesn't 'aping', and in extension to it, the notions of 'East' and 'West', 'foreign' and 'indigenous' and all the other associative binaries, need a new and more useful definition in the world that now runs a parallel virtual existence on Facebook and YouTube?

When Rajan said that for him it is hip-hop that can 'match' his energy, I was left wondering that if hip-hop as a form is perhaps somewhat internally equipped to host bodies of the contemporary Indian youth as they go through their very specific 21st century socio-cultural circumstances of dejection at various levels. For those who see it as yet another populist aping of the West, my thought is, it is a very particular type of aping and is being executed in a particular way. As to why it is happening is something that the society at large has to think about. It definitely also holds a huge scope for introspection for the critical dance discourse and its performers and participants in the Indian context, regarding why a section of the Indian youth feels more driven to 'aping' (even though I absolutely intend to denounce this term in this context!) when it comes to dance, and why spaces devoted to creating so-called radical movement research seem less motivating, less attractive, less accessible to these performers who otherwise live their lives as extremely dedicated and driven dancers leading their dance practice with an 'energy' that comprises a lot of potential to truly and constructively challenge the larger socio-cultural system at several levels.



Shiva, aka B-boy Prokid.

Indonesia report

by Michael Raditya

The launch of *Reading Java* by Sal Murgiyanto on 29 April 2018 at Teater Besar ISI Surakarta, as part of celebrations of International Dance Day.



Book Launch: Sal Murgiyanto: *Reading Java* (Indonesian Version)

This year, one of World Dance Alliance-Indonesia Chapter's programs is the launch of a book produced by ISI Press (ISI Surakarta) in collaboration with the Senrepita art community. The launch was organized by the Department of Dance, ISI Surakarta, as part of the World Dance Day 2018 celebration held in Teater Besar ISI Surakarta, on 29 April 2018. People from various scopes attended the launch presenting three academicians as reviewers. They are Dr. G.R. Lono Lastoro Simatupang, M.A., Prof. Dr. Soetarno, DEA, and Prof. Dr. Sri Rochana Widyastutiningrum, M.Hum. who read the book from different perspectives.

Written by Dr. Sal Murgiyanto – better known as Pak Sal to younger Indonesian artists and dance scholars – this book contains 366 pages of discussion and actualization of Javanese values in today's life. In the West, Pak Sal is often identified as Javanese, but in Java, traditional Javanese often look at him as 'deviant,' especially by those who have fossilized Javanese tradition. This is not to say that Pak Sal has abandoned Javanese values, but he constantly questions the traditions that he inherits in order to understand their essence. Pak Sal reads critically the meaning of tradition, in the context of contemporary life.

Pak Sal appreciates Javanese tradition not by storing it neatly in the closet, but by developing and reinterpreting it. In this case,

Pak Sal is the embodiment of a Javanese who is able to create and make choices. Pak Sal continues to practice Javanese life and values in accordance with the present. In articulating the idea, Pak Sal uses his understanding of Javanese values through performing arts and dance. Occasionally, Pak Sal also uses his findings and understanding of these values in his writing on film and literature. Other contributors in this book also write the embodied Javanese: Javanese values as put into practice by Pak Sal from different perspectives, i.e., his life, his writings, and the collaborative dance-ritual *Wiwoho Girisapto* he initiated for the funeral-ritual of his beloved wife, Endang Nrangwesti, in 2004.

Other contributors to this book include R. Anderson Sutton, Sri Rochana Widyastutiningrum, Frans Sartono, Ika Krismantari, Soemardjo Hardjoprasonto, I Nyoman Wenten, Djoko Walujo, Siti Sutiyah or K.R.T. Dwija Sasminta Murti, Sunardi, Veronica Retnaningsih, Angela Retno Nooryastut, Tutik Winarti, Heni Winahyuningsih, Bambang Kusumo, Sekar Sari, and Landung Simatupang.

Prof. Dr. Soetarno, DEA, discusses the book from a personal perspective by reflecting on his aesthetic experiences as a gamelan player performing with the author in the past. Soetarno critically discusses how Pak Sal reads and re-reads to give new meaning to the two Indian-derived Javanese literatures: the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*.

Prof. Sri Rochana Widyastutiningrum, M.

