

Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





Fitri Anggraini (Indonesia) and Lau Beh Chin (Malaysia) in their work 'Bumbu Goyang', with students of the Dance Department, University of Malaya, at Dancing in Place 2019, Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia, 26-27 January 2019. Photo: Foo Chiwei

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World Dance Alliance
Asia-Pacific

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Cover: Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Dance Programme students in 'Limbo 101' by Ezekiel Oliveira, part of 'Crossings' at Lee Foundation Theatre, Singapore, 26-27 April 2019. Photo: Jeff Low

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.



Taiwanese Young Dancers Flying to the World at the 2019 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF), produced by Tso's Dance Association: 'Four Seasons' of Taiwan, choreographed by Ya-ting Chang and Kuo-chun Wang. Photo: Chun-yung Lin



President's report

by Urmimala Sarkar

It is a pleasure to be back with a report for the next Channels. In the times of great changes in terms of priorities in funding, medical benefits available, and shifting away of focus from dance in particular, and arts in general, World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific is actually faring well.

Of the two events that the Asia Pacific region is proudly looking forward to, the first is Ocean Dance Festival, the WDAAP Choreolab for emerging dancers, WDAAP conference and Annual General Meeting in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, in November 2019.

The WDAAP meeting is a regular yearly event, but is happening for only the second time in South Asia since WDA's inception. The venue and the basic infrastructure are being provided by the Government of Bangladesh, while Nrityajog, the Bangladesh Chapter of WDAAP, is at the helm of organising all other affairs. Bangladesh is organising Ocean Dance Festival for the first time and WDAAP is proud to be invited to organise its annual meeting and conference around the festival.

The response to the call for papers,

performances, choreolab and twinning projects has been magical, with people from all over the world responding and registering with enthusiasm.

The Choreolab has as its mentor and facilitator the well-known choreographer, scholar and dancer Sashar Zarif from Canada, a long time member of WDA-Americas. Out of a long list of excellently qualified aspirants, we have been able to invite 20 dancers, who will be participating in the Choreolab for fifteen days.

The second event I would like flag is the WDA Global Summit 2020 in Hong Kong, organised by Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts (HKAPA), alongside the SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Workshop Festival. This is an event for which the HKAPA has started discussing exciting plans with the WDA Global Executive.

For those who are registered or are registering to attend the WDAAP AGM and event in Cox's Bazar, a warm welcome in advance. For those who are missing it for some reason, keep a lookout for the December Channels, the website of Ocean Dance Festival www.oceandancefestival.com and the Facebook pages of World Dance Alliance and Nrityajog, the Bangladesh Chapter of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific.



Dancers from Bangladesh, including Md. Hanif (far right), in a scene from Helena Waldmann's 2014 film *Made in Bangladesh*. Read the story of Md. Hanif's meteoric rise in dance in the Bangladesh report in this edition.



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.



Secretary's report

by Julie Dyson

WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE – ASIA PACIFIC Notice of 2019 Annual General Meeting

Mermaid Resort, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh
Sunday 24 November 2019
1.30 – 3 pm

AGENDA

Chair: Prof. Urmimala Sarkar Munsri, President, WDAAP

- Welcome, apologies
- Minutes of previous AGM (Adelaide, 11 July December 2018: to be circulated)
- Executive Board reports (For noting, as in the June 2019 edition of Asia-Pacific Channels):

- President's report
- VPs' reports
- Treasurer's report

- Secretary's report
- Secretary-General's report (as in Asia Pacific Channels June 2019)

- Chapter reports – (for noting, as in the June 2019 edition of Asia-Pacific Channels)
- Network reports (for noting, as in the June 2019 edition of Asia-Pacific Channels)
- Overview of WDAAP networks (Urmimala Sarkar Munsri):

- Research & Documentation
- Education & Training
- Creation & Presentation
- Support & Development

- Next AGM: Hong Kong, 15-21 June 2020 (exact date tbc).
Presentation on behalf of HKAPA & HKDA: Stella Lau

Network meetings

- 3.00-3.45 pm Research & Documentation
- 3.45-4.00 pm Tea
- 4.00-4.45 pm Creation & Presentation
- 4.45-5.30 pm Education & Training



Pacific
 Aotearoa New Zealand
 Australia
 Papua New Guinea



Pacific report

by Vice President Sheryl Lowe

New Zealand has long been viewed as an incubator for Pacific talent contributing significantly to the achievements of our national sports teams. In recent times young Pasifika artists finding their voices through arts and dance have also been shining the light on their communities, revitalising the rich storytelling traditions of the Pacific. These artists have been nurtured through creative platforms that encourage positive transformation enabling them to express themselves through the arts.

The Kia Mau Festival ran from 1-15 June 2019 in Wellington featuring theatre and dance by Māori, Pasifika, and Indigenous artists from across Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa and the globe. As a festival, Kia Mau is a contemporary platform which fosters creative and cultural exchange with an Indigenous worldview. 2019 marked the fifth year of the festival and included two stunning works by emerging Pasifika artists.



TRIP by Ufitia Sagapolutele. Photo: Mataara Stokes

Inano Dance Company's *Mamai'ata (The New Dawn)* called upon its audience to reflect on their own personal experiences, focusing on human traits and characteristics that we all possess. Choreographed and directed by Te Hau Winitana, (Cook Island/Māori) *Mamai'ata* revealed our frailties and strengths, and contemplated a new way to a good life with the break of a new dawn.

Award-winning choreographer Tupua Tigafua is a highly accomplished dancer and storyteller. After an illustrious career dancing for some of Aotearoa's creative elite, Tupua has masterfully created his own dance style. Inspired by the works of renowned American writer Shel Silverstein, *She/ We* was an invitation to witness an enchanting, playfully intriguing, and visually stunning dance show.

The fourth rendition of the Pacific Dance Festival held from 5-23 June 2019, embraced contemporary Pacific dance in Auckland New Zealand, the most populous Polynesian city in the world, providing a vital platform for Pasifika artists. Acclaimed and accomplished Pacific dance artists took to the floor and brought a moving feast of entertaining and thought-provoking theatre, workshops, screenings, choreographic labs and more.

Contributing and recurring festival artist Ufitia Sagapolutele (New Zealand/Sāmoa), says of the festival: "The festival is definitely a space for me to grow as an emerging artist. We are born as performers and it's amazing to have this platform for us to showcase what we're about."

Fellow presenting artist Xavier Breed is a recent postgraduate student from the University of Auckland Dance Studies

Programme and is making moves on and off the dance floor. Xavier's work *Pou* was choreographed for and performed by his project-based Pacific dance company, MANU Collective. *Pou* was presented as a double-bill alongside Vivian Aue's (AUE Dance Company) *Anga* in the 2018 Pacific Dance Festival. Xavier represented both New Zealand and the Pacific at a recent UNESCO Forum for Creativity and Heritage in China, and is also part of the Asia New Zealand Foundation Leadership network.

These artists are also delving into mainstream dance festivals, with a new wave of young, Pasifika choreographers featuring in Tempo Dance Festival, New Zealand's pan-genre dance festival which takes place 2-12 October 2019. Genres of street dance, Indigenous dance, contemporary dance and Siva Sāmoa all feature in the headline shows announced by new artistic director Cat Ruka (Ngāpuhi, Waitaha). The programme reflects Cat's strong and innate passion for seeing rangatahi (youth) succeed, and affirms her reputation as one of the most sought after mentors for Māori and Pasifika artists.

Spearheading the programme are two works from Pasifika artists. Sau E Siva Creatives presents *Fa'asinomaga Identity*, an epic tour-de-force of Siva Sāmoa with over 50 performers who fuse new choreography with the "Best of Le Best" from previous sold-out shows. Sau E Siva Creatives is a recently-formed Pacific Dance theatre company founded by graduates Troy Tu'ua, Italia Hunt, Idalene Ati, Bob Savea and Leki Jackson-Bourke from the Pacific Institute of Performing Arts. The foundation of their work stems from the cultural heritage art form of contemporary and traditional Siva Sāmoa. They are a passionate collective of Pasifika artists weaving multiple disciplines, diverse audiences and authentic storytelling enhanced by theatrical elements



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and conventions to challenge perceived concepts of traditional and contemporary.

