

Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





From Royal New Zealand Ballet inaugural digital festival Ballet Bites. *Artemis Rising* choreographed by Sarah Foster-Sproull. Photo: Dan Harris

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Cover: Dancers from Pichet Klunchun Dance Company outdoors in Paris in December 2021, after the performance of classical Khon masked dance piece “The Combat of Rama and Todsakan,” at Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac. Photo: Korn Takang

‘Kathabi’ for Crossings 2022 choreographed by Filomar Tariao, performed by Sabril Amin and Pia Custodio, on 29 & 30 April 2022, at Lee Foundation Theatre, NAFA, Singapore. Photo: Bernie Ng



Executive reports

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



President's report

by Urmimala Sarkar Munsi

We began again

We have started dancing again - creatively, hopefully, joyfully, and experimentally into the future with 'Begin Again', a mentored and funded screendance project for dancers/choreographers from Bangladesh and India.

The 'Begin Again' Project has been one of the highlights of this dark period from March 2020 till March 2022. Although it has been reported in detail in previous and subsequent editions of Channels, I would like to give an overview of the process.

The project was conceived on the basis of input from Canadian-Azerbaijani-Iranian choreographer Sashar Zarif after the Ocean Dance Festival in Cox's Baza, Bangladesh, in 2019. In the leadup to that event, he mentored the Choreolab of young dancers, mostly from Bangladesh and India, which led to a performance of their work in progress *Chaand* during the festival. Sashar Zarif continued working online with the same group of dancers during the darkest days of the pandemic-related lockdown.

It was the sense of hopelessness and vulnerability that the dancers were sharing with Sashar that led to him and the WDAAP planning an online video fundraising benefit to collect money for providing a small grant

to ten young/emerging choreographers/dancers to each produce a screendance film. The process was planned meticulously as a mentoring/mentored one.

The 'Begin Again' grant worked like magic, with a distinguished panel of assessors helping to select, mentor and energize the creative efforts of the eleven chosen grantees. As promised, we shall be showing the eleven dance films in one 45-minute slot during the SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Festival and Global World Dance Alliance event, 22–25 June 2022. This project has helped us renew friendships and make new ones as well, and that is what WDAAP has always done.

The usual routine of ongoing work for *The Journal for Emerging Dance Scholarship* [JEDS] had to come to a near standstill during the last two years. The world stopped functioning, and so did our website for JEDS. The new guest editors for JEDS are ready to take over and the recreating, re-launching, and reclaiming of the website is complete. The renewed and re-energized JEDS is ready with its new volume.

Let us use the wonderful upcoming events in and around the SWEAT Festival and the WDAAP Global Meetings to think together about the future.



Vice President's report

by Stella Lau

I am so excited to share with you all that after two years of postponement, the SWEAT International Festival co-organized by the Hong Kong Dance Alliance and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and funded by the Hong Kong Arts Development Council will commence later this month from 17 to 25 June. We very much look forward to seeing everyone from dance communities across the world coming together, online, to share and to re-connect. I will be sharing more about this event in the next issue.

According to the World Health Organization, dance can improve the wellbeing and quality of life of those who have Parkinson's disease. As such, I have the pleasure to share that the School of Dance of the HKAPA has received a HK\$10 million funding to establish the "Dance Well Project", which is funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust. This 3-year project is a creative movement programme designed for people with Parkinson's

disease and people of different ages and abilities through providing dance classes and activities in artistic spaces. The project was originated from the Dance Well initiative which was introduced by the Municipality of Bassano del Grappa and the Centro per la Scena Contemporanea in Italy in 2013. This is exciting news given that we have had a challenging first half of 2022 when Hong Kong was reeling from the impact of the fifth wave of Covid.

Meanwhile, our counterparts across Asia Pacific region continue to bring people together through dance events online and/or in-person which are thoroughly reported in this issue. I remain optimistic about our future through practising dance: it brings better quality of life, and develops interpersonal relationships in combating the isolation that often accompanies challenging times like these, and most importantly it continues to develop creativity and new forms of expression.

Please keep well.

SWEAT
HONG KONG
INTERNATIONAL
DANCE WORKSHOP
FESTIVAL



Secretary's report

by Julie Dyson

The WDA Global Executive Meeting

The WDA Global Executive meeting was held on 20 June 2022, with several important discussions taking place and decisions made.

After much discussion, it was decided to reintroduce the original non-hierarchical WDA organisation by reverting to an annual regional Presidents' meeting rather than placing responsibility on a Secretary-General. This position had been created in 2008 and was first held by Cheryl Stock (Australia), and then by Mohd Anis Nor (Malaysia), both of whom brought great credit to WDA through their international networks and the development of policies and procedures.

However, in a new post-pandemic world of communication, the Executive agreed that an annual Presidents' meeting would now best serve members, and this new format has therefore been adopted for World Dance Alliance, following a formal motion.

The following comments were made in relation to this restructure:

- Public visibility of the organisation as well as its role in providing public visibility to the dance community is what we need to be working on very seriously, especially in our role as service providers.

- It was agreed to invite all dance organisations to become WDA members, rather than just nominated chapter and chapter heads from each country, and allow individuals to choose to be global members or members of country organisations.
- Conformity across regions in Policies & Procedures is desirable.
- Immediate past WDAAP President Yunyu Wang reported that she had established the first WDA chapter in China, named WDAAP Beijing.
- There is an urgent need for a WDA activities calendar, but it was noted that 'everyone doesn't have to be in everything'. One region can lead global discussion, roundtable talks, meetings with global institutions etc. WDA has so many stars who could lead these discussions!
- It was agreed to establish a separate website group to redevelop the WDA Global website to include links to each region and a simple drop-down menu for ease of navigation. The WDAAP President will seek quotes from India for this work with an appointed working group.
- The JEDS (Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship) [website](#) has now been secured and is operational again.

The WDAAP Annual General Meeting

The World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific held its Annual General Meeting via Zoom on 25 June 2022.

This was the first AGM held since 2019 in Bangladesh.

The President, Urmimala Sarkar Munsî, noted that WDA had tried bringing the whole world together for some time, but because everyone has their own way of functioning we can't expect templates to be followed – differences have to be understood.

The pandemic has changed communication and so there is no funding for personal visits. WDA's role has changed, and the President invited comment on the following ideas that are now possible on digital platforms:

- Invite people to highlight organisations which are important – we don't know where/who they are! We would like to talk about their work – digital dialogue is possible with them.
- Organise talks or presentations, now it's easier to share platforms.

WDAAP had run a very successful project in 2020 called 'Begin Again', generated by Sashar Zarif for dance film development in Bangladesh and India, with paid grants available to applicants. The films were all made by unrelated people through an independent selection process. Each filmmaker was given USD\$300 each, thanks to donations and support partially from the Chinlin Foundation for Culture and Arts

based in Taiwan/USA. All 11 films were shown at the SWEAT festival.


Network reports appear in full in this edition of Channels, but all network chairs reported some important activity, even through the pandemic periods of the last two years.

There was discussion about CID and its relationship with UNESCO. It was noted that WDA has been excluded from UNESCO membership because only one artform organization is allowed. However, WDA is very closely allied with ITI UNESCO and works together to choose the official IDD Message each year, although this creates some confusion, with CID also issuing an 'official' message. International Dance Day was created by the ITI, not by CID. ITI/ UNESCO Director Tobias Biancone, based in Shanghai, did write to CID warning of its illegal action in announcing an IDD Message.

Lubna Marium (Bangladesh) informed WDAAP that the [Khajuraho Dance Fest](#) organisers, the Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet evam Kala Academy (UAKSKA), has proposed that WDAAP curate, from 2023 onwards, a week-long Contemporary Dance Platform beside their main Dance Festival held each year from 20 to 26 February at Khajuraho (Madhya Pradesh, India) for the last 48 years.

A proposal to set up a WDAAP subcommittee to consider the proposal was agreed to.

It was suggested that the next WDAAP AGM be a hybrid event of online and offline.



Harshini Sukumaran in her work "Reflection of Pathways" in *Protégées: New Dances by Women Choreographers*, at Nero Event Space, PJ Performing Arts Centre, Malaysia, on 13 March 2022. Photo: Nazir Azhari

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 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 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 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 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.

Research & Documentation Network report

by **A.P. Rajaram, co-chair**

It's a great pleasure to inform everyone that the Research and Documentation chapter has managed to create an independent website for the WDA journal the *Journal of Emerging Dance Scholars* (JEDS) with the support of WDA-Taiwan chapter and the address is www.jedsonline.in. Currently the website is under construction and testing, and it will take another month or so to iron out the bugs. This effort would not have been possible without the support and guidance from the WDA president, Dr Urmimala Sarkar.