Hum, discusses the book with her personal experience of studying and working with Pak Sal. Sri Rochana, too, uses her personal approach to analyze Pak Sal's understanding of Javanese values. She talks about two things: (1) Pak Sal and his independence and Javanese life, and (2) values from Pak Sal's personal perspective.

Dr. G.R. Lono Lastoro Simatupang provides a more tactical reading strategy. He articulates the book in two ways: first, *Reading Java*, and second, *Reading Java* from Pak Sal's perspective. In this case, Lono argues that the book does not present a single meaning of reading Java, but

multiple perspectives.

Questions and answers followed the book discussion, then a comment from the author. In conclusion, the book was then launched by the Rector [President] of ISI Surakarta and the author. With this program, the World Dance Day 2018 celebration in Solo, Indonesia, was complete: presenting not only dance performances, but also an academic book launch event.

Reading Java (Indonesian Version)

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Editor: Anastasia Melati and Michael HB Raditya



New Structure of WDA-Indonesia

Chairman: Sal Murgiyanto

Vice Chairman: Sri Rochana

Widyastutiningrum and Bambang

Pudjasworo

Secretary: Michael HB Raditya and Galih

Prakasiwi

Treasurer: Ni Nyoman Sudewi

Documentation and Research: I Wayan

Dibia

Creation and Choreography: Eko

Supriyanto

Education and training: Melina Surya Dewi

and Soemaryatmi

Support and Development: Fawarti

Gendra Nata Utami and Multi Alfian

Performances and events during the celebrations of International Dance Day by World Dance Alliance Indonesia, at Indonesia Institute of the Arts Surakarta, on 29 April 2018. Photos: Maharani

Kaeksi

Malaysia report

by Bilqis Hijjas

'Langgar', choreographed by Sharm Noh, and performed by Adhli Fadhullah Bin Sa'adilah, Mohd Zhafir Muzani bin Mohamad (Zhafheybat), Ayie Elham, Peot & Akid Jabran, at Dancebox on 1 May 2018 at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre. Photo: Eddie Tan



People are calling it Malaysia Baharu – the New Malaysia: the rejuvenated sense of faith and energy we have been feeling in the country since our national election on 9 May. An estimated 85% of the eligible population voted for our first Opposition-led federal government in the 61 years of Malaysia's history. This move has been widely interpreted as a reaction to rampant governmental corruption and abuse of power.

MyDance Alliance had our own general meeting and committee elections on 6 May, and we hope the new members in our committee will also usher in a period of optimism and energy (otherwise I hope the similarities to our national election end there). Committee members remaining include myself as President, Wong Jyh Shyong (JS) rising to Vice President, Tan Bee Hung as Secretary, and Rithaudin Abdul Kadir and Leng Poh Gee as ordinary committee members. We welcome new committee members Joyce Chan (Treasurer), Dalila binti Samad (Media & Communications), Lau Beh Chin, Mohd. Nur Faillul bin Adam, and Chai Vivan.

Many thanks to our outgoing committee members, who have worked hard and contributed selflessly to MyDance activities since 2014. And special thanks to Prof Anis for his contributions to the MyDance Research & Documentation Network, which he has spearheaded dynamically since the organization was founded in 2001. His many conferences, proceedings and publications have made MyDance Alliance a powerhouse in dance scholarship in the region. His

shoes are too big to fill; for the moment, the position remains empty. We wish him the best of luck with future endeavours through Nusantara Performing Arts Research Centre (NusPARC).

One of Prof's projects for this year is the Second International Conference on Dance Education, which will be held from 2-4 August 2018 in Kuala Lumpur, with the theme "The Spirit of Creativity in Dance Education." The conference will present keynotes, papers and a roundtable discussion, organized by NusPARC, and supported by Sultan Idris Education University and the MyDance Education & Training Network. Registration is now open to attend the conference: <https://nusparc.wixsite.com/iconde>

The MyDance E&T team, headed by PhD candidate Nurulakmal Abdul Wahid, has also begun to organize events to reach out to the diversity of dance educators in our area. In December last year, the network supported a small student-organized seminar titled 'Unity in Motion', at Sultan Idris Education University, discussing the development of dance education in Malaysia.