Internationally acclaimed dancer and choreographer in street dance Parris Goebel is also featured. Her work, *Girl*, is an intimate show that looks into the journey females take to discover their inner power. Parris created 'Polyswagg', a unique style of dance that combines elements of traditional New Zealand dance inspired by her Samoan heritage with aggressive, contemporary 'popping'. Polyswagg has been embraced for its empowerment of female dancers in hip hop and has been used extensively in music video choreography by top recording artists.

The emergence of a new generation of Pacific artists, their diverse works and ways of making their statement in dance, bodes well for the Pacific story to flourish in the arts world.



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1. MANU Collective.
 Photo: Pati Solomona Tyrell
2. Sau E Siva Creatives.



South East Asia

Malaysia

Philippines

Indonesia

Singapore

Thailand



South East Asia report

by Vice President Bilqis Hijjas

Two women sat on the sofa, each staring into the depths of a saucepan. Audience members perched agog beside them, as the women suddenly tipped the saucepans over their thrusting groins. On the other side of the sitting room, a male dancer wearing a sarong cavorted on the dining room table, his head perilously close to the ceiling fan. Then he upended himself upon the table, legs akimbo, presumably to let a little breeze play around his privates.

This bizarre but humorous vision of gender politics in the household, seasoned with a strong dash of psychological intrigue, was titled 'A Strange Meeting', performed in a hundred-year-old house at Rimbun Dahan as part of Dancing in Place in January this year. A collaboration between Malaysian dancers Fauzi Amirudin and Nurulakmal Abdul Wahid

with Thai dancer Vidura Amranand, the work was also part of Step Together, a project supporting collaboration between Malaysian and other Southeast Asian choreographers, which was funded this year by CENDANA, Malaysia's Cultural Economy Development Agency, as part of their Emerging Artist Incubation Funding Programme.

A total of four works were created in the Step Together project, which brought the participants together for a week of collaboration before the results were performed at Dancing in Place. The results were an interesting way to assess choreographic trends among contemporary producers in the region.

One of the evident trends is an interest in duration. Indonesian choreographer Sherli Novalinda made a duet with Vietnamese dancer Nguyen Thanh Chung which featured an extended period of immobility, broken by the carefully timed sounding of the azan from the Muslim surau across the road. Hii Ing Fung from Malaysia worked with Chan Sze Wei from Singapore to create the appropriately titled 'Tree Time', an engagement with elements in the garden which went on for 3 hours, as the other Dancing in Place works played out around them.

Fitri Anggraini from Indonesia and Lau Beh Chin from Malaysia decided to recruit non-professional dancers to enhance their work. Luckily, a troupe of students from the University of Malaya's Dance Department were on hand. After a quick briefing, they



Malaysian dancers Fauzi Amirudin and Nurulakmal Abdul Wahid (seated at the table) in their work 'A Strange Meeting', created with Vidura Amranand (Thailand), at Dancing in Place 2019 at Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia. Photo: Nazir Azhari



1. Nguyen Thanh Chung (Vietnam) and Sherli Novalinda (Indonesia) in their work 'When at RD', at Dancing in Place 2019 at Rimbun Dahan, Malaysia. Photo: Nazir Azhari

2. Morning Star Dark Valley, choreographed by Darlane Litaay, performed at the Indonesian Dance Festival 2018 (Darlane was also a SEA Choreolab participant.) Photo: Feri Latief

were incorporated into Fitri and Beh Chin's 'Bumbu Goyang' as a corps who tossed and shredded newspapers while the two choreographers moved through slow weight-sharing.

Five other Malaysian dance works rounded out the program for Dancing in Place, contributed by choreographers Tan Bee Hung, Norsafini Jafar, Kenny Shim, Chan Kar Kah and Khairi Mokhtar. It was also a chance for these choreographers and dancers to meet and mingle with their Southeast Asian colleagues over the performance weekend.

This is the second time that Dancing in Place at Rimbun Dahan has included collaborations by Southeast Asian choreographers, all of whom are alumni of the annual Southeast Asian Choreolab at Rimbun Dahan. This project forms a natural stepping stone after the Choreolab, allowing the Choreolab participants to reunite with collaborators of their own choosing, and to spend some serious time making dance together.

But the sustainability of this project is tenuous. This year we were lucky to get CENDANA funding, but the previous year was unfunded, and we have no sponsors on the horizon for next year. Unlike the Southeast Asian Choreolab, which lends itself to reliable support from international cultural organisations associated with the selected choreolab facilitator, it is difficult to see how the Step Together project can ever reach a comfortable financial footing. As always, it is difficult to bring Southeast Asians together to meet other Southeast Asians, when all of us are operating in straitened circumstances.

On that note, I would like to recognise and celebrate the many independent dance events in Southeast Asia which have persisted over the years, finding creative

ways to harness what resources they have to keep going. Sibu International Dance Festival enters its eighth year in 2019, while Fang Mae Khong International Dance Festival is nine years old. Melaka Art + Performance Festival celebrates its first decade this year, as well as the tenth edition of the M1 Contact Festival in Singapore, which is run by T.H.E. Dance Company. The grandmother of them all is the biennial Indonesian Dance Festival, which is 27 years old, having started in 1992. Congratulations to them all!

Dancing in Place celebrated its 10th anniversary this year too. Even before Step Together, it has always had a few Southeast Asian participants, although most of them have had to pay their own way. The willingness of Southeast Asian dancers and choreographers to invest their own funds in order to meet their peers in the region continues to impress me. Their eagerness is the reason I will find a way to keep my small platform going.



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.



The mature dancers of Dance Dynamics from Singapore, in their performance at Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre on 29 December 2018.

Research & Documentation Network report

by A. P. Rajaram & Stephanie Burridge, co-chairs

Research on dance has become a vibrant multidisciplinary area of academic focus in the Asia-Pacific region and is attracting new generations of scholars. The focuses of the research are varied, encompassing studies based on historiography, philosophy, analysis and cultural studies. The new research extends to understanding and analysing of contemporary dance forms, the dance-like movements and the ideas around varied forms of embodiments. The new emerging dance scholars are setting the preliminary foundation of questioning the changes that are forced on the academic discourse due to the advanced interventions of new media.

This is observed in the two international conferences that are about to happen in the Asia Pacific region, the first one is the International Council of Traditional Music (ICTM), at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, happening in July 2019; the second is the Ocean Dance Festival (ODF) happening at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, in conjunction with the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific Annual General Meeting. The research papers at the ICTM conference are ranging from analysis of performances, dance forms, and costumes from all over the world covering the orient to occident. Centred around the theme of 'Bridging the Gap', the research papers at ODF cover dance pedagogy, corporeal experiences of Indian classical dance, finding the missing linkages to dance from the past and locating the present nature of dance forms.

The WDAAP Research & Documentation Network proudly announces a book focusing on dance, contributed by our WDA and daCi members, along with other artists and scholars. This is the third book in the series 'Perspectives on Dance, Young People and Change' published by Routledge UK and co-edited by Stephanie Burridge and Charlotte Svendler Neilsen. This new volume, *Dancing Across Borders:*

Perspectives on Dance Education, Young People and Change, presents 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. Its focus is 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.

The volume 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 accent empathy, creativity, cooperation, collaboration alongside skills and knowledge-based learning in an endeavour to create civic mindedness and a more harmonious world.

The rationale of including multiple countries to gain many points of view and perspectives from practitioners in the field is the essence of this third book and others in the series 'Perspectives on Dance, Young People and Change'. International perspectives come from Australia, Brazil, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hong Kong, India, Iraq, Norway, New Zealand, Poland, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Syria, Uganda, UK and USA. The book will be launched in Norway in April 2020 at the 'Future(s) of Dance Education(s): Opportunities and Challenges' conference in Trondheim.