The network was also actively involved in the process of selection of the Pecha Kucha presenters for the [WDA Global Summit 2022](#) conference which was part of the SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Festival. This is both an online and offline festival presented by the HKAPA, co-presented with the Hong Kong Dance Alliance (HKDA), which brings global discourse to a virtual stage by sharing a fascinating collection of digital research projects, performance screenings, creative presentations, international choreographer's dialogues, academic discussions and many more. The theme of the conference is Dance Offer/On New Energy; the focus of this theme is to promote dance and wellness in response to the Covid-19 pandemic which has affected the wellbeing of dancers and dance worldwide.

The SWEAT festival conducted between 17 and 25 June 2022, within which the WDA conference was conducted between 22 and 25 June 2022.



now at www.jedsonline.in

The conference sub-themes are:

- Sustaining wellness and creativity through and under the “new normal”
- Leading the Arts through the pandemic
- Empowering dance artists of tomorrow and amid the pandemic: Emerging areas in practice and research
- Reimagining the future of dance – light after lockdown

The conference invited many researchers and practitioners of dance, to explore and examine different facets of dance not only in scientific research, but also in community projects, education and training for dancers. The four-day virtual conference featured a series of riveting and inspiring paper presentations, Pecha Kucha presentations, dance film screenings and more. Along with the conference, the summit also paves way to explore with opportunity for scholars, performers, choreographers, community dance artists, local and international dance groups and companies, to congregate for the underlined issues and inspire further developments.

The Research and Documentation network is proud to have played a part in the organisation of this global event.

Finally, we are excited to let you know about the new Google Group networking initiative from WDA-AP's Research & Documentation (R&D) Network. This Google Group will enable network-wide communication between events, for greater awareness and collaboration in dance research and writing across the region, on a virtual space. We hope our participants can share their interesting work among each other! Please look out for announcements of our new Google Group coming soon on our WDAAP Facebook page and website. If you are interested to join the Google Group, please email [Anja](#) or [Raja](#).



Chapter reports

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

Chapters

Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia, Bangladesh, 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.

Students of the Dance Division, Tsoying High School, performed 2022 *Bolero in Kaohsiung* choreographed by Shu-yi Chou at Kaohsiung Metro-R9 Central Park, Kaohsiung, Taiwan on 29 May 2022. Photo: Su-ling Chou

Aotearoa New Zealand report

by Sheryl Lowe

Sublime Interludes, created and performed by Tabitha Dombroski and Björn Aslund.



The Aotearoa New Zealand dance community faced renewed disruption during the first half of 2022, impacted along with the rest of the world by resurgent phases of COVID-19 and its ever evolving variants. Cancellation, postponement, adaptation and reinvention all featured in large measure during this period for our dance artists and practitioners.

Kicking off in January, Contemporary Dance uNZipped, a significant professional development event for secondary school dance educators, was jointly hosted by University of Auckland and The Auckland Performing Arts Centre, ahead of protective restrictions coming into play with the rise of the Omicron COVID-19 variant. Many events down the track, however, fared less well in terms of sidestepping the impact of Omicron.

Two major art festivals, Aotearoa New Zealand Festival of the Arts and the Auckland Arts Festival scheduled for February and March, respectively, were sadly forced to cancel most of their live performances. Auckland Arts Festival presented a scaled-down programme of online works, including choreographer Ross McCormack's *Artifact: How to Behave in a Museum*, the *Siva Afi Festival* (based on the traditional art-form from Samoa – siva afi/ fire knife dancing), as well as renowned New Zealand choreographer Michael Parmenter's *Full Moon Folk Ball*.

The New Zealand Fringe Festival was able to present a portion of its shows during February/March, innovatively following up

with "ReFringe" later in May, to showcase award winners and previously disrupted shows and artists. A highlight in this return season was the popular work *Sublime Interludes* created and performed by Tabitha Dombroski and Björn Aslund.

Good Company Arts, led by artistic director and Arts Laureate Daniel Belton, launched their dance film *Tiger (Silver Lotus)* at the beginning of February to honour the auspicious start of the Lunar New Year of the Tiger. Described as a "high energy dance opus" the film showcases dancer Airu Matsuda and has since garnered multiple international awards. You can view the film and read more about it [here](#).

The Performance Arcade in Wellington, being an outdoor festival, was also fortunately able to proceed in February, as was the Dunedin Fringe Festival in March, while the Nelson Fringe Festival was postponed until June. Many other dance presenters pivoted their work to digital and online platforms – a common strategy over the last two pandemic-fraught years.

Disability-led company Touch Compass marked in February, their already substantially postponed 25th Anniversary Celebrations with */ritaha/*, a live-streamed performing arts festival of digital works, tactile installations, improvised and choreographed dance, innovative theatre and aerial performance. Emerging and established artists were featured including the multi-award-winning Lusi Faiva, Rodney Bell and Suzanne Cowan.

Rituals of Destruction by experimental

dance artist Alexa Wilson, conceived originally as an interarts live project, was reimagined as a cinematic project having already suffered several postponements due to COVID lockdowns/restrictions. The work premiered in March with viewers able to select from a personal menu of online interdisciplinary art interweaving video, performance, dance, music and installation.

Also executed in March, was the first ever live-streamed virtual staging of the annual *ASB Polyfest* festival, with inspiring youth performances from Auckland secondary schools celebrating the diverse cultures of Aotearoa New Zealand, performed on several competitive stages including a "Diversity Stage" supported by Unitec. Dance cultures represented included Aotearoa, Samoa, the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Fiji, Tokelau, China, Korea and India.

International Dance Day 2022 was once again celebrated online this year in April, including via a Zoom event hosted by Wellington's YouthDance Education Trust, offering free online community workshops spanning a multitude of dance cultures and genres.

The Royal New Zealand Ballet, launched a new RNZB Screen programme with its first-ever digital festival in May. Twelve new works and fresh takes, were created specially for online presentation featuring works by guest choreographers, choreographers from within the Company, as well as RNZB Choreographers in Residence Loughlan Prior and Shaun James Kelly.

Pacific Dance New Zealand presented their work *MĀUI* as a special theatre film event in Auckland in June – billed as a reawakening of Māori and Pasifika stories through dance, music and theatre.

As COVID-19 restrictions have gradually eased in recent months, dance

performances and tours have been progressively reinstated. Contemporary dance company Footnote New Zealand Dance completed a national tour during April/May of their new full-length work *Dry Spell* – choreographed by Rose Philpott.

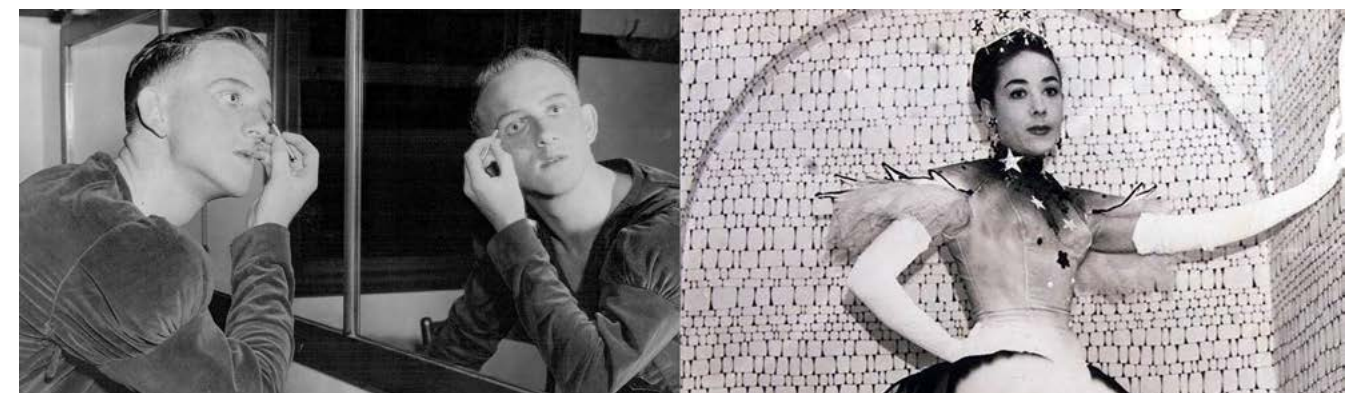
The New Zealand School of Dance staged its solo season *For by Four* in May. Four choreographers paired up with four graduating contemporary dance students to create new works offering a unique window into New Zealand's contemporary dance future and emerging new talent.

In June the New Zealand Dance Company celebrated their return to live performance with the eagerly awaited and repeatedly COVID-postponed double bill *Night Light*, launching two new works – NZDC Co-artistic Director Tor Columbus's *The Fibonacci*, and emerging Māori choreographer Eddie Elliott's *Uku - Behind the Canvas*.