While we look forward to many more projects initiated by our committee members, we also wrapped up a number of events in the first half of the year. In January, we organized the first Dancing in Place site-specific performance weekend featuring alumni from previous Southeast Asian Choreolabs, who collaborated to create and perform new works. We were happy to welcome international choreographers Citra Pratiwi (Indonesia), Otniel Tasman

(Indonesia), Al Bernard Garcia (Philippines), Siko Setyanto (Indonesia), Nitipat Ong Pholchai (Thailand), Colleen Coy (USA/ East Timor), Eng Kai Er (Singapore), Sonoko Prow (Thailand), Fadilla Oziana (Indonesia), and Sarah Maria Samaniego (Philippines) back to Rimbun Dahan to work with local choreographers Lee Ren Xin, Chai Vivan and Fauzi Amirudin. Other Malaysian choreographers also created new works for the event.

MyDance presented two Dancebox programs, in February (programmed by JS Wong) and in May (which I programmed), featuring short works by local and international choreographers. Both played to big crowds, and generated good feedback. We are happy to continue partnering with The Actors Studio at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre in this series which provides dancers with the opportunity to present their work in a relaxed, responsive atmosphere, on a professional stage.

As usual, ASWARA, the National Academy for Arts and Heritage, celebrated International Dance Day in Kuala Lumpur with a weekend of free workshops and student performances. Another Dance Day celebration in George Town, Penang, was helmed by Aida Redza of Penang Arts Link (PEARL) and hosted at Penang Performing Arts Centre. MyDance supported three

Kuala Lumpur-based artists to travel to Penang to share their work in the show: Rathimalar Govindarajoo presenting a new contemporary duet in Indian classical vocabulary with emerging dancer Arunagiri Lam, and Yeow Lai Chee with a butoh solo. As Malaysian arts are greatly segregated by geography, I welcome this attempt to build more bridges between arts communities in Kuala Lumpur and Penang.

On a national scale, it remains to be seen how the new government will influence the Malaysian arts scene. Great emphasis has been placed on reestablishing institutional checks and balances, curbing corruption and tackling our national debt. A number of prominent arts practitioners have met with the recently-appointed Council of Eminent Persons, and discussed the potential for a national arts council. Some local practitioners have also launched a petition calling for a Ministry of the Arts, to mainstream arts and culture in our national discussions. In the end, the greatest impact of the new federal government on the arts is likely to be a relaxation of the censorship laws, and greater freedom of speech and media. This alone, I believe, will provide us with a much-needed boost to carry on when the sparkle of Malaysia Baharu finally begins to fade.



Short works from Dancebox at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre on 1 May 2018, produced by MyDance Alliance in partnership with The Actors Studio. All photos: Eddie Tan
 1. 'RIDING HIGH TOGETHER', choreographed and performed by Lee Ren Xin.
 2. 'Curated Ideals/Chaotic Reality', choreographed and performed by Joanna Tan.
 3. 'The Enigma', choreographed and performed by Maria Devonne Escobia.

Philippines report

by Joelle Jacinto



Carlos Deriada Jr. in 'By and Bye,' choreographed by Rhosam Prudenciano Jr. for Airdance, Green Sun, Makati City, 24 February 2018. Photo by Ernest Mandap

With the reinstatement of Shirley Halili-Cruz as head of the Dance division at the National Commission on Culture and Arts (NCCA), so returns the Dance XChange Philippine International Festival, which coincides with International Dance Day and National Dance Week in the Philippines. Held this year in Dumaguete, the festival had nightly performances for four evenings from 26-29 April 2018, featuring 28 local and 15 international dance groups invited from England, Hong Kong, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, China, and Russia, to name a few. To further their goal of having exchange and collaboration between the foreign guests and the local communities, the festival included components such as outreach workshops and a dance forum with keynotes delivered by Malaysia's Prof Mohd Anis Md Nor and former NCCA chairman Felipe Padilla de Leon. According to the official NCCA report, each workshop saw at least 100 participants, and each performance yielded thousands in audience attendance.

In an ideal world, festivals of this magnitude seem to actively cultivate dance as both art form and cultural product, on both national and international levels. It is also a reminder that the Philippines is so large that one organisation cannot do it all for all who wish to participate; despite the scope of the festival and the number of participants from all over the country and

the world, many who are active in Philippine dance were not even aware that this festival existed.