The next volume of the Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship (JEDS) is being co-edited by two guest editors: Anja Ali-Haapala and Sarah Knox. We look forward to make this new arrangement a norm and will be inviting two new guest editors for the coming year as well.

Education & Training Network report

by Ralph Buck & Jeff Meiners, co-chairs

Future steps and directions for the Asia-Pacific Education & Training Network and for the WDA

Co-Chairs of the WDA-AP Education & Training Network, Ralph Buck and Jeff Meiners, met in Hong Kong on Monday 28 May 2019 with Anna Chan in her new role as Dean of Dance at Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and WDA East Asia Vice President Stella Lau, to discuss two key matters.

Succession Plan for Co-Chairing of the WDA-AP Education & Training Network

First, after many years holding these positions, we believe it is time for new people to take up these voluntary roles. Plans are now underway for a succession plan for co-chairing of the WDA-AP Education & Training Network.

Ralph reminded everyone that as noted at the 2019 WDA-AP meeting in Adelaide, Sarah Knox (NZ) will take on his role once she returns from maternity leave (anticipated to be June 2020). Ralph is currently continuing as WDA Global Ed & Training network and WAAE chair.

Jeff flagged his intention to give notice and resign from his co-chair role at the upcoming November Bangladesh meeting. Jeff is now Chair Elect with dance and the Child international (daCi), working with Chair Susan Koff from the USA and will take on the Chair role at the next daCi conference in Toronto 2021. Anna agreed to seek someone to nominate for this role as soon as possible.

We noted that over the past 12 years, the WDA-AP Education and Training Network has led participation by members to ensure that dance education is represented and situated strategically and internationally, working with UNESCO and World Alliance

for Arts Education (WAAE) initiatives and providing a voice for dance in significant events such as the WAAE Creativity Summits in Taiwan 2008, England 2009, Finland 2012, Germany 2013, and conferences in Australia 2014, New Zealand 2017, as well as the Asia-Pacific Alliance for Arts Education (AP AAE) Online Summit 2010. Part of this work has also been to bring to fruition collaborations between WDA and daCi 2012 Taiwan and the 2018 Australia joint congresses, as well as associated proceedings and book publications driven by the Research & Documentation Network. Such outputs enable us to build our global knowledge networks to develop and strengthen synergies between practice and theory, and between WDA networks. It was also noted that daCi and the WDA Global Education & Training network continue to work together with many individuals taking key roles and working collaboratively across both organisations and with WAAE.

We agreed that these international networking principles should be maintained as selection criteria for new E&T network chairpersons.

WDA Global Congress Hong Kong 2020

Our second matter for discussion was support for the next WDA Global Summit. Anna reported on proposed dates of 15–21 June for the WDA Global Congress to be held in Hong Kong in a partnership between HKAPA, HK Dance Alliance and SWEAT along with the International Festival for Dance Academies (IFDA) scheduled for 18–20 June. It was noted that such IFDA events had occurred alongside the 2010 New York, 2012 Taiwan and 2014 France congresses, but not since.

Anna spoke of her aspiration to reinvigorate the Hong Kong summit with a focus on 'bursting the bubble' by revisiting the contributions of tertiary academies within the context of training for high level performance. With SWEAT, the focus would be on artistic exchange and making processes, with 'Wellness' as a

theme encompassing all aspects of this term including physical, emotional and the inclusion of a DanceScience Lab initiative. Ideas were drawn from recent Asia Dance Network experience as an effective model for collaboration.

Discussion

The above matters led to a broader discussion about the context of the next WDA summit, following the success of the joint WDA Global E & T Network event Panpapanpalya 2018, the second such collaboration with daCi, as well as the upcoming WDAAP AGM and Ocean Dance Festival in Bangladesh, convened by Vice-President South Asia & Chair WDA-Bangladesh, Lubna Marium. Acknowledging the changing context of tertiary education along with WDA's work in education, training and research, a timely key question that might be addressed as part of the 2020 Global Summit is 'What is the purpose of WDA in 2020?'

Ralph had recently met with WDA Asia Pacific President Urmimala Sarkar, and also Cristina Golletti, President of WDA-Americas. Ralph noted several ideas and concerns that arose from these separate meetings. Some issues included the need to improve the WDA website, and a need to review the membership and payment model. Our meeting in Hong Kong noted that changes within the Australian Dance Council (Ausdance), the Taipei National University of the Arts, and the wider geopolitical climate presents new challenges for World Dance Alliance.

We went on to discuss the WDA network structure. Anna noted that in light of new organisations such as the Asia Network for Dance (AND+), along with the growth of dance houses and choreographic centres across countries, that the WDA Creation & Presentation network and the Support & Development network may no longer be key action areas for WDA. Again, we thought that this needed some detailed consideration in forthcoming WDAAP and WDA Global meetings. It may be therefore beneficial to revisit Carl Wolz's vision in the

context of new technologies and changing global priorities, including communication, digital technologies, screen dance, neuroscience and safe dance practice, and a decrease in national funding for dance service organisations etc.

Perhaps the focus of WDA is, in reality, **tertiary education and training** which can include the activities of the Research & Documentation Network as well as the Creation & Presentation network. Is the purpose therefore mainly to ensure that a Summit occurs every two years to provide opportunities to network and share practices and research endeavours with regular publication outputs to disseminate practice and generate new theory?

Concluding Questions for Us All

From our discussion in Hong Kong we have outlined in this report some of the current developments undertaken by the WDAAP and Global Education & Training Network. With a focus on 'bursting the bubble' as suggested by Stella and Anna, we suggest it may be timely to take a critical perspective during the 2020 Global Congress by including a provocation that may elicit responses to the question 'What is the purpose of WDA in 2020?' This might be done in a 'long table' participatory discussion to be videoed, ensuring that many voices are heard to refresh WDA vision and role and to determine future directions for WDA.

This report therefore poses some collegial questions as we seek your insights into the future of WDA:

We are wondering what you want from the WDAAP Education & Training Network and indeed the WDA?

How might we better understand the WDA Global constitution and also the constitutions of each of the Americas, Europe and Asia-Pacific Chapters?

How do these constitutions compare? What are the financial arrangements and responsibilities of each region, and how are membership, resourcing and website maintenance arrangements managed, and by whom?



Chapters

Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, South 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.



A Kulau male dance at a Balabalaguan mortuary ceremony by the Kabalama clan in Matupit village, East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea, in September 2018, choreographed by To Pidik Mong & To Welwel Tovuat. Photo: Naomi Faik-Simet.



Aotearoa New Zealand report

by Sheryl Lowe

Keep the Peace, choreographed by Anna Groves, performed at Oriental Bay, Wellington.

New Zealand dance teacher Brie Jessen-Vaughn, in a Dance Aotearoa New Zealand (DANZ) blog post, writes: “The arts bring us together, to transcend the mundane and transform lived experience into archetype. The arts are able to capture what we haven’t got words for...” This was written in response to the terrible attacks which befell the Muslim community in Christchurch early this year. New Zealand has been in a state of mourning and many people have been using the arts as a way to understand and move forward.

Dance has been an excellent conduit to inspire social change and many New Zealand dance artists have been tackling hard-hitting social issues in their projects. At the beginning of the year, recent dance graduate Caitlin Davey was recipient of a three-week dance residency sponsored by DANZ and Saint Kentigern College in Auckland. Caitlin used the time to develop her work *About Others*, a contemporary piece that invites the audience to walk in the shoes of those who have had different life experiences to us – particularly in light of the global refugee crisis.

Another example of dance for social change was Anna Groves’ choreographic project *Keep the Peace*, a ‘flash mob’ style work dedicated to those who have said yes to peace in the past and those who continue to advocate for it. The project took place around Wellington city’s Oriental Bay and received express support from Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern and United Nations

Messenger of Peace, Dr Jane Goodall. In Palmerston North a national campaign called *Dancer I Am* was launched in response to youth mental health and wellbeing issues. The campaign is set up to encourage young people to use dance as a way to empower and express themselves, as well as open up a dialogue about mental health issues.