We are devastated to have lost two treasured New Zealand dance legends during these last six months. **Dorothea Ashbridge**, ONZM passed away just before the new year – a dancer with London's Royal Ballet, and resident Ballet Mistress for Limbs Dance Company, she was also a ground breaking television choreographer, teacher, coach and international ballet competition adjudicator.

Russell Kerr ONZM, QSM, sadly left us in March. An internationally acclaimed dancer, former Royal New Zealand Ballet Artistic Director, choreographer, producer, Arts Foundation Icon, "Father of Ballet" in Aotearoa and teacher, coach and mentor to many generations of leading New Zealand dancers. Both Dorothea and Russell will be enormously missed and long celebrated for their respective major lifetime contributions to New Zealand dance.

L-R: Russell Kerr in London, 1951, and Dorothea Ashbridge at the Covent Garden Opera House, late 1940s.



Australia report
by Julie Dyson

An article from *The Canberra Times* on 4 May 2022, covering the donation of the ballet shoes of Robert Helpmann and Marilyn Jones to the Ausdance National collection at the National Library of Australia. Pictured are NLA director general Marie-Louise Ayres, Ausdance ACT director Cathy Adamek, and Ausdance National vice-president Julie Dyson.



A new federal government

Australians voted in a new federal government in May, and with it came an experienced new Arts Minister, Tony Burke, who has been Shadow Arts Minister since the Labor Party lost office in 2013.

In a statement after the election, Mr Burke noted that “the political attack on the arts and entertainment sector is now over”, and that “this is a sector that has been hit hard by COVID-19, and rebuilding will take time.”

“I don’t intend to waste a moment. As I announced during the election campaign, the first step is developing a comprehensive cultural policy to bring drive, direction and vision back to the sector.

“In the coming months I will embark on a thorough, nationwide consultation in each State and Territory to inform this cultural policy. It is important for us to get this right – but speed is of the essence.”

In a further appointment in support of the industry, the Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese, has appointed a Special Envoy for the Arts, Susan Templeman, (Member for Macquarie), who will be promoting and supporting the Arts in her newly-created role.

Ms Templeman noted, “I am delighted to have the opportunity to work closely in this new role with the Minister for the Arts, Tony Burke, with his vision for a cultural policy that rebuilds and shapes the sector’s future.”

Ausdance National strategic planning

Ausdance National, in the meantime, is working to re-establish its post-Covid strategies, and had its first face-to-face meeting in more than a year in late May.

Facilitated by Diversity Australia’s Dr Gökem Acaroğlu, board members spent two days together unpacking current programs, projects, partnerships and services, and resolved to clarify purpose and goals to ensure they are more equitable and inclusive.

- Ausdance National –
- Is committed to examining, better understanding and advocating for equity, anti-discrimination and intersectional diversity in the Australian dance environment.
 - Prioritises safety in all its forms and supports safe spaces for such discussions.
 - Values the unique capacity of dance for cross-cultural exchange, knowledge-sharing, artistic expression, healing and storytelling.
 - Promotes respectful communication, interactions and behaviour across all platforms throughout the dance community.

The Australian Dance Awards

The board has also issued a [statement](#) about the future of the Australian Dance Awards, which will be reviewed to ‘consider the relevance of the Awards in today’s world,

and their impact and value in serving the national dance community and the mission and vision of Ausdance National, including their accessibility, their inclusivity and their viability.’

The Tertiary Dance Council of Australia (TDCA)

The TDCA is made up of academic members from Australia’s higher education institutions offering programs in dance and dance education, and includes New Zealand observers.

The TDCA made a pre-election [statement](#) and several recommendations, including about the need for a national cultural policy, arts research and the issue of ministerial interference in Australian Research Council grants.

- The TDCA wants to see:
- Commitment by all political parties to the development of a National Cultural Policy that includes arts education and training, and developed in consultation with artists, arts educators, the community, industry and peak arts bodies.
 - Allocation of ARC grants to a broader industry cohort to redress diminishing arts research in dance in particular. Ministerial interference in ARC decision-making processes must stop.
 - Support for research into the vulnerability of the arts in higher education.
 - Reversal of increased tertiary fees in the Creative Arts, made on the false premise that this area of study does not lead to employment.
 - Enabling of research into the private dance studio sector to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the viability of this important ‘feeder’ sector in dance training and employment.

Australian Dance Week and IDD

During Australian Dance Week the National Library of Australia (NLA) accepted two signed ballet shoes by Robert Helpmann and ballerina Marilyn Jones, recently discovered in the Ausdance ACT office.

In a presentation ceremony on International Dance Day, the NLA’s Director-General, Dr Marie-Louise Ayers, accepted the shoes into the Ausdance collection, already housed there in more than 240 boxes of papers, manuscripts, publications, photographs and posters.

The event was recorded in *The Canberra Times*.

The Ausdance collection at the National Library of Australia. Photo: Julie Dyson



Bangladesh report

by Zuairiyah
Mouli

A team of dancers from Shadhona Cultural Centre, performing in Paris, France, on 6 December 2021, with artistic direction by Lubna Marium



Of course, these have been difficult times. Yet dancers have discovered and explored new avenues of dance-related activities through the virtual world of the Internet. Performances galore have floated on social media and other streaming platforms. Additionally, Nrityajog, the Bangladesh chapter of WDAAP, has conducted several rounds of online workshops, in search of a framework for 'Bangladesh Dance Studies'. The workshops were mostly conducted by WDA-BD Chair Lubna Marium, and Dr. Munjulika Rahman, Assistant Professor, Dance Department, Williams College (USA).

Dance, of course, is not all about performance. Performance is only one aspect of dancing. According to the journal article 'Research in Dance: Educational and Scientific Perspectives', by of Sandra Minton, "The international field of dance has grown so immensely in the last one hundred years that, now, dance has truly become a diversified sector. Today, dance students study and research topics related to anthropology, business, career counseling, creativity, education, ethnology, feminism, history, kinesiology, medicine, psychology, science and technology." The dancers of Bangladesh, especially the younger generation, are acknowledging this fact day by day and they are taking an interest in the academics of dance.

In the school curriculum of Bangladesh,

music or dance is not included officially. In some schools, they have dance and music classes as co-curricular activities but it's not mandatory for the students to attend. Dance education is important because it helps to develop body awareness. Also, students become more expressive and creative. Dancers have submitted their request to the Ministry of Education and everyone is hoping that soon Dance will be added to the school curriculum of Bangladesh.

Many young Bangladeshi dancers now aim to pursue their undergraduate and masters degrees in dance from many prestigious universities in India or abroad. The Indian Council for Cultural Relations has made the process easier. Manmohan Singh announced the prestigious India Scholarship Scheme during his visit to Dhaka in September 2011 and ICCR introduced the scheme from academic year 2012-13 onwards, offering scholarships to students to undertake undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD programs. The ICCR annually offers about 33365 scholarships under 24 scholarship schemes. The Indian government has so far given the ICCR Scholarship to more than about 3000 Bangladeshi nationals.

Shanta Marium University of Creative Technology is the first university in Bangladesh to take the initiative to start a Department of Dance, established in 2003

in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The Department of Dance in the University of Dhaka started with only 10 students in the 2014-15 academic year, and now 103 students are enrolled in the B.A (Dance) Honors course in different academic years. Tagore University of Creative Arts is to be noted as the third University of Bangladesh which has recently been authorized to open a dance department by the University Grant Commission of Bangladesh. This was not an easy task. Senior dancers of Bangladesh have gone through a time-consuming struggle to make this happen.

As the borders are open now after the COVID-19 pandemic, cultural exchange programs are going on in full swing. Dance teams from Bangladesh Sishu Academy, Shadhona Cultural Centre, Trishul, DhritiNarthanalaya, Bhangima Dance Theatre and many other dance troupes have recently visited London, Paris, Switzerland, Greece, USA, Italy, India and some other countries of Asia and Europe. They have performed in prestigious platforms and received accolades from audience and dance critics there. Anandita Khan, principal dancer of Shadhona Cultural Centre, described her experience: "Paris resembled the picture of a lovely cultural metropolis that I had seen in literature as a child. Performing dance at the UNESCO House was a dream come true for me. It's such a living city that simply

walking on the roadside is enjoyable." Trina Majumdar, team leader of Trishul, shared her experience, "Our performance was very well received by the audience and dance critics there. The Honorable Bangladeshi Ambassador of Switzerland himself appreciated us and told us this type of cultural exchange program should often be organized. They also arranged made arrangements for us to visit Interlaken. The beauty of the place is beyond description." These experiences help dancers to develop their artistic expression. Dancers get the opportunity to experience other cultures and social practices which expand their thought process.