It is an understatement that dancing is important and omnipresent in the Philippines. In Metro Manila alone, there were several performances produced by dance companies and schools, some supported by agencies promoting Philippine Arts Month (February) and the Philippine Heritage Festival, which presented *Journeys on a Galleon* in May, a new contemporary ballet with folk dance effects choreographed by Gener Caringal and dance masters of the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group, performed by ROFG, the Ateneo Chamber Group, the University of the East Silanganan Folkloric Troupe and Philippine Ballet Theatre. The remaining ballet companies presented new choreographies from Martin Lawrance and Augustus Damian III for Ballet Manila in their *Ballet and Ballads*, and a celebrated *Don Quixote* from Ballet Philippines, featuring international ballet star Joseph Michael Gatti partnering our own Candice Adea, both in mid February.

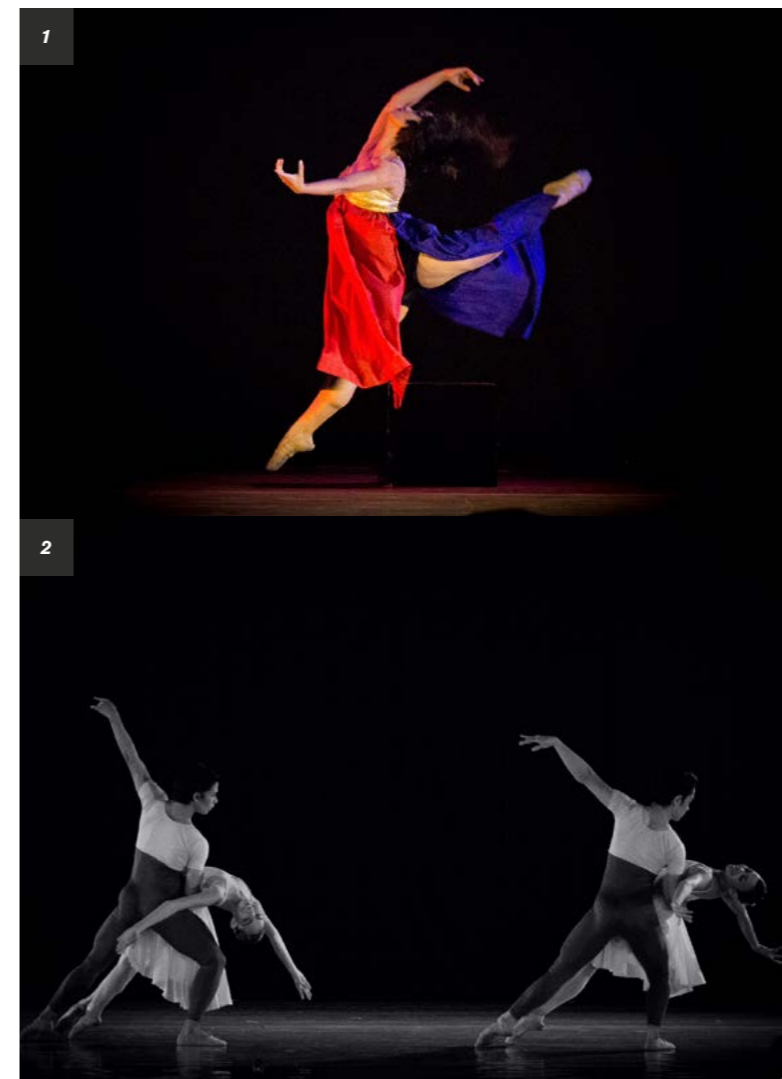
Another international ballet star, Stella Abrera, the first Filipino-American principal dancer at American Ballet Theatre, brought some of her co-dancers to Manila to perform in a fundraiser for Sofia Zobel-Elizalde's Steps Dance Studio, for Centex, an educational program for underprivileged children. Joining her were her husband

Sascha Radetksy, who gave fully-attended master classes, and famous ballerinas Isabella Boylston and Gillian Murphy. Supported by the scholars of Steps Dance Studios, Abrera performed the grand pas de deux from *Don Quixote* with partner Joo Won Ahn. The sold-out shows were indeed the highlight for many balletomanes for 2018.