In the same vein of change, the dance scene in New Zealand as in other parts of the world, has been expanding for some time beyond traditional practices and embracing the realm of the experimental. To highlight this shift, New Zealand had its first ever experimental dance festival. Experimental Dance Week Aotearoa was curated by Berlin-based New Zealand artist Alexa Wilson, and launched in Auckland in February. The festival was a gathering of some of New Zealand’s finest experimental dance artists; presenting provocative works, delivering workshops and panelled discussions. The festival also marked the launch of *Te Ao Live: Experimental Dance Aotearoa NZ in the Early 21st Century*, a publication with the writings of 30 experimental dance artists at the top of their game. The publication is a snapshot and archival documentation of experimental dance being created in Aotearoa.

There has been a real drive for collaboration and partnership across the arts and other sectors and we have seen some really positive outcomes. This year DANZ was supported by Sport New Zealand, the national leader of our sporting system,

to extend the New Zealand Dance Week programme, resulting in high visibility and participation for dance. Collaboration across companies and art forms is also building steam and it's exciting to see the kind of work and opportunities coming out of it. One of our leading contemporary dance companies, Footnote New Zealand Dance, collaborated with the Guangdong Modern Dance Company (China) to present a stunning triple bill around the country. We have watched the growth of cross-discipline work in the form of virtual reality dance with filmmaker Ed Davis using the art form as a basis to explore new technologies. Māori

choreographer Moss Patterson shared his indigenous voice through The Royal New Zealand Ballet, creating an evocative work, *Hine*, which interweaved traditional Māori practices with contemporary elements. All of these things highlight the power of cross-cultural and cross-genre collaboration.

To end this chapter we will take another quote from Brie Jessen-Vaughn which speaks volumes about dance and its possibilities: "...to dance is to share, to communicate. And to communicate is to have a voice, and to raise your voice is to have power. And with that power we can bring about change."



'Mass Solitude'
choreographed by
Sarah Foster-Sproull,
performed by Footnote
New Zealand Dance
and Guangdong Modern
Dance Company, in
Hemispheres, February/
March 2019.

Photo: Li Jianyang



This report begins with the very sad news that the board of Ausdance National has decided to wind up the organisation. 'The impact of shrinking government funding for the organisation has resulted in dwindling reserves and severely limited resources. Despite significant fundraising efforts and organisational restructuring, Australia's national advocate for the dance sector could not secure sustainable financial support.'

Ausdance National has contributed significantly to the health of the dance profession for 42 years through its advocacy, research and groundbreaking partnerships. It's ironic that at a time when the sector needs a voice to the federal parliament more than ever, that voice has now been silenced. You can read the full statement from the board online here.

There is concern by many in the dance community about the future of the Ausdance National website, recognised internationally as one of the most resource-rich dance repositories available to educators and researchers. A group of life members is working on strategies to preserve and maintain the site, and to grow its reputation as a leading publisher of dance articles, papers and publications.

The dramatic announcement of the closure of Ausdance National came as the organisation, in collaboration with Tracks Dance Company in the Northern Territory, was about to present the fifth National Dance Forum (NDF), held in Darwin on 9-10 August 2019.

At the heart of this year's NDF is the acknowledgement that dance is a political force, a provocation for change, a much-needed disruptor. The forum paid particular attention to artists, thinkers, teachers and leaders who explore this potential. Questions included issues about what it means to belong and what happens when your connection to place or community is disrupted? How does dance become a force for radical action? How does the dance sector drive and respond to change?

The full NDF program is available here.

In recent years, several high profile women in dance have been recognised with awards in the Order of Australia, including international ballerina Lucette Aldous, last year awarded the rare Companion of the Order of Australia (AC). Several other artists and administrators have been recognised in recent years, including Shirley McKechnie and Susan Street (Officers), and Nanette Hassall, Cheryl Stock and Julie Dyson (Members).

In June the artistic director of the Queensland Ballet (and Mao's Last Dancer) Li Cunxin, and choreographer/director Meryl Tankard, were both made Officers of the Order, along with Tankard's associate artist, photographer and visual artist, Régis Lansac (Medal). All recipients are entitled to use the appropriate letters after their names ahead of any other awards they may have received, and to wear their medals or pins whenever they appear in public. It's wonderful to see our dance artists nominated and recognised.

Australia report

by Julie Dyson

Bangladesh report

by Lubna Marium



Nrityajog All Set to Host the Ocean Dance Festival of Bangladesh

"If in the Ananda, or bliss, one dances for the sake of salvation, let it be performed with the songs of Vajra in the company of yogis."

– Hevajatantram (6.10), eighth century AD, Bengal.

Bangladesh has a long history of dance starting all the way from Buddhist ritual dances of the 8th Century AD, described in the Tantric text *Hevajatantram*, and which, amazingly, are still performed in the Kathmandu Valley of Nepal, due to a history of cultural relocation. Since then dance has been part and parcel of the land with a vibrant and continuing practice of dance within folk theatre, both mundane and ritual. However, it was left to two artistic stalwarts of the last century, Bengal's Noble Laureate Rabindranath Tagore and internationally renowned dancer Uday Shankar, to bring dance to the prosceniums of Bengal. When Bengal was divided, by the British, into the East and the West, with the former becoming the independent nation Bangladesh, in 1971, there was a distancing

of the rural and urban practices, with almost no connection between the two. Folk dances, based on oral narratives with a distinct ritual nature, still remain hugely popular in their own domains, while the urban dances were further dissociated from the indigenous practices

by the increasing influence of first the Indian classical dances and then the global trends of contemporary dance practices, especially classical jazz. In 2009 Bangladesh joined World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific, and a large contingent of around 19 dancers joined the WDAAP Conference at Delhi in November of that year. Since then, there have been innumerable interactions between WDA and Nrityajog, a conglomeration of forty organizations which forms the Bangladesh Chapter of WDAAP. Each year dancers from countries such as India, Nepal, Canada, and Taiwan have conducted workshops in Bangladesh courtesy of WDA. Bangladesh too has participated in WDA events in Nepal, Taiwan, Canada, Singapore, Hong Kong, New York, France and more.

Finally, after several attempts, Nrityajog is set to host the WDAAP Annual event in Cox's Bazar, the spectacularly beautiful beach city on the Bay of Bengal, from 22 to 24 November this year. Nrityajog is combining this event with the inauguration of a yearly dance festival called the Ocean Dance Festival of Bangladesh, combining exciting tourism with dance. While the WDAAP Conference will showcase dances from all over the Asia Pacific, the Ocean Dance Festival hopes to give a platform to dancers from Bangladesh and South Asia. The Ministries of Cultural Affairs and Tourism of Bangladesh are co-organizers.

The first ODF will be combined with the yearly event of the WDAAP which includes keynote speeches, academic seminars, workshops, performance and lecture demonstrations, on a single theme, by participants from all over the Asia Pacific, concluding with the Annual General Meeting. This year the theme is 'Bridging the Gap', referring to the ability of dance to

1. Down Memory Lane: Nrityajog at the WDAAP Delhi Conference in 2009.
2. Nrityajog at a WDA-Americas event in July 2010.



bridge the gap between social, cultural and economic situations within society i.e. in the cultural sphere, within society, between generations, and between tradition and innovation. The keynote speeches will be delivered by Bangladeshi-British dancer Akram Khan; Indian dancer Leela Samson; Dr Urmimala Sarkar, President of WDAAP; and Bangladeshi dancer Lubna Marium, Vice President, WDAAP.

There is already confirmed participation of dancers from Taiwan, Korea, Canada, USA, Australia and the countries of South Asia.

A unique section of the ODF will be Twinning Projects between Australia and Bangladesh, USA and Bangladesh, and India and Bangladesh. Another component is a 15-day choreolab, preceding the ODF, from 5 to 15 November 2019, for 25 mid-career dancers mentored by Canadian-Irani dancer Sashar Zarif, based on his practice of the dance of Mugham, a Central Asian genre of art. Lastly, the ODF also plans to showcase folk dances of South Asia.