Another interesting dance initiative, 'Begin Again', was begun by Canadian-Iranian dancer Sashar Zarif. World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific then took up 'Begin Again' by funding small grants to support young and emerging dancers and choreographers from India and Bangladesh. Five young Bangladeshi dancers named Anandita Khan, S.M. Hasan Ishtiaque Imran, Umme Habiba, Kazi Raihan and Yasin Arafat received grants to complete their projects. They will also get the opportunity to showcase their videos at the SWEAT Festival in Hong Kong during the World Dance Alliance Global Summit events from 22-24 Jun 2022.

We look forward, though, to meeting up in-person sooner rather than later.



A team of dancers from Trishul performing in Geneva, Switzerland, on 6 December 2021, under the direction of Trina Majumdar.

Hong Kong report

by Nicholas Wong

At the recording of 23rd Hong Kong Dance Awards, hosted by Irene Lo (left) and Shirley Loong (right), with Chairperson Allen Lam (centre).



With caution, we speculated in our last Chapter report that the public was getting used to the anti-pandemic measures, and the dance sector in Hong Kong was gradually reviving. At the time of this report writing, five months later, having gone through the fifth wave of COVID infections, we report that we once again are diligently adapting to the ever-changing measures, and the Hong Kong dance sector is ever more resilient. After a two-years hiatus, the 23rd Hong Kong Dance Awards returned.

Despite the desire and preparation put in to organise a physical presentation and gala performance, the Hong Kong Dance Alliance (HKDA) reacted to the suddenly worsened pandemic situation and hosted an online ceremony on Facebook and YouTube on 16 April 2022. The results were announced via livestream, with special pre-recorded appearances from the two Lifetime Achievement Award awardees: Professor Shen Shir Ming and Tania Tang, both of whom are flagbearers of dance education and development in Hong Kong. Out of the 50 shortlisted nominations in the 15 categories, including the new Online Production Award, Hong Kong Dance Company received 5 awards, and Beyond Dance Theater's Kelvin Mak was selected

for the prestigious Tom Brown Emerging Choreographer Award. His powerful *Remnants* was also named Outstanding Medium Venue Production, alongside City Contemporary Dance Company's *Days Are Numbered*.

Dance performances have been frequently featured in multiple large scale Hong Kong festivals. Prior to theatre closures, the Jockey Club New Arts Power (NAP) presented Terry Tsang's *Mo4 Ngaan5 Tai2 – Juk6*, a cross-disciplinary interpretation of desire. Amidst the turbulent times, the 50th Hong Kong Arts Festival (HKAF) proceeded with a very strong online programme despite mostly cancelled in-venue events, which goes to show Hong Kong dance sector's growing online appearances. In collaboration with Tai Kwun, HKAF brought together different digital spaces that evolved from site-specific projects in truly innovative fashion, including *Stillness*, an interactive digital experience by choreographer and dancer Wayson Poon, and *The Island Whispers...*, an adaptation by internationally-renowned choreographer Helen Lai from her own dance theatre work of the same title.

In response to the fast-changing dance landscape, the Hong Kong Dance Alliance Executive Committee has invited Shirley



Loong to take on the role of Executive Director, acting as a senior decision-maker who has thorough understanding of the dance industry, such that HKDA will always be ahead of the worldwide curve. Shirley Loong, a dancer, educator, producer, and professional mediator, has been succeeded in her role as HKDA Chairperson by Allen Lam and Vice Chairperson Angela Hang.

Soon after the SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Festival, our very own DanceHub will be set for a return, once again providing a platform for local dance professionals to be in conversation, sharing their respective experiences gained from navigating the many waves of the pandemic. The 'New Force in Motion' series will also return later in the year, showcasing local emerging choreographers.

The Alliance and the Hong Kong dance sector has embraced the utilization of technology in dance as a means to deepen connection, which indeed has led to many fruitful discussions on the future of dance. However, this has by no means diminished our wish to return to theatres, for international travel and exchange, and for meet ups. With fingers crossed, we hope to see you all soon.



1. Choreographer Terry Tsang leading a body movement workshop which is part of *Mo4 Ngaan5 Tai2 – Juk6*. Photo courtesy of Jockey Club New Arts Power

2. Shirley Loong, previously Chairperson of Hong Kong Dance Alliance, stepped down and took on the role of Executive Director.

India report

by Paramita
Saha

Illustration by Sant Mote, visual and sound artist from Bangalore. Inspired by the digital performance of *Amorphous* for At the Still Point 2020. *Amorphous* is a dance x film project by dancer and choreographer Ronita Mookerji and filmmaker Priyanshi Vasani.



'Let us consider that stillness is also part of dance. Dance is not only about moving faster and more and bigger. Stillness is as integral to movement as silence is to speech.'

Navtej Singh Johar, President, Dance Alliance India

After a hiatus of two seemingly endless years, Dance Alliance India reassembled online to reconnect and, in many ways, to make a fresh start to this journey of World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific in India. As we remembered members of the Executive Committee who are no longer with us – Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan, Dr. Shanta Sarbjeet Singh and Dr. Sunil Kothari – we also prepared to constitute the new committee and find directions for the future of Dance Alliance India in these vastly altered and rapidly altering circumstances.

The new committee with fresh energy has begun to draft and plan ideas and events for the coming year and what better way but to start with World Dance Day in April. Our Vice President Urmimala Sarkar proposed the theme 'Changing the Dance. Dancing the Change.' What followed was a call for papers for an Emerging Scholars' Webinar that explored this transformation of dance and its meanings through the pandemic, new ways of dancing, learning, teaching, curating, presenting, watching, filming and writing, and the discovery of newer sites of performance, be it corners of our homes or on Zoom.

The idea was to encourage young and mid-career scholars and artists to present case studies, motivations, thoughts and approaches to how the landscape of dance has speedily transitioned beyond the familiar. With sub themes such as reimagining dance writing/presentations/productions, creating new audiences/communities, screen dance,

dance patronage and dance teaching/ learning, the Emerging Scholars Webinar received 20 research papers from scholars who are pursuing their PhDs, have just completed their PhDs or are mid-career practitioners or academicians from across South Asia. The papers, which were read in both vernacular languages and English, were presented in front of a panel of expert scholars, artists and academicians like Dr. Sruti Bandopadhyay and Dr. Aishika Chakraborty who contributed their time to listen to the 15-minute presentations and to read through the full papers to give feedback. The sessions were well-attended and led to incisive comments and discussions. These papers are expected to be published as an edited book in the upcoming months.

The webinar was in continuation to a panel discussion that took place earlier in the morning on 29 April with speakers Dr. Urmimala Sarkar, Dr. Aishika Chakraborty, Mandeep Raikhy, Paramita Saha, and Dr. Arshiya Sethi, moderated by Somabha Bandhopadhyay. The panel asked 'How to Sustain the Dance' and was broadcast live on Facebook on the Dance Alliance India page. The President's greeting set the tone right at the beginning as Navtej Singh Johar advocated for reflection on dance in these troubled times.

Dance Alliance Vice-President Urmimala Sarkar appealed for a plurality of voices in the centre of the celebration of dance: "Different bodies, with different kinds of environments, different identities, different kinds of freedoms." She reminded us that we cannot dance in historical times. We move and dance now. Through natural and social crises, the dance needs to survive in all

these bodies. We need to battle the invisible controls that the state, patriarchy, tradition and circumstances have over us and make space for younger voices.

Dr Arshiya Sethi reiterated that, "This timeless historicity that we dance in the classical tradition particularly needs to address the nowness, the hereness, the immediacy of our lives." Mandeep Raikhy raised his concerns about the hate-filled politics that he has found his body reacting to in the last few years. He went on to speak about The Secular Project and how it explored how responses to the political could be embodied, how the secular might be performed and questioned! As he travels through the country meeting and moving with artists and citizens, he feels that these conversations around the secular could be an archive of these times.

Dr Aishika Chakraborty pointed out that the university and academic space is still not ready for scholarship in dance. She spoke of her continuing research into disenfranchised bodies for whom dance was not an option or leisure or skill but pure livelihood. Paramita Saha spoke of the glaring gaps of privilege, access and power that emerged during these times; she mentioned that "to sustain is to include" and explored how one co-exists with not only other dancing bodies but also all the living and non-living forms of nature on this planet. She concluded by pointing out the difference in rigour of training and joy of training, when the spaces are unsafe and the dancing bodies are controlled. We are reminded to consider how we can create, communicate and collaborate without stepping on each other's feet! How can we get our audiences to think with us, nurture us and hold space for us?

Indonesia report

by Anastasia Melati

Participants in the discussion "The Spectrum of Dance: From Local to Diaspora" at Taman Budaya Yogyakarta on 1 April 2022: Anastasia Melati, Sulistiyani, Galih Prakiwi and Suyoto.



WDA Asia Pacific Indonesia Chapter would like to give a report on interesting discussions held in the city of Yogyakarta, as part of the regular bi-monthly discussion at Taman Budaya Yogyakarta. Two discussions, in April and June 2022, are worth mentioning here because of the importance of the topics.