Contemporary groups were also active in the first half of 2018. Airdance and University of the Philippines Dance Company had shows in February and March, respectively, while Daloy Dance Company is preparing its new season after artistic director Ea Torrado's recent return from an Asian Cultural Council residency. Airdance introduced Green Sun, a new multi-functional performance space in Makati City with a full evening of contemporary aerial work. UPDC premiered a collaborative work between choreographer Sarah Maria

Samaniego and folk music artist Bullet Dumas in a mixed bill show that also saw new works by Herbert Alvarez and Elena Laniog.

The members of these independent groups are also active in Contemporary Dance Network Manila and World Dance Alliance Philippines. Both networks are planning long-range projects which will hopefully intersect at various points in the future. CDNM gathered several groups to participate in a relaxed celebration of International Dance Day in two venues: Fo Guang Shan temple in Pasay City on April 28, and Dance Forum Space in Quezon City on April 29. There were improvisation games to introduce the attendees to each other, some studio performances and screenings of dance films, as well as the announcement of the finalists of the Wifi Body New Choreographers Competition, which will be held in August 2018.



1. Sarah Maria Samaniego in Liza Fernandez's 'Femina,' Abelardo Hall Auditorium, University of the Philippines, 23 March 2018. Photo: Erica Jacinto.
2. 'Etudes,' choreographed by Herbert Alvarez, Robles, Jam Chavez, Marveen Ely Lozano and Alexa Torte, Abelardo

Hall Auditorium, University of the Philippines, 23 March 2018. Photo: Erica Jacinto
3. Over a thousand dancers after learning Shirley Halili-Cruz's 'Unity Dance,' which was performed as the finale at the IDD celebration performance at Dance Xchange 2018, Dumaguete City, 29 April 2018.

Singapore report

by Peter Gn

Singaporean dancers in their 50s to 70s in Dance Dynamics at the Wonju Dynamic Dance Carnival, South Korea, in September 2017.



Led by founder and artistic director Yu Shu Huai and President Ang Sioe Hwa, Dance Dynamics participated in the Wonju Dynamic Dance Carnival held in South Korea from 19-21 Sep 2017. 16 dancers in their 50s-70s performed two ballet pieces, *Crimson Sunset* and *Singapore, My Beautiful Homeland*, and two ethnic Chinese dances, *Woolly Clouds* and *Alamuhan* for the stage performance at the Usan-dong cultural stage. They also performed one Indian dandiya dance at the Tattoo stadium. The group was happy to have joined 300 Korean and international groups in this dynamic dance carnival that celebrated the spirit of dance.

The INTENSI-5 series, a unique platform started by choreographer-dance educator Peter Gn for exploring choreography and the creative process, celebrates its third installment with new dance works. The platform seeks to inspire youth by allowing them to see how dance may be presented in alternative contexts. This exciting and educational dance event also acquaints them with dance artists in Singapore as they push the multiple possibilities of 21st century dance. The choreographers each stage a work, and share five points that include areas like creative processes, challenges and opportunities encountered, as well as strategic steps towards the innovative realisation of the performance. *INTENSI-5 2018: Dancing Left of Centre* was held on 13 January 2018 at the Open Stage, Esplanade Library. Choreographers included Benedict Soh, Derek Seong, Peter Gn, Peter Teo, Som Said, and Stephanie Burridge as well as student choreographers

from LASALLE College of the Arts and Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. An annual platform that adds even more colour to Singapore's already exciting dance scene, choreographers for this platform have so far included Ebelle Chong, Gillian Tan, Kavitha Krishnan, Liu Wen-Chun, Melissa Quek, Soul Signature (Sheriden Newman & Sufri Juwahir), Stephanie Burrridge, Susan Yeung and Vincent Yong. Performers at INTENSI-5 have included but were not limited to Bernice Lee, Eva Tey, Gretel Lee, Kailin Yong, Kenneth Tan, Liu Wen-Chun, Melyn Chow, Pamela Leong, Rosanne Chan, Shahrin Johry, Sheriden Newman, Stacie Leong, Sufri Juwahir, Yarra Iletto and many NAFA, LASALLE and independent dancers.

The Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) Dance Programme commemorated the institution's 80th anniversary with two productions. *Crossings 2018* presented a diverse repertoire of works from international choreographers on 27 and 28 April 2018 at the Lee Foundation Theatre. This interdisciplinary performance showcased the edge and versatility of NAFA's dancers, trained in the Dance Programme's unique conservatoire style, in contemporary choreographies by Ezekiel Oliveira (Portugal), Filomar Tariao (Philippines), Gillian Tan (Singapore) and Richard Chappell (United Kingdom). *Dancers@Work*, an informal performance, choreography and production platform for NAFA's Dance students, showcased the contemporary choreographies of ten Dance Creation 3B students on 10 and 11 May 2018 at the Studio Theatre on campus. NAFA is also happy to announce the recent engagement

of several of its dance graduates as dance artists with Singapore's major companies. Sayaka Yamauchi and Ma Xiao Yu joined Singapore Dance Theatre; Muhammad Nur Afiq Bin Noorazwa and Klievert Jon Junia Mendoza joined T.H.E Dance Company, and Stephanie Rae Yoong joined RAW Moves. In addition, Liu Shiyu joined Lei Dong Tian Xia (LDTX) Modern Dance Company in Beijing, China.

Siri Rama and her students of Kanaka Sabha Dance Ensemble collaborated with Grammy award-winning musician Ricki Kej in a collaborative work themed on environmental awareness called 'Shanti Samsaara' at Proto Village in Andhra Pradesh state (Southern India) on 24 Dec 2017. Kathasagara 2018, a multimedia story-telling festival in its second year was presented in Bengaluru (India), supported by Singapore International foundation (SIF) on 25 Dec 2017. This festival featured a collaboration of music, dance and theatre artists from Singapore and India. Singapore

artists Bhagya Murthy (vocalist), Soumya Verma (theatre director), Siri Rama (solo dance theatre) and Jyoti Unni (Odissi) presented works on the theme of guru or teacher along with local Indian artists. Siri Rama and Kanaka Sabha dance ensemble were invited by the government of Andhra Pradesh to present Buddhist themed dances at the first Global Shanti/Peace - Amaravati Buddhist heritage festival, Andhra Pradesh on 4 Feb 2018. Siri Rama was lead performer, artistic director and choreographer for a dance theatre production *Hayavadana - Horse Face* produced by IZAARA production house with a local multiracial Singaporean cast of actors and dancers at Goodman Arts Blackbox (Singapore) on 27-29 April 2018. Siri Rama and her students also performed for the Vasantotsavam celebrations at the Kalliamman temple (11 April) and for the centennial celebrations of Mathuram at the Sri Srinivasa Perumal temple (21 April).



1. 'Phantasmagoria' choreographed by Gillian Tan for *Crossings 2018*, presented by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in April 2018. Photo: Jeff Low

2. The poster for INTENSI5 2018, convened by Peter Gn, with a performance at the library@esplanade in January 2018.



Taiwan report

by Su-Ling Chou



Usually spring is a season for the members of WDA-AP to present their annual achievements in a form of dance recitals, especially by the universities and high school levels. This year, each university not only presented their spring concerts produced and choreographed by their faculty members and invited local and international guests, but also took the chance to promote their graduate students' creative works. For high school levels, the students who will graduate in June were also eager to present their creativity in challenging themselves.

Tso's Dance Association, the office of WDAAP-Taiwan, was honored to be

invited again this year by Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government to produce a full-evening production in 2018 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF). Following the productions, *Peter and the Wolf* and *Carnival of Animals* (2015), *Something about Growing Up* (2016) and *The Mysterious Journey* (2017), this year *Pulcinella* is the fourth production in KSAF.

Dancers from dance programs of elementary, junior high, senior high schools and the general education class worked together for eight months aiming toward presenting their best for the final production. Accompanied by Kaohsiung Youth

Symphony Orchestra, this was the first full-length presentation of Stravinsky's score for *Pulcinella* in Taiwan. Along with *Pulcinella*, six musical works composed by Leroy Anderson were selected to be performed at the second section, including "Plink Plunk Plunk", "The Syncopated Clock", "The Waltzing Cat", "Jazz Pizzicato", "Blue Tango" and "Fiddle Fiddle".