Dance has always been a vibrant cultural practice of Bangladesh. ODF will facilitate skill transfer, networking, collaboration and innovation.

Arising From Grit, Toil And Determination: A Dancer's Story

Taking up dance as a career is never easy, whichever part of the world one is in! But in Bangladesh, a Muslim majority country, with scant resources and funding for dance, it is doubly difficult. However, as we know, if your heart yearns to move in sync with music and rhythm, dancers can be pretty resourceful and determined. One such story is that of young Bangladeshi dancer Md. Hanif.

Md. Hanif started working with our dance company, Shadhona, a decade ago. A young, shy boy, living in one of the many shanty settlements of Dhaka, he loved to dance. Hanif was reticent and pretty much uncommunicative, but he was totally transformed whenever he started dancing.

Through the years we've watched him doggedly finish school with a 4.5 GPA, all this while helping his two young sisters to go through school, supporting his family financially and earning his own living expenses by giving 'private tuition' to students and earning money dancing with Shadhona. We've watched him continue to dance, in spite of all odds. Hanif mostly walked to and from home to our studio, a good few kilometres, to save up, and rarely spent money on himself. Finally, the

Arts Department of the US Embassy identified him, due to the generous efforts of a couple of sincere officials there. They put him through a year of Computer and English lessons, which later helped him to apply for a scholarship.

In 2014, Hanif participated in 'Made in Bangladesh', the Bangladesh-German production directed by Helena Waldmann. As an aside, in spite of all my efforts to make Hanif save his substantial earning from this project for himself, he spent it all to ensure that his father no longer had to do manual labor to look after their family of six.

A beautiful documentary film, 'Above This City', by Australian film-maker Georgia Foulkes-Taylor, movingly captures the dreams and aspirations of two young dancers from Bangladesh, including Hanif.

In between, Kathleen Weitz, an American dancer, took Hanif under her wings. Finally, Hanif received an ICCR Scholarship from the Government of India and has recently, successfully, completed his BA in Kathak from Rabindra Bharati University. While in Kolkata both Mitul Sengupta of Rhythmosaic and Ashimbandhu Bhattacharya supported Hanif's dance. A month ago, Hanif was awarded a second scholarship by ICCR for his Masters Degree. Excitingly, Akram Khan, the stellar British-Bangladeshi dancer, accepted Hanif for his Summer Intensive 2019 scheduled for August 2019 in Italy.

Every time I see Hanif grow from strength to strength, my faith in life is renewed.



Md. Hanif with Joy Alpuerto Ritter, at Orsaline 28, Italy, during the Summer Intensive 2019.



Hong Kong report

by Cathy Lau

21st Hong Kong Dance Awards 'Outstanding Performance by a Male Dancer': Shen Jie as Albrecht in *Giselle*, presented by Hong Kong Ballet. Photo: Conrad Dy-Liacco, courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet



There are lots of exciting happenings in Hong Kong in the first half of 2019. One of the highlights was the recent launch of Freespace, a performing arts venue in West Kowloon Cultural District. As the new centre for contemporary performance, Freespace presents and supports thought-provoking, boundary-pushing, multi-genre productions and collaborations.

Freespace has both indoor and outdoor performing venues, blackbox theatre The Box, Livehouse live music bar, The Room and The Studio. The opening season includes a stellar line-up of dance programmes, including: *From a True Story – Christian Rizzo*, *Autobiography* by Company Wayne McGregor, *ON VIEW: Panorama*, and two residencies with City Contemporary Dance Company and Hong Kong Ballet.

In addition, Karen Cheung took over as the Head of Dance (Performing Arts) of the West Kowloon Cultural District in April. Cheung has worked in the dance sector for many years, with rich experiences and key roles in Guangdong Dance Festival, Guangdong Modern Dance Company, Beijing Dance Festival and City Contemporary Dance Company.

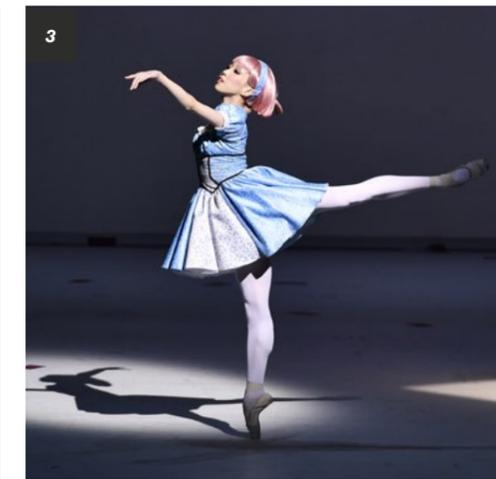
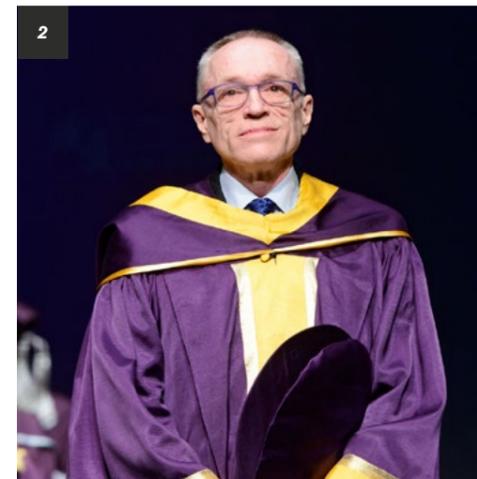
The **21st Hong Kong Dance Awards** were held in Kwai Tsing Theatre on 18 April, with a feast of dance by some of the best

Hong Kong dancers. It was a wonderful celebration to acknowledge outstanding achievements and promote the diversity of the Hong Kong dance industry.

The Lifetime Achievement Award was bestowed to the late Dr Tom Brown (1948-2018), in recognition of his immeasurable contribution to the development of dance in Hong Kong. Tom's life was one truly dedicated to dance. He nurtured generations of local dance artists during his 30-year teaching at the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Among the 13 distinguished awardees, *ALICE (in wonderland)* by Hong Kong Ballet received three awards: Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer, Outstanding Ensemble Performance and Outstanding Costume Design Award. Tai Kwun, the largest restoration project ever undertaken in Hong Kong, received both Outstanding Service to Dance and Outstanding Small Venue Production Awards.

In the coming months, HKDA will organise a workshop series on Writing Dance Movements, produce the '*New Force in Motion*' Series in September 2019 as a performance platform to support young talented choreographers, and attend the Ocean Dance Festival and WDAAP General Meeting in November.



1. 21st Hong Kong Dance Awards: Gala Performance. Photo: : Worldwide Dancer Project

2. 21st Hong Kong Dance Awards 'Lifetime Achievement Award' awarded posthumously to Dr Tom Brown (1948-2018).

3. 21st Hong Kong Dance Awards 'Outstanding Performance by a Female Dancer': Chen Zhiyao as Alice in *ALICE (in wonderland)*, presented by Hong Kong Ballet. Photo credit: Conrad Dy-Liacco, courtesy of Hong Kong Ballet.

4. 21st Hong Kong Dance Awards: group photo of Awardees. Photo: Worldwide Dancer Project

India report

by Meghna
Bhardwaj



A view of Mermaid Resort, the main venue of Ocean Dance Festival and the WDAAP AGM 2019.

This report is not as much focussed on the events and activities happening within the geographical limits of India, but on an important exchange that is soon to happen between WDA India and WDA Bangladesh. This makes this report exciting from the point of view of how it effectively dissolves the idea of nationality-based reports, and therefore starts to encourage important moments of cross-border interactive activities within a more coherent realm of the World Dance Alliance community. At the moment, WDA India is gearing up for the Ocean Dance Festival, WDAAP Annual General Meeting and conference to be held in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, this November. So far, a large number of extremely interesting participants – research scholars, dancers, students, choreographers, and administrators, from India as well as from other parts of the world – have registered for the event. Students and faculty from two major universities of India – Presidency University in Kolkata, and Jawaharlal University in Delhi, who together form the WDA India Chapter – have been co-involved in overseeing the organisation of the event, while being in constant negotiation with Nrityajog and the Ocean Dance Festival Conference Committee in Bangladesh.