The first discussion was held on 1 April 2022, presenting three speakers: Anastasia Melati, a dancer and a doctoral student at the Taipei National University of the Arts in Taiwan; Sulistiyani, a dance researcher who is based in Jakarta; and Suyoto, a Reog Wayang trainer from Bimo Murti Srandakan Studio, in Bantul district, Yogyakarta. The discussion was moderated by Galih Prakiwi, a lecturer at the Indonesia Institute of the Arts, Yogyakarta.

The topic was about dance, specifically traditional dance, that is carried to regions outside its original domain. Suyoto, who spoke first, related his experience of teaching dance to rural communities in Srandakan village at the outskirts of Yogyakarta city. He posed questions on the difference between dance performed by the rural communities and classical dance performed in Yogyakarta Palace, widely acclaimed as the source of traditional Javanese dance: Is there any difference between the two

performances? How did the rural community change their performance? When did they change it? Suyoto emphasized the different nature of the two performances. Albeit only 20 kilometers from the Palace, the rural communities took the liberty to perform their dance to suit their abilities and their economic conditions.

The second speaker, Sulistiyani, explored how the Javanese palace ritual dances are staged and performed in the capital city of Jakarta. The stately appearance in the capital raises the question of whether its new appearance has made the spiritual aspects of the Srimpi dance fade away. In its original format, the Srimpi is usually performed by four dancers. In Jakarta, in order to show its entertaining aspect, the number of the dancer has been increased threefold to twelve, raising a debate amongst the audience whether what is shown is original or not.

Anastasia Melati, the third speaker, discussed the dance performance by Indonesian migrant workers in Taiwan. Unlike the dancers who perform classical dance in Bantul and in Jakarta, the Indonesian migrant workers learn to dance independently. They have no teacher who can teach and direct them to the "traditions." They perform their own style of dance, which they shared

mostly with their fellow workers. This distinctive style raised the question of the position of the dance master who often serves as the guardian of the tradition. As Indonesian traditional dance, as its name suggest, is strictly guarded by pakem or standard patterns, can these migrant workers be called dancers in the traditional sense?

The three speakers in discussion have clearly shown that there are some problems with the so called pakem. Indonesian migrant workers, as to a lesser degree also the communities in Srandakan village, clearly do not abide by these traditional standards. They assert their agency to independently perform their own dances. They freely choose the dance they want, interpret the dance form, and even re-choreograph the dance they choose to adapt to their needs and abilities. They feel empowered because they are free to perform – even more in the case of migrant workers because they interpret and "re-choreograph" the dances they learn online from Youtube. At the same time, they can claim that what they perform is a representation of tradition. When connected with nationalism, they also interpret what they perform as Indonesian dance. What are the consequences? Some scholars state that in this Internet world, which colors modern life, craftsmanship has died (Nichols, 2017). If the same is true in the art world, including dance, what does this mean for the sustainability of traditional dance?

The next bi-monthly discussion will be held on 16 June 2022. The discussion will be centered on a book by neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, *Self Comes to Mind: Constructing the*



Conscious Mind (2010). Damasio put forward the hypothesis of how the physical brain generates awareness of oneself, subjectivity, the experience of consciousness and the mind. Damasio's observations are based on what we already know about the human brain and how it works.

The discussion invites neurosurgeon and neuroscience enthusiast Ryu Hasan, M.D., and centers around contemporary dance, which is associated with neuroscience. The topic is arguably still new in Indonesia. The other two speakers are notable contemporary dancers and choreographers Ari Ersandi and Ela Mutiara. Anastasia Melati will moderate the discussion.



Dancer-choreographer Ari Ersandi [above] and Ela Mutiara [left], who will participate in the next bi-monthly discussion on contemporary dance and neuroscience. Photos courtesy of the artists

Korea report

by Hong Jo Jun

Kang Sue-Jin, International Dance Day Message Author for 2022, at the celebrations for International Dance Day hosted by ITI-Korea and WDA-Korea on 29 April 2022 at Seoul Cyber University. Photo courtesy of ITI International.

International Dance Day 2022 Celebration



April 29, 2022 3p.m.

Cyber University, Korea



ITI-KOREA



WDA-KOREA

The International Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute [ITI-IDC] created International Dance Day [IDD] in 1982, to be celebrated on 29 April, the birthday of modern ballet founder Jean-Georges Noverre.

ITI-IDC selects the IDD Message Author every year from all around the world to write a message about the noble spirit of dance.

This year is the 40th Anniversary of IDD and we are very honored to have the first Korean chosen as the Message Author: Sue-Jin Kang, the Artistic Director of Korean National Ballet.

Therefore hosted the 2022 IDD Celebration here in Seoul, Korea, and announced the Message to the World.

I would briefly like to share the process of the selection of the Message Author. First, ITI-IDC sent the request for recommendations for a candidate in early December 2021. ITI-IDC had an online vote in late December 2021 and reported the list of nominees to the ITI Headquarters. After a

final vote by ITI Executive Council, Sue-Jin Kang received the largest number of votes and was chosen as the 2022 IDD Message Author.

In the past, famous dancers or choreographers like Yuri Grigorovich, Maurice Bejart, Alicia Alonso and Jiri Kylian were likely to be selected as Message Authors. However, as the years passed, the selection process has evolved and increased its consideration of the social contributions and social change through dance achieved by nominees.

Jean-Georges Noverre said that the dance is the vehicle in which you can express human emotions and soul. We can be consoled by dance and at the same time console others through dance, and we believe that dance can build up the interaction between mind and body.

On 29 April we all remember this noble spirit of dance and I wish all of you a Happy International Dance Day.

International Dance Day Message 2022

by Kang Sue-jin

The Covid-19 catastrophe has stopped life as we so freely knew it and being amidst this tragedy makes us rethink the meaning of “dance” and “dancers” In the distant past, dance was a primal means of expression and communication through gestures; becoming performance art that moved the soul and inspired the audience. It is a momentary art that is difficult to restore to its original form once completed because it’s created with the entire body and soul. Dance is made of ephemeral moments, which destines dancers to be on the move forever. Yet, Covid-19 has restricted and even blocked the art of dance in its original form.

Even though the situation is improving, dance performances are still subject to many restrictions. This makes us cherish the precious memories of times when dance and dancers sparkled like jewels, conveying human anguish and anxiety, will and hope for life, and illuminated the world.

Similarly, it is important to recall that during the aftershocks of the Black Death in Medieval Europe, the ballet *Giselle* depicting love beyond death was performed at the Paris Opera on 28 June 1841 and received an explosive response. Since then, *Giselle* has been performed all over Europe and around the world to comfort and encourage the souls of mankind ravaged by the pandemic. It is also my understanding of that point, which was first demonstrated in that very performance of *Giselle*, is the magnificent spirit of a ballerina trying to escape the gravity of the world’s hardships.



The lonely and weary audience is thirsty for the sympathy and comfort of the dancers. As dancers, we believe that the flapping of our wings gives hope to the hearts of those who love the art of dance and gives them the courage to overcome this pandemic.

My heart is already starting to pound.

Kang Sue-Jin (born in 24 April 1967), is Artistic Director of Korean National Ballet. She holds an Honorary doctorate degree in the Department of Dance, Sookmyung Women’s University in Seoul, Republic of Korea. A Stuttgart Ballet soloist and principal dancer for over 15 years, she was appointed as Kammertanzerin (Royal Court Dancer) in Germany in 2007. An Honorary Ambassador of the PyeongChang 2018 Winter Olympics. Kang Sue-jin uses her fame and her artistic skills to introduce disabled children to dance.



1. Kang Sue-Jin delivering the International Dance Day Message for 2022 at the celebrations for International Dance Day hosted by ITI-Korea and WDA-Korea on 29 April 2022 at Seoul Cyber University.

2. A dance performance at the same event. All photos courtesy of ITI International.

Malaysia report

by Bilqis Hijjas

ASK Dance Company in 'Sight and Seek' choreographed by Fatin Nadhirah Rahmat, in *Dancing in Place* at 1 Utama, 5-6 February 2022.
Photo: Mohd Nor Azmil



MyDance Alliance is thrilled to have embarked on a partnership project with the new Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre [PJ PAC] at 1 Utama Shopping Centre. We have already completed 3 events from our proposed schedule for 2022.

The first, *Dancing in Place* at 1 Utama on 5-6 February this year, was produced by our Vice-President, Rithaudin Abdul Kadir. For this version of our site-specific dance series *Dancing in Place*, Rithaudin invited six choreographers to present short dance works in the public areas of the shopping centre. From the ornamental fish ponds to the new K-pop district and the rooftop running track, the dancers enthralled the audiences who moved from place to place. Rithaudin himself performed a solo up and down a pair of escalators; passers-by using the escalators alongside him naturally became part of the show.