Guest choreographer Francesco D'Astici focused on preparing young dancers in supporting them to be ready on stage. He explored the young dancers' passion and successfully developed their highest potential by way of the dances with various styles. These young dancers have made great progress throughout this production. The plan is to cultivate these artistic seeds in this city and help those 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. Instead, seeking the possibility of international connection, around 100 Taiwanese members are ready to join Panpapanpalya 2018 Congress in Adelaide, Australia, in July. There are more than 20 choreographers selected to perform in the Delegate Performance programs. Tsoying High Dance Group is also joining the Twinning Project under the instruction of Lewis Major, who is the local Australian choreographer as well as one of the selected choreographers in the 2015 IYCP. He is going to collaborate with the dancers from Tsoying High Dance Group and from Charles Campbell College, sharing skills and knowledge with each other.

Throughout the above opportunities, WDA-AP Taiwan members are working hard to promote themselves and keeping on moving forward.



WDA-AP Taiwan Members Activities, January - June 2018

Performances:

Kaohsiung City Ballet

- 2018 Dance Shoe, 20-21 January at Experimental Theater of National Theater & Concert Hall, Taipei City,
- 27 January at Jihshshan Hall of Kaohsiung City Arts Center,
- 3 February at Native Theater of International Hall of Tainan Municipal Cultural Center

Tso's Dance Association

- 2018 KSAF *Pulcinella*, 14-15 April at Kaohsiung City Dadong Arts Center

T.T.C Dance

- 2018 Dance Round Table, 11-14 January at Experimental Theater of National Theater & Concert Hall, Taipei City

Horse

- Behalf*, 25-27 May at Cloud Gate Theater, Taipei City
- Primal CHAOS - Dance X Sounds improvisation*, 3 January, 7 February, 7 March, 11 April at Horse Studio, Taipei City

Sun-Shier Dance Theatre

- CoDance Festival 2018, 12-25 May at Huashan Umay Theater, Taipei City

Century Contemporary Dance Company

- Dance in Asia 2018, 18-20 May at Huashan Creative Park, Taipei City

B. Dance

- LUCKY TRIMMER Tanz Performance Serie #26, 31 March at Sophiensaele, Berlin, Germany
- Floating Flowers*, 7 April at Scène Nationale d'Albi, 10 April at Scènes et Cinés, 14 April at Carré Stemaxime, 17 April at Théâtre de Grasse, 20 April at Théâtre Durance, France
- Zürich gets Lucky!, 4 May at Tanzhaus Zürich, Switzerland

Hung Dance

- International Contest of Choreography Burgos & New York Gala, 27 April at Theater Principal-Palencia, 28 April at Theater Medina del Campo-Valladolid, 29 April at Theater Principal Burgos, 1 May at Theater Arroyo de San Miguel, 2 May at Theater León, Spain
- TAC International Festival of Street Arts, 24-26 May at Valladolid, Spain
- Festival Cádiz en Danza, 10-13 June at Sala Central Lechera, Spain
- Valencia, Las Naves, 17 June at La Mutant, Spain
- Lekuz Leku Festival, 29 June at Bizkaia Aretoa, Spain



All photos in this report: *Pulcinella*, presented by Tso's Dance Association, choreographed by Francesco D'Astici, co-choreographed by Hui-chen Tsai, on 14-15 April at Kaohsiung City Dadong Arts Center, as part of the 2018 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival. Photos: Su-Ling Chou

Linda Caldwell with Stephanie Burrige at the WDA Global Summit, Angers, France, in 2014.
Photo: Julie Dyson



Tributes to Prof. Linda Caldwell

8 August 1950 – 22 April 2018

“When you are sorrowful, look again in your heart and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight.” – Kahil Gibran

We often say that the hour of death cannot be forecast, as we imagine this would be in a distant future. However, it still came as a shock when a dear colleague was with us no more.

I am deeply saddened to hear of Linda's passing; it is truly devastating news. Many of her closest friends and WDA Global Executive Board Members knew that Linda was recuperating from her illness, but it never occurred to me that the WDA Global Summit in St John's Newfoundland, organised by WDA Americas in 2017, would be the last time we would see her. She did her best to help us to understand how fragile her health was, but we would never have thought that Linda Caldwell would become a memory so soon.