This team has welcomed most of the applications it has received in order to ensure that this opportunity is available to as many participants as possible. The work has been extremely smooth, and has been

facilitated by young members from both the organisations, rather than the older generation who have usually had to be at the helms of such organisations before. Of course, it bears important reflections for how those who have been the decision-makers thus far are encouraging an expansion of all the selection criteria involved while attempting to make it more democratic, open, and inclusive. A comprehensive website dedicated to the festival has also been designed, with a hope that the festival must continue to grow in its future editions.

The festival comprises scholarly gatherings that include individual paper presentations and panel discussions, alongside dance performances, under a broad theme 'Bridging the Gap'. While curating the performances, the organisers have been thoughtful in encouraging more younger artists to bring their short-works in progress, rather than aiming for large-scale productions, so that the new space they are trying to generate can stay experimental, intimate, and comfortable for each one to participate in informal conversations that are far more effective in encouraging new ideas and friendly associations than the more formal ones.

In terms of the festival's leadership scale, the organisers have been successful in inviting the renowned international choreographer of Bangladeshi origin, Akram Khan, to be the keynote speaker and to address the dance enthusiasts and writers

from both traditional and contemporary backgrounds. Apart from him, choreographer and multi-disciplinary performance artist Sashar Zarif, of Azerbaijani origin, has been invited as the mentor for the 15-day Choreolab that is to take place prior to the beginning of the festival.

One very important aspect of the festival is the Dance Outreach programme that the festival has dedicated to generating support for the Rohingya immigrants from Myanmar, which also brings light to the political significance of Bangladesh as a location for the festival. What it clearly suggests is the interventionist attitude with which the organisers have been working, especially their inclination to imagine dance as a space for social change and humanitarianism than as an apolitical realm of unthinking bodies.

Overall, the initiative appears significant from the point of view of how it brings one to imagine a more interactive South Asia and how it operates as beckoning call for broadening definitions of centres and peripheries.



Different spaces for studio performances at Mermaid Resort, the main venue of the Ocean Dance Festival, at Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh, in Nov 2019.



Malaysia report

by Bilqis Hijjas

A workshop on dances of Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan by Sashar Zarif, organised by Nusantara Performing Arts Centre in partnership with MyDance Alliance, at Five Arts Centre, Kuala Lumpur, in June 2019.

Photo: Bilqis Hijjas



In an under-resourced and largely self-funded community like ours, dance practitioners operate within their own little circles of mutual support. These personal networks are often based on ties of language, ethnicity or religion. While this strategy allows our dance cultures to survive, even to thrive, it also creates silos. Young Chinese dancers fighting for a place at prestigious national Chinese dance competitions are only ever seen by an ethnic Chinese audience. Indian classical dance practitioners seldom realise how much they share with classical ballet dancers. Contemporary dancers in Sabah, at one end of the country, may have neither met nor heard of their counterparts in Johor, at the other end.

Creating unity within this diversity is a real challenge; it is here that MyDance Alliance plays an important role in the local dance ecosystem. By organising events which cut across community boundaries, especially highlighting contemporary dance in its varied manifestations, we hope to bring people together on the same stage. Using the MyDance Festivals of the past as a blueprint, this year we presented the Dancebox Festival, a combined celebration of 30 years of The Actors Studio (the local theatre organisation which co-presents Dancebox) as well as 18 years of Dancebox itself, which was first presented in 2001 in a tiny theatre space, literally underground, at Dataran Merdeka.

The Dancebox Festival ran from 11 to 14 April at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts

Centre, and featured 28 short works by about 200 dancers, ranging from classical ballet to contemporised Minangkabau plate dance, and from a cutting-edge criticism of modern consumerism accompanied by rocking live music, to a contemplative solo dance in the classical Chinese tradition by a dancer who uses a wheelchair. Our program began with looking back on some of the most significant companies and individuals involved in the development of contemporary dance in Malaysia, encompassed the dances embedded in various ethnic communities, and concluded with a glimpse of works by emerging choreographers.

We were also pleased to share the fruits of two of our committee projects during the Dancebox Festival. Committee member Lau Beh Chin has been giving free dance classes to young people from the Chin refugee community, with the help of MyDance members and interns. The students performed a traditional Chin bamboo dance in the festival's Dance in the Community segment.

Committee vice president JS Wong and committee member Mohd Faillul Adam collaborated on a project entitled Dancing Alone, mentoring the creation of short solo dance works. After a choreographic workshop and several rounds of presentation accompanied by critique earlier this year, nine choreographers presented their crafted solos at a free showing at NOW Theatre in March. Three of these works made their way to the New Dances/New Faces segment of the Dancebox Festival.

Other committee projects are also bearing fruit, including *Langkah*, which was launched by former committee member David Lim. Current committee member Leng Poh Gee has successfully attained a grant from the National Department of Arts and Culture to produce two more editions of this publication, which presents writing about contemporary dance process and practice in Malaysia, in a bilingual format.

Our other projects continue, including our Small Grants program. It is always a pleasure to be able to partner with other organisations to maximise the assistance that our Small Grants can provide. Recently, Alliance Française de Kuala Lumpur offered a scholarship for one Malaysian dancer to participate in the Camping dance training event in Paris; our Small Grant was able to help Silver Yee to attend. We also gave a Small Grant to Nadhirah Rahmat, to attend a workshop in Hofesh Schechter repertoire in Perth, generously supported by Paul Selwyn Norton and STRUT Dance, the National Choreographic Centre of Western Australia.

Canadian dancer and dance-scholar Sashar Zarif came through Malaysia on his way to the IETM meeting in Bangkok recently, and thanks to the World Dance Alliance network, Prof Mohd Anis Md Nor and his team at Nusantara Performing Arts Research Centre (NusPARC) were able to organise a special workshop by Sashar to introduce his unique vision of Central Asian dance to the Malaysian dance community. MyDance Alliance was happy to partner in presenting this workshop, sharing a type of dance which is little seen even in Malaysia's diverse dance world, but which resonates here thanks to shared Islamic spiritual roots.

Another international dance workshop, by the dancers of Art Move Concept

from France, introduced their brand of experimental hip hop, following a performance in Kuala Lumpur in April 2019. This was also a partnership project, organised by MyDance committee member Dalila Samad with Alliance Française de Kuala Lumpur.

We look forward to many more projects like these, bringing different facets of the Malaysian and the global dance community together.

Works from the Dancebox Festival at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre, 11-14 April 2019, produced by MyDance Alliance in partnership with The Actors Studio:

1. Fatin Nadhirah binti Rahmat and Muhd Nur Azammudin Tumiran in Aris Kadir's 'Nasi Putih', restaged by Norsafini Jafar, in Program A: Classic Restages. Photo: Huneid Tyeb

2. 'Ruakhua Tlaak (Bamboo Dance)', performed by the Chin Student Organization of Cheras Center, organized by ANJEZ Art Project, in Program C: Dance in the Community. Photo: James Quah

3. 'Anak Angkat', choreographed by Mohd Nuriqam, performed by Syamil bin Norzalahuddin, in Program D: New Dances/New Faces. This work premiered in the 'Dancing Alone' project at NOW Theatre in March 2019. Photo: Huneid Tyeb



Papua New Guinea report

by Naomi Faik-Simet



1. A Patete female dance at a Balabalaguan mortuary ceremony by the Kabalama clan in Matupit village, East New Britain Province, Papua New Guinea, in September 2018. Choreographed by Ia Burbur Tovue. Photo: Naomi Faik-Simet.
2. Leoshina Kariha in her Ms PNG/Pacific dance performance at the PNG Trade Event in Auckland, New Zealand, in May 2019. Photo: Florence Bunari.