I produced the second event, *Protégées: New Dances by Women Choreographers*, on 13 March, in celebration of International Women's Day. I invited women leaders from the local dance community to recommend emerging women choreographers to present short dance works. This was MyDance's first in-theatre production since August 2020, due to Covid restrictions, and our first show in the blackbox Nero Event Space at PJ PAC. A full house gathered to enjoy the six short works, although we had to replace a work at short notice due to Covid close contacts among the dancers. I was delighted to support the creativity of women

dance artists, who often shrink from putting themselves forwards for opportunities, by offering them a performance platform.

The third event in our series, *Beyond Moving with Artisans*, was an unusual blend of creative laboratory and performance. MyDance committee member Lau Beh Chin has been working on her project *Moving with Artisans* since 2018, when she conducted oral history research among five artisans of traditional jobs on the verge of extinction — a rattan weaver, a typist, a coconut shell carver, a traditional coffee master, and a biscuit maker — in the city of Butterworth, Penang. Since then she has invited dancers and other artists to engage with the movement vocabularies and life histories of these artisans, to create new works of art.

In this edition of the project, Beh Chin and her dancers took up residence in a small area of 1 Utama Shopping Centre, hoping to engage with shoppers and passers by and spread awareness about Malaysia's sunset industries. She invited three non-dance artists to provide dramaturgical feedback. MyDance Research & Documentation Network co-chair Lim Paik Yin also conducted a workshop on materiality in the making of performances.

At the end of the project, the dancers presented 3 solo dance works loosely linked to the artisans' practices, in an informal work-in-progress session in Nero Event Space. The session invited audience members to practice embodying the movement vocabulary of the artisans (stirring

coffee grounds, typing on a typewriter, pressing biscuits into moulds) and to ask questions about the process. We are pleased to announce that Beh Chin has won a BOH Cameronian Grant for New Productions 2022 to support the next stage of this project, continuing to develop the solo dances for Dancebox in December 2022.

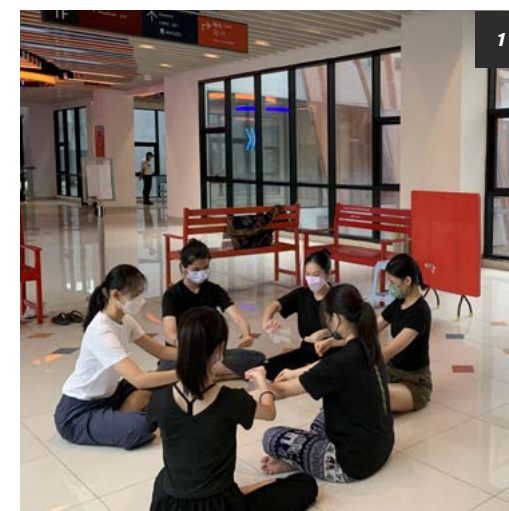
For information about our upcoming events at PJ PAC, check out this page on our website: <https://mydancealliance.org/mydancepjpac/>. We also look forward to continuing our long partnership with Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre, with two editions of Dancebox later this year.

Other Malaysian dance activities are roaring back, now that Covid restrictions are lifted. We have seen a host of stage performances, enabled by subsidised venue rentals at PJ PAC and Damansara Performing Arts Centre. Malaysia has also lifted all its Covid restrictions against fully-vaccinated international visitors, allowing international performers to take to the stage once again.

Finally, we congratulate ASK Dance Company, one of Malaysia's only full-time independent dance companies, on celebrating its tenth anniversary. With uneven and unpredictable levels of support in Malaysia, sustaining a dance company in the long term is a significant challenge, even without the added burden of Covid. ADC's achievement is truly impressive, and we wish them all the best, with many years of spectacular dance to come.

We close our report by remembering Madame Lee Lee Lan, one of the founders of MyDance Alliance, who passed away on 16 May 2022 at the age of 77. Founder of Federal Academy of Ballet, KL Dance Theatre and The Dance Society, she was the first Asian examiner of the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing and indisputably one of the iconic leaders of the Malaysian dance community.

Lee Lee Lan was also one of the founding members of World Dance Alliance. At



the seminal meeting at the Hong Kong International Dance Conference in 1990, she was elected the first Treasurer to the Executive Board of then Asia Pacific Dance Alliance [later WDAAP]. She subsequently served in the roles of Recording Secretary, Membership Chair, and Vice President until 2002.

Without her blazing the trail, none of our work would have been possible. MyDance salutes her passing.



1. Participants in *Beyond Moving with Artisans* during the residency in 1 Utama Shopping Centre, practicing the movement vocabulary of artisans from sunset industries.
Photo: Lau Beh Chin

2. Winnie Tay Yi Xuan in her work 'Not So Kechil' in *Protégées: New Dances by Women Choreographers*, at Nero Event Space, PJ Performing Arts Centre, 13 March 2022. Photo: Mohd Nor Azmil

3. Lee Lee Lan (far right) with Carl Wolz (top left) at the 1990 Hong Kong International Dance Conference when WDAAP was founded.
Photo: Julie Dyson

4. Lee Lee Lan (seated, second from left) at the 2001 Singapore WDA Conference. Photo: Julie Dyson

Philippines report

by Angela L. Baguilat

Tides of Our Soul at Philippine Night, Dubai Expo 2020, directed by Bart Guingona and Marc Dalacat, choreographed by JM Cabling.
Photo: Dubai Expo



With the declining COVID-19 cases in the last quarter of 2021, the world is eventually slowly seeing things going back to normal. This respite from a surge in cases paved the way for some in-person performances and dance classes, as well as events that were the means to earn money for most of our dancers, especially in the Metro region.

When January 2022 beckoned, a sudden surge in cases was seen and experienced with the new Omicron variant. But this new threat didn't hinder the operations of schools and companies; they pushed on and moved forward by bravely taking on this new challenge in working in this new normal.

One of the bravest endeavors is the massive Philippine delegation of dancers and singers to the World Expo in Dubai in February 2022. *Tides of our Soul* is a showcase of the beauty of the Philippines, through its traditions, geographical landscapes and cultural traditions. Its success is owed to the artistic direction of veteran theater director Bart Guingona and artist Marc Dalacat, and the skillful and imaginative choreographic talent of WifiBody Choreographer's competition 2012 winner and Yokohama Dance Collection X finalist JM Cabling. With them is a formidable team of artists such as Ejay Yatco and Krina Cayabayab for music, costumes by Leeroy New and libretto by Luna-Griño-Inocian. This massive delegation had to go through challenging rehearsal schedules, having to be in a bubble for long periods of time

and long hours rehearsing online as well as dealing with the fear of getting infected with COVID-19 during in person rehearsals.

Together with this hour-long showcase of songs and dances was a 5-minute audio-visual presentation entitled 'Our Gift to the World'. With direction by veteran choreographer and artist Denisa Reyes and co-choreographed by JM Cabling, this video was showcased in the Philippine Pavilion for the duration of the Expo. Featured in the 5-min video are dance artists Abbey Carlos, Michael Barry Que, Minnette Maza, JM Cabling and composer Teresa Barrozo.

In February, when the campaign for the Philippine National Elections was launched, numerous dancers and groups declared support for certain candidates. Most notable of all is the collective group of dancers that went out to support presidential candidate Leni Robredo. Tagged as Dancers for Leni, this collective was initiated by contemporary dance and independent artist and WifiBody Dance Festival founder Myra Beltran. Her call was heeded by Philippine dance icon Lisa Macuja and hundreds of independent artists, dance scholars and students as well as filmmakers and musicians. Starting with a short dance video of Leni Robredo's official campaign jingle, the collective eventually were mainstays in all the sorties of the party all over the National Capital Region and its neighboring cities and provinces. Along with this endeavor was also the formation of the Cheerleaders for Leni, a group composed of



cheerleaders from varsities of the different universities in the country. Inspired by these collectives, the different dance ensembles of the different universities also formed their own groups in support for the presidential bid of Leni Robredo. It was a time of hope for all these groups amidst the adversity the country is going through.

Professional dance companies have also ventured out to do in-person performances. With the successful re-opening of the Metropolitan Theater in early February, the Artists of CCP Dance Workshop, as led by National Artist for Dance Alice Reyes, showcased *Tuloy ang Palabas sa Met* in March. Some of the repertoire featured are, Reyes' 'Carmina Burana' and 'Bungkos Suite', a collection of Filipino folk songs arranged by National Artist for Music Ryan Cayabyab.

The Philippine Ballet Theater on the other hand was the featured performer for the National Heritage Month celebration in Victorias City, Talisay City and Silay City in May. Presented by Philippine Heritage Inc., PBT performed *Take the Next Step*, choreographed and directed by its artistic director Ronilo Jaynario.