Linda was principally responsible at WDA Americas for keeping her Research & Documentation Network globally linked to WDA Asia Pacific and beyond. She worked hard with Urmimala Sarkar to give young scholars the opportunity to publish their work in the *Journal for Emerging Dance Scholarship* (JEDS), connecting and enthusiastically engaging in global networking.

Linda had the most inspiring love for

everyone in World Dance Alliance, with amazing courage, strength and tenacity that was felt by every single person who ever came into contact with her. She was a manager, mentor, friend to us in WDA, and had the gift of making each one of us feel part of the big family. A shining light that could never go unnoticed.

We will always remember her as a colleague, a leader, a fighter, a nurturer and a very resilient woman with strong ethics. May her soul rest in peace.

**Mohd Anis Md Nor,
WDA Secretary-General**

An infectious bubbling laugh, ready to erupt; short red hair and a unique colourful style. Linda was immediately recognisable, not just physically, but because her presence exuded such positive energy, together with a can-do, no-fuss attitude which inspired confidence in us, whether student, friend or colleague. Linda was fun: she loved a good meal, revelled in good company, relished her workshops and classes. She was a wonderful story teller but also a wonderful listener – always a dialogue, never a monologue – she gave camaraderie a sparkling immediacy.

And Linda was extremely courageous – she faced the devastating illness that took her life with humour, resilience and grace, never complaining and always optimistic.

Above all, Linda was generous, in her life and in her work. Her keen intellect, superb and painstaking scholarship and insights were a gift to others. For that alone, we owe her much. Her enormous contribution to

dance and academia will live on through her beloved students; how she encouraged and nurtured them and the joy she took in seeing them flourish – this is an enduring legacy.

We, the WDA family, shared so much with her over the last decade – the endless meetings, conference planning, reviewing, editing, proofing and shaping through three major Global Summits and WDAA Proceedings, and of course through her visionary co-editorship of JEDS.

Linda is a leader to celebrate and emulate; hers was a selfless leadership of service, collaboration and empathy. Thank you Linda – your spirit will live long in our memories.

**Cheryl Stock, Immediate Past WDA
Secretary-General**

My association with Linda as a friend, colleague and co-editor of JEDS (*Journal for Emerging Dance Scholarship*) grew slowly and steadily over the years of our connected work in two distant parts of the world. Her insight and enthusiasm in response to my suggestion about launching JEDS led to an intense sharing of ideas and possibilities between the two of us, through which I got to know her diligent and rigorous academic ability. Once we got the journal going, she was the main coordinator for the first three volumes, organising the editorial committee and the schedules. Always humouring and encouraging to new scholars, her editing always had detailed suggestions for each editorial input.

Linda's input to the last WDA Global Summit was exceptional. The panel of editors she brought together for the round table was an extremely important addition to the event.

Cheryl Stock with Linda Caldwell at the WDA Global Summit, Angers, France, in 2014. Photo: Julie Dyson



Always supportive and encouraging, Linda's work with JEDS will be remembered and missed. When I took over the work of JEDS 2017 because of her illness, she was always there for all queries, ready with a smile and a quick response. World Dance Alliance will miss Prof. Linda Caldwell as a scholar, as an editor and also as its ardent and enthusiastic member.

**Urmimala Sarkar Munsri, President,
WDA Asia Pacific**

Linda was a visionary friend. She was vibrant, funny, generous and committed. Never taking 'no' for an answer or wavering from a difficult task, she achieved extraordinary opportunities for dance across several spheres, including her university and in Research & Documentation with WDA. Her curiosity to explore new directions in teaching and learning covered a wide canvas and embraced huge breadth and diversity. She loved bringing out the best in her students. Her passion for dance scholarship translated into initiatives like the WDA JEDS she co-edited with Urmimala Sarkar Munsri to help young scholars traverse the path from student to the realities of academic publishing. She supported and watched talent emerge under careful mentorship that never submersed creativity or individuality.

Linda's commitment to WDA was legendary and she was still organising review panels for conferences when she was ill. I will always treasure her wise words, encouragement and support over my years of association with her through the WDA R&D Network.

**Stephanie Burrige, WDAAP Co-Chair,
Research & Documentation Network**

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 <<https://www.wda-americas.net/>>.

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

www.facebook.com/WorldDanceAlliance/

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