Papua New Guinea's recent political changes saw the election of a new Prime Minister, Honourable James Marape. The new leadership comes at a time when the country is experiencing economic recovery stabilising growth in both public and private sectors. While these developmental activities take place at the national level, dance communities continue to thrive in schools and learning institutions, at international events and cultural festivals, and in village ceremonies. This report shares some positive developments of Papua New Guinea dance in the country and abroad.

In April, Papua New Guinea's all male hip hop dance troupe, the Wan Squad Crew, qualified to represent New Zealand and the South Pacific at the Hip Hop International Competition in Arizona, United States, in August this year. This came after the Hip Hop International South Pacific Islands qualifier held in Auckland, New Zealand, where Papua New Guinea's first international dance crew had finished in first place. This achievement inspired other aspiring dance artists in the country to value and develop individual dance interest and skills.

Another international event held in Auckland in May this year included the staging of Papua New Guinea's Tourism Trade Event organised by the PNG Tourism Promotion Authority, which involved the participation of tour operators. The Tour operators marketed the country's tourism products and connected with potential agents and individuals in Auckland. A key feature of this event was a performance by Ms Papua New Guinea/Pacific, Leoshina Kariha, who promoted Papua New Guinea's diverse cultures through dance. She is a talented and passionate young woman leader who was a great ambassador for Papua New Guinea dance, tourism and culture at the event in Auckland.

On the home front, Papua New Guinea dance is very much connected to ceremonial life. In September 2018, the Kabalama clan from Matupit village in East New Britain province staged a balabalaguan mortuary feast. An important part of the feast was the performance of Tolai indigenous dance repertoires. These dances involved great participation from the local Matupit people and drew cultural appreciation from the wider Tolai and non-Tolai community.

In each of these events, dance in Papua New Guinea is strengthened by its continued practice both in local and international contexts. It is encouraging to see the interest generated by the young to uphold dance traditions and art forms that reflect the country's complex cultural and social identity in a new political era.

Philippines report

by Nicole Primero



Participants of the International Dance Day celebration event *Saya Sayaw*, at *Mano Amiga Philippines*, April 2019

Dance Alliance Philippines and the Contemporary Dance Network Manila organized a three-day event in celebration of International Dance Day, in partnership with Myra Beltran Dance Forum, Guang Ming Dance Project, and *Mano Amiga Philippines*. The celebration was held from 27 to 29 April 2019.

The celebration opened with "Un-stagram", the third iteration of MB Dance Forum's *indepDance* series. It connotes being offline and an attempt to reclaim dancing bodies from virtual and technological attachments. It was a chance to express actual physical experience apart from social media apps. As in Karina Mansour's International Dance Day message, in this day and age where connection and connectivity have taken on new meanings, dance helps us re-establish that lost connection. Featured choreographers were Myra Beltran, Ma. Elena Laniog-Alvarez, Al Bernard Garcia, Raul "Buboy" Raquitico Jr., Sarah Maria Samaniego, Dingdong Selga, Michael Barry Que, Ghealyn Rose Undang and Mary Evangeline Recto. Most of the works were short and intimate, each followed by a narrative on the creative/creation process. The audience was eventually invited to discuss the performances.

The second part of the celebration, *Saya Sayaw*, was hosted by the *Mano Amiga Philippines* as part of their Art for Education fundraiser. Dance Alliance Philippines invited members of the network to showcase pieces highlighting the spirit of positivity that "every child can". *Saya Sayaw* explored

the alternative space provided by *Areté*, allowing unconventional and intimate experience with the audience. The platform featured performances both from established dance companies and emerging young artists. *Airdance* performed a collaborative choreography by Carlos Deriada Jr. and Rhosam Prudenciano Jr. Mia Cabalfin reunited with senior members of *Airdance* in a new quartet piece. Blanche Saagundo choreographed a strong and dynamic number for *Chameleon Dance Theater*. Company of *Ateneo Dancers* featured a solo piece from Maja Concio. Another soloist was the experimental Sasa Cabalquinto. *Buboy Raquitico's* duet represented *Daloy Dance Company*. *TEAM Dance Studio* danced two beautiful pieces created by Eli Jacinto.

"Can Do Can Dance" was the final event in celebration of International Dance Day. The UP Dance Company offered master classes in ballet, contemporary dance and improvisation. The workshops welcomed exchanges among teachers and dancers from varied backgrounds. The space was warm and inviting, allowing new movement explorations and friendly discourse. A small informal showcase brought the program to an end.

Perhaps the Philippines is living in a time of disquiet, discomfort and disconnect. However, dance is a healer. In her IDD message, Karina Mansour invited people to go beyond borders, crises, and limitations. She added, "I invite everybody to dance to their heartbeat, to their inner truth because it is from these internal movements, that lead

to internal revolutions, where real change happens.” The International Dance Day celebration is one of those times wherein artists come together to regroup and recalibrate. Different organizations make the effort to provide platforms for dance companies, choreographers and dancers

to encourage their involvement. However many, it is important to keep promoting these art practitioners through such events, and to show them appreciation to strengthen our ties. What better way to celebrate dance, than with a healthy and encouraging community of Filipino artists?



Performers during International Dance Day celebration event *Saya Sayaw*, at *Mano Amiga Philippines*, April 2019



1

Among the activities of the members of World Dance Alliance Singapore, Dr Siri Rama performed a specially-commissioned contemporary piece for the inauguration of a rare exhibition of an Indian painter held at Singapore Management University's (SMU) de Suanto Gallery on 23 January 2019. The exhibition was entitled 'Hemen Mazumdar: The Last Romantic'. Dr Siri's Kanaka Sabha dance Ensemble Mumbai performed a bharatanatyam production 'Ayyappa Charitram' for the All Bombay Nair Association on 2 March 2019 and for the annual Natyanjali festival at Cheddanagar Temple Auditorium on 20 February 2019. Kanaka Sabha (Singapore) ensemble performed kuchipudi and bharatanatyam for the Vasantotsavam at the Vadapathira Kalamman Temple on 23 May 2019.

'Crossings' produced by Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Dance Programme has become a must-see annual event for anyone interested in Singapore's emerging talent and burgeoning dance scene. This year's 'Crossings' presented on 26 and 27 April 2019 at Lee Foundation Theatre was an exciting evening of contemporary dance works featuring both local and international choreographers. Charlotte Boye-Christensen (Denmark) and Christina Chan (Singapore) 'invited and invigorated reflection', while Ezekiel Oliveira (Portugal) created a work that 'verged on spectacle and precision', and Jeffrey Tan's (Singapore) 'Swirling (Dark Fantasies)', was an exploration of dystopian classicism. This diverse repertoire was testament of the edge and versatility of NAFA's conservatory-style trained dancers.

Maya Dance Theatre presented *PERFECT*

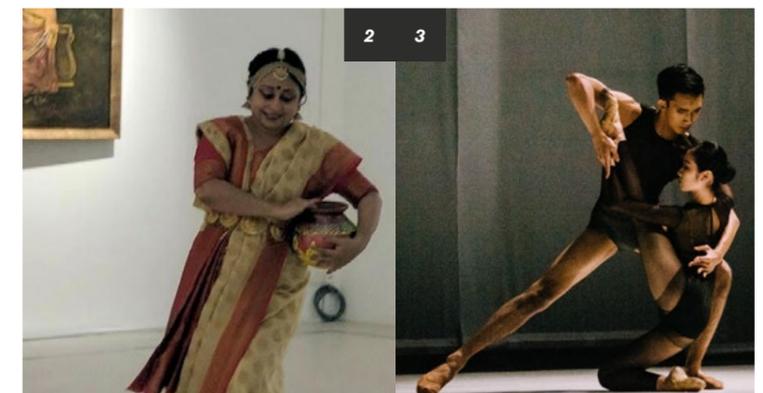
at the inaugural Want to Dance Festival in Taipei, Taiwan, 26-27 April 2019. The Want to Dance Festival is a dance exchange platform for independent choreographers using several alternative styled theatre spaces. 2019 saw the very first Want to Dance Festival, and helming it is the director of the Shinehouse Theatre, Po-Yuan Chung, and former Taipei Art Festival Director Yi-Wei Keng as co-curators. *PERFECT* is a new explorative work in progress that deals with the theme of body image and explores societal expectations for people to develop a 'perfect body'. *PERFECT* will be further developed into a full-length production with IPTANZ (Germany), and will be presented in Germany in September 2019 and thereafter in Singapore in December 2019.