In early June, the dance world was gifted by the best news. On his last days in office, President Rodrigo Duterte conferred eight new National Artists. One of them is Agnes Locsin. She was acknowledged for her revolutionary choreographic experiments, creating a movement vocabulary, and establishing her own genre, which she calls "neo-ethnic". She has also inspired the next generation of dance artists to push boundaries in their technique and creativity, as well as instilled a revitalized pride in local

cultures. Locsin was artistic director of Ballet Philippines from 1994-2000 and currently directs the Locsin Dance Workshop in her hometown, Davao City. The Order for National Artist is the highest national award given to Filipinos who have made distinct contributions in the field of the arts. This award is jointly administered by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts and The Cultural Center of the Philippines and is conferred by the President of the Philippines through the recommendation of both institutions. The eight new National Artists were officially conferred by President Duterte in a ceremony in Malacañan Palace on 16 June.

With these brave steps into the new normal and with the coming of a new administration, we hope that in the remaining months of 2022, Philippine dance will take flight and will soar.



1. L: Agnes Locsin. Photo: Jojo Mamangu. R: *La Revolucion Filipina* choreographed by Agnes Locsin, with Ballet Philippines. Photo: Victor Ursabia
2. Alden Lugnasin and Ballet Philippines in Agnes Locsin's *La Revolucion Filipina*, performed at the Cultural Center of the Philippines, 1996. Photo: Rudy Vidad.

Singapore report

by Goh Jia Yin

If It's Now, a dance installation choreographed by Neo Jenny & Benedict Soh of Singapore Chinese Dance Theatre at the Esplanade Annexe Studio, 18-20 February 2022.
Photo: Alan Ng



COVID-19 is still in our midst at this time of writing, but Singapore has seen further easing of community and border safe management measures. 22 April 2022 marked a step down to DORSCON from Orange to Yellow. The resumption of live performances without safe distancing and no limit on audience capacity for both indoor and outdoor performances, albeit the maintenance of masks-on indoors, has brought forth a long-awaited hint of normalcy.

The Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts [NAFA] Dance Programme's *Dancing to Heal, Dancing for Wellness* production held in May celebrated the return to live performance after challenging times with the pandemic over the past two years. Led by Dr Filomar Tariao, the project was a meaningful bridge that allowed NAFA Dance students to learn the values of responsibility and care as they connected with Singapore community organisations St Luke's Hospital and Quinn Special Student Care participants, who in turn felt a sense of accomplishment and belonging.

Art institutions NAFA and LASALLE College of the Arts were once again able to present their annual dance performances live in full force in April. *Are We There Yet?* by LASALLE was a nudge to ponder the coping strategies used to manage the impatience of arriving at a desired place. It featured works by Yarra Iletto, Melissa Quek, Germaine Cheng, Sufri Juwahir and

Muhd Sharul Mohd. NAFA also presented its annual showcase *Crossings*, paying homage to the Singapore contemporary dance scene through the works of Filomar Tariao, P7:1SMA artistic director and choreographer Norhaizad Adam, and T.H.E artistic director and main choreographer Kuik Swee Boon, all of which shared a common thematic thread of culture/tradition and its role and presence in our lives today.

After two years of postponements and cancellations of tours in the pipeline, 2022 finally saw T.H.E Dance Company tour the United Kingdom and Italy, making their debut for their 2019 work *PheNoumenon* 《现·象》 at The Coronet Theatre in February, and *Mr. Sign* to the Sicilian audience in April respectively.

The pandemic had sparked the call for and rise of digitalisation in all facets of life, and performance-making was no exception. Conceptualised and directed by Dr Peter Gn, The Presence Project released *Skin Experiment: Sensed. Felt. Unearthed.* at the World Dance Alliance Global Summit. The dance film was a blend of ethnic dance influences and Western dance idiom that deep-dived into each artist's movement practice and sensory perception, primarily through the skin as the sensory organ.

Frontier Danceland continued its efforts in filmic experimentation and presented its filmic adaptation of *Elemental Beings*, a performance originally presented live, as well as "Stage On-Screen: A Filmic Translation

of MILIEU 2021 Live Performance". *You are 56, Still Counting and Keep Counting; I am 25*, one of six films produced for Dancers' Locker 2020, directed and performed by company artist Tan Xin Yen, was invited to be screened in March, as part of Singapore International Film Festival 2021 Southeast Asian Short Film Competition. Moreover the company also embraced performing live with *MORE THAN HUMAN* by Shahar Binyamnini (Israel) presented as part of its annual production SIDES 2022.

In response to the slew of digital works created when the pandemic forced artists and performance-makers online, T.H.E and Seoul International Dance Festival launched [Stre@m - An Asian Digital Dance Platform](#), a video-on-demand platform that seeks to extend the longevity and visibility of such works.

Together with the Esplanade as part of Huayi - Chinese Festival of Arts held in February, Singapore Chinese Dance Theatre co-produced the dance installation *If It's Now*, a reflection on the role and identity of women in the past and present. Its eighth edition of Chinese Dance Fiesta included hybrid performances both live and live-streamed across various locations, a Mongolian Dance Talk and Demonstration, as well as a unique "Coffee, Tea, and Dance" session that coincided with International Dance Day on 29 April. Its efforts garnered an estimated 11,000-strong live and online audience/participants.

With the onslaught of digitalisation of performances sparked by the pandemic, and 'online fatigue' increasingly becoming a legitimate and commonplace syndrome, the initial fervour of digitalisation seems to have waned, and in place, the desire to return to face-to-face interactions seems to be ever-more apparent. A nod to reimagining dance



in an endemic world, T.H.E will be presenting its twelfth edition of its Dance Festival (13 Jun - 3 Jul 2022), refreshed as Contemporary Dance Festival: Breathing Ground. Renamed to mean "continued act", the festival endeavours to provide a space of respite, reflection and reconnection with the self and the larger community, with a smorgasbord of purely live programmes involving local and international artists.

Also in June, the collaboration amongst music, theatre and dance (SAtheCollective, Nine Years Theatre, and T.H.E Dance Company respectively) that bore the site-specific work *Windward Side of the Mountain*, will premiere at the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre's Cultural Extravaganza (9-12 Jun 2022). Celebrating the warmth, strength, and will of humanity, the work seems to signify hope as Singapore and the world strides on to emerge from the shadows of the pandemic, and move onward to a world that re-embraces the human touch and physical interaction between people, collectives, and disciplines.



1. 'Tan[A]m', choreographed by Sufri Juwahir and Muhd Sharul Mohd for *Are We There Yet?*, 7-9 April 2022, at Singapore Airlines Theatre, LASALLE College of the Arts. Photo: Bernie Ng
2. A still from *Frontier Danceland's You are 56, Still Counting and Keep Counting; I am 25*, directed and performed by Tan Xin Yen, produced by Jeremy Chua, streamed online via The Projector Plus, 3-31 March 2022.

Taiwan report

by Su-Ling Chou

Students of the Dance Division, Tsoying High School, performed 2022 *Bolero in Kaohsiung* choreographed by Shu-yi Chou at Kaohsiung Station, Kaohsiung, on 23 April 2022.
Photo: Su-ling Chou



The COVID-19 pandemic started to spread seriously in May 2022 after it had been well controlled in Taiwan since 2020. During the four months from January to April, performances, exhibitions, and arts productions gradually completed their presentations. However, from May most of activities were cancelled or postponed due to the increase of COVID-19 cases. It seems that the pandemic situation will continue for a while. Hopefully, this wave will begin to ebb before long.

Kaohsiung City Government hosted 2022 Taiwan Lantern Festival in Feb. The Festival aims at condensing the faith of Kaohsiung with the glowing grand events. It lights Kaohsiung, illuminates Taiwan, and dazzles the globe. Weiwuying and Love River Bay were two sites chosen to present shows. One of the dance events held in Love River Bay was the Site-Specific Dance Series, which was also included in 2022 Kaohsiung Spring Art Festival. The series featured Solar Site Dance Theatre's *Raven Steals the Light*, Kaohsiung City Ballet's *City Light*, Cooperative Society's *Follower*, and 01 Dance Production's *White Night*.

Another big show held in Weiwuying was *Maritime Glow*, a musical based on Taiwanese Opera. Combined with the renowned domestic performance groups, the musical reproduced the prosperous maritime era and the origins of Yancheng, Dagouding and Qixian 3rd Road in the 1960s. Ya-ting Chan, from Tso's Dance Association, was the dance choreographer and students

from Tsoying High School performed. This high-quality production received terrific compliments and was also awarded the Gold Medal by MUSE Design Awards in the category of conceptual design.

In 2021, National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts invited choreographer Shu-yi Chou to become the artist-in-residence. Chou was one of eight selected choreographers in 2006 Asian Young Choreographer Project sponsored by WDAAP. As the resident artist in Kaohsiung, Chou has been working hard to recruit people to understand contemporary dance. He chose his old dance work *1875 Ravel and Bolero* to be performed in the outdoor space. This piece was created and premiered in the 2006 AYCP presentation. After AYCP, the work was again performed in the following years. It won the first prize at Sadler's Wells Theatre (England) first International Dance Competition Award and was invited to perform in London as well as at Fall for Dance Festival in New York. Later, it traveled back to Taiwan and was presented in 60 performances in open spaces without sets and stage lighting.

This year 2022, Chou re-adapted and re-named this piece *2022 Bolero in Kaohsiung*. He recruited 20 dancers from Tsoying High School as well as 15 freelance dancers to perform the dance across Kaohsiung, bringing performing arts out of the theater and into the city, especially into outdoor space. There were 28 performances from 23 April to 26 June this year. The performing

venues are playgrounds of temples, old buildings, pagodas, community libraries, train station, metro station, museum, and so on, in 14 districts around Kaohsiung City. The youthful spirit and brilliant color of this piece, with its classical music, extensive scope of emotion and lavish sense of movements are able to touch viewers. The open space format allows dancers to walk into the crowd and dance around people in the street. The design of the production allows dance to be presented in the open space in the city and enables better communication and sharing with all through dance. Chou's idea is to make dance a part of everybody's life, natural but yet surprising.



Students of the Dance Division, Tsoying High School, performed 2022 *Bolero in Kaohsiung* choreographed by Shu-yi Chou at Old Railway Bridge Wetland, Dashu District, Kaohsiung, on 28 May 2022.
Photo: Su-ling Chou

WDA-AP Taiwan Members Activities, Jan-June 2022

Performance

Tso's Dance Association

- *Maritime Glow*, 18-10 Feb at Weiwuying Outdoor Theater
- *2022 Bolero in Kaohsiung*, 23-24 April at Kaohsiung Station, 30 April at Kaohsiung Public Library-Caoya Branch, 1 May at Singuagn Ferry Wharf, 7 May at KLR C12 Dayi Pier-2, 8 May at Kaohsiung Museum of History, 14 May at Cishan Tianhou Taoist Temple, 15 May at Meinong Cultural and Creative Center, 21 May at Chihtian Inn, 22 May at Xinwei Primary School, 28 May at Old Railway Bridge Wetland Education Zone, 29 May at Kaohsiung Metro-R9 Central Park Exit 1, 11 June Mituo Mi-Shou Temple, Kaohsiung Public Library-Mituo Branch, 12 June at Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, 18 June DaDong Arts Center, 19 June at Lianchihtan (Lotus Pond) Scenic Area, Tzu-chi Temple, 25 June at Gangshan Cultural Center, 26 June at National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts.
- *1314*, 10-12 June at Dance Theater of Tsoying Senior High School, Kaohsiung City

Kaohsiung City Ballet

- *2022 Dance Shoe*, 15 January at Jhihshan Hall of Kaohsiung City Arts Center, Kaohsiung City, 22 January at Native Theater of International Hall of Tainan Municipal Cultural Center, Tainan City
- *Light of City*, 10-11 February at Coral Zone of Kaohsiung Music Center, Kaohsiung City
- *Those Beautiful Times*, 2-3 April at The British Consulate at Takow, Kaohsiung City

Solar Site Dance Theater

- *Raven Steals the Light*, 7-8 February at Dolphin Walkway of Kaohsiung Music Center, Kaohsiung City

The spring is also the time for the dance graduation concerts from universities and high schools for their final presentations after years of hard training. Those young dance artists present dance concerts with various styles as well as individual characteristics that are always different from the former generations before them.

It is a pity that because of the spread of COVID-19 in Taiwan, the 2022 International Young Choreographer Project has to be cancelled. Hopefully, the project can be held in the summer of 2023. We are praying for all our WDAAP member countries to recover soon from the pandemic, until we are all together to bless each other.

Hsu Chen Wei Dance Company

- *Sang Tsau*, 15-17 April at Kaohsiung Experimental Theatre, Kaohsiung City, Taiwan

01 Dance

- *White Night*, 24-25 February at Hi-Ing Music Hall, Kaohsiung City

Horse

- *Primal Chaos Dance x Sound Improvisation*, 19 January, 16 February, 2 March, 6 April at Horse Studio, Taipei City,
- *Two men, ten years later*, 22-24 April at Experimental Theater of National Theater and Concert Hall, Taipei City
- *FreeSteps 2.0*, 16 April- 22 May at Serenity Corner of National Taichung Theater, Taichung City
- *90 minutes to easily understand what dance is*, 9-11 June at Shulin Arts Center, New Taipei City

B. Dance

- 2022 Europe Tour - *Floating Flowers*, *Timeless*, *Rage*, 22 February- 14 April at Aonuye- Aymeries, Compiègne, Fouesnant, Dinan, Cholet, Saint-Brieuc, Villejuif, Puteaux, Meudon, Macon, Annemasse, Echirrolles, Le Perreux-Sur-Marne, Oloron-Sainte-Marie, Merignac, France. Esch-Sur-Alzette, Luxembourg. Aachen, Germany. Monthey, Cillars-Sur-Glane, Switzerland. Torino, Italy.

Hung Dance

- *Formless Erosion*, 25-27 March at Wellspring Theater, Taipei City
- *See You*, 12-13 June at Kaohsiung City Dadong Arts Center, Kaohsiung City

Bulareyaung Dance Company

- *Not Afraid of the Sun and Rain*, 15 January at Taitung County Cultural Center, Taitung County, Taiwan

Thailand report

by Pornrat Damrhung

Dancers from Pichet Klunchun Dance Company outdoors in Paris in December 2021, after the performance of classical Khon masked dance piece “The Combat of Rama and Todsakan,” at Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac.
Photo: Korn Takang



Thai Dance Traditions Rise again in the Aftermath of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Between December 2021 and May 2022, dancers trained in Khon (classical Thai masked dance) and Nora (southern folk performance) have moved into new zones and stages of interaction, whether in Thailand, in other countries, or in new media spaces, as part of a wider re-emergence of Thai dance in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Both traditions have now been inscribed on UNESCO’s Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (RL), and both are seeking new ways to engage the world of dance.

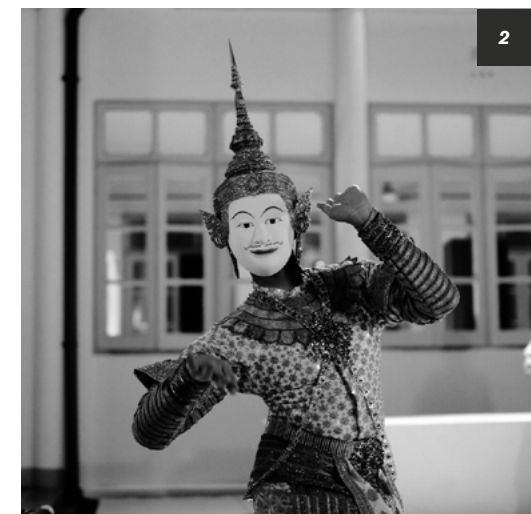
In late 2021, despite a COVID-19 resurgence, the Pichet Klunchun Dance Company was invited to perform at the Musée du quai Branly – Jacques Chirac in Paris. Their special program consisted of three works by the Khon-trained dancer and choreographer Pichet Klunchun and his troupe. One was the screening of a film of the well-known piece with French artist Jérôme Bel, “Pichet Klunchun and Myself” that they performed more than 150 times around the world since 2006, and which made them good friends in work and life. Two live pieces performed in Paris included a reprise of the contemporary dance piece “Black and White,” which had been

commissioned by Esplanade in Singapore a decade ago, and a newly choreographed traditional Khon piece of “The Combat of Rama and Todsakan,” which included scenes of the abduction of Sita and the fight between the armies of Rama and Todsakan (Ravana). The latter was a richly reimagined traditional version, re-interpreting, re-choreographing and re-telling traditional scenes from the Thai Ramayana through the vision of Pichet as a contemporary Khon artist. The show included live musicians and singers from Burapha University in Thailand along with 11 classically-trained dancers, including five new young Khon dancers. Pichet performed the red hermit (Todsakan in disguise) and later was a narrator, since the main narrator caught COVID-19 while in Paris.

The performance continued on the wintry streets of Paris, as the young classically-trained artists went after the shows, barefoot but in costumes, to film themselves in front of the Eiffel Tower. After posting their images and clips on Facebook, they generated many likes and shares back in Thailand. The dream of performing on Paris stages and streets after long being homebound came true for the young Khon artists. It gave them a sense of accomplishment