Dance Dynamics held its third cultural dance showcase on 29 Dec 2018 at the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre. Highlights of the programme included classical Chinese dance 伊人如画 and 鸿雁 and ballet 小雨.

Singapore report

by Peter Gn

1. Dance Dynamics in their performance at Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre on 29 December 2018.
2. Dr Siri Rama dancing at de Suanto Gallery for the exhibition 'Hemen Mazumdar: The Last Romantic' on 23 January 2019.
3. Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Dance Programme students in 'Crossings' at Lee Foundation Theatre, 26-27 April 2019. Photo: Jeff Low



2 3

Taiwan report

by Su-Ling Chou



Spring is the time when the members of WDAAP-Taiwan present their achievements after half a year's work on dance research and performances. In the meantime, the graduates from universities and high schools also have their presentations after three or four years' training. Those young dance artists challenge themselves to present dance concerts in various styles with individual characteristics that are different from the former generations.

It is with great honor that Tso's Dance Association, one of major organizational members of WDAAP-Taiwan, was invited again by the Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Kaohsiung City Government, to produce a full-evening production in the 2019 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF). Following the 2015 production *Peter and*

Wolf and Carnival of Animals, 2016's *Something about Growing Up*, 2017's *The Mysterious Journey*, and 2018's *Pulcinella*, the project in 2019 entitled *Taiwanese Young Dancers Flying to the World* is the fifth production in KSAF. Dancers from elementary, junior high, and senior high schools worked together for eight months aiming toward presenting their best for the final production. Accompanied by Kaohsiung Youth Symphony Orchestra, this production was presented with two beautiful string compositions, *Serenade for String Orchestra* composed by Tchaikovsky and *Four Seasons of Taiwan* by Masaaki Hayakawa. The guest choreographer, Francesco D'Astici, was invited to work for KSAF for the third time. Under the title *The Legend of Atlantis*, the artist used stories from Greek myth to describe the music of *Serenade for String Orchestra*. He focused on preparing young dancers in a variety of dance styles. The other piece, *Four Seasons of Taiwan*, was choreographed by two local dance artists, Ya-ting Chang and Kuo-chun Wang. Both choreographers aimed at portraying the beautiful scenery of four seasons in Taiwan using fruits, butterflies, and flowers to fill the stage. All the young dancers worked together on weekends for eight months and made great progress throughout this beautiful production. Aiming at cultivating these artistic seeds in this city, Kaohsiung City Government makes every effort to promote arts education from K to 12 and help those dance talents to challenge themselves in building up their future



Taiwanese Young Dancers Flying to the World at the 2019 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF), produced by Tso's Dance Association.
1. 'Four Seasons' of Taiwan, choreographed by Ya-ting Chang and Kuo-chun Wang. Photo: Chun-yung Lin
2. 'The Legend of Atlantis', choreographed by Francesco D'Astici. Photo: Su-Ling Chou

professional dance careers.

After one year's absence, the International Young Choreography Project (IYCP) is back in 2019. This year, we have received more talented young applicants from the WDA regions than ever, and the competition was especially high. Eight choreographers (one from WDA Americas, three from WDAAP and four from Taiwan) were selected and will

join together at Kaohsiung, Taiwan, in July this year. They will work with local dancers from 1 to 19 July and the final performances will be on 20 and 2 July. With a limited budget, WDAAP Taiwan has been working hard to support and organize the event. It will be a great joy to see these talented young dance artists developing their good works through this international platform.

Taiwanese Young Dancers Flying to the World at the 2019 Kaohsiung Spring Arts Festival (KSAF), produced by Tso's Dance Association: 'The Legend of Atlantis', choreographed by Francesco D'Astici. Photo: Chung-yun Lin



WDA-AP Taiwan Members Activities, January - June 2019

Performances:

Kaohsiung City Ballet

- *2019 Dance Shoe*, 12 January at Jihshsan Hall of Kaohsiung City Arts Center, 26 January at Native Theater of International Hall of Tainan Municipal Cultural Center, Taiwan

Tso's Dance Association

- 2019 KSAF *Atlantis & Four Seasons of Taiwan*, 27-28 April at Kaohsiung City Dadong Arts Center

Horse

- *Free Step*, 15 June at Horse Studio, Taipei, Taiwan
- *Behalf*, by Pichet Klunchun & Chen Wu-kang, 22-23 March at National University of Singapore, Singapore, 24-25 April at Les spectacles vivants du Centre Pompidou, France, 3-4 May at Kaaitheater, Brussel, Belgium
- *Culture On the Move*, 1 May at Huashan 1949 Creative Park, Taipei, Taiwan

Sun-Shier Dance Theatre

- CoDance Festival 2019, 11-24 March at Huashan Umay Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

TTC Dance

- *A Blooming Tree*, Want To Dance Festival, 26 April at Monga-Longshan Cultural & Creative B2, Taipei, Taiwan

Century Contemporary Dance Company

- *The Present*, 14-16 June at Huashan Umay Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

B. Dance

- *MILLENNIALS*, 4-6 January at Experimental Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

- *Floating Flowers*, 29-30 March at Staatstheater Mainz, Germany, 5 April at Centro Culturale Altinate San Gaetano, Padua, Italy, 14-15 April at Suzanne Dellal Centre, Tel Aviv, Israel
- *B.OOM by B.dance*, 28-29 June at Well Spring Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

Hung Dance

- *Boundless*, 11-13 January at Experimental Theater, Taipei, Taiwan
- *Birdy*, Macau City Fringe Festival, 18-20 January at DIOCESE DE MACAU, Macau
- *Raining in the Room*, 21-23 March at Huashan Umay Theater, Taipei, Taiwan
- *On the Road*, Tanzplattform Bern, 20-22 June at Vidmarhalle, Liebfeld, Bern, Switzerland

Workshops:

Horse

- *A Duet With You*, 27 April, 4-5 May at G9 Park, Chiayi, Taiwan

TTC Dance

- TTC Dance Summer Dance Workshop, 1 June at Wenshan Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

B. Dance

- *B.OOM Workshop*, 22-23 June at Bei-An Junior High School, Taipei, Taiwan

Exhibition:

Horse

- *Rama's House: Pichet Klunchun X Wu-Kang Chen*, 1-30 June at Wistaria Tea House, Taipei, Taiwan

2019 WDA Events



The Ocean Dance Festival 2019

22-25 November 2019
Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh

Including twinning projects, a choreolab, seminars, workshops and performances, in the beautiful beach resort town of Cox's Bazar. Special discounts available for South Asian dance students, WDA members, performers and presenters.

For more information, check out the event website:
www.oceandancefestival.com

8-13 July 2018



Panpapanalya
2018 Adelaide Australia



Call for Papers for Panpapanalya Joint Proceedings

We are pleased to finally announce the Call for Proceedings of Panpapanalya 2018: the 2nd joint dance congress of daCi and the WDA Education and Training Network.

This is a tight turnaround due to administrative delays and we look forward to receiving full paper submissions from those who presented papers at Panpapanalya, by 30th September 2019.

Please click [here](#) to access Guidelines for submitting full paper submissions.

2020 WDA Events

WORLD DANCE ALLIANCE GLOBAL SUMMIT & INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DANCE ACADEMIES 2020

Long Table Discussion | Pecha Kucha | Pop Up Dance | Open Studio
Networking | Dance Performance from International Dance Academies

Hong Kong

15-21.6.2020

Co-Presented by Hong Kong Dance Alliance & The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts
Supported by Hong Kong Arts Development Council

Festival Partner

SWEAT

– Hong Kong International Dance Workshop Festival
Masterclasses | Topical workshops | Dance Hackathon
Improvisation nights | Dance Film Screening | Networking

1-21.6.2020

Presented by The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

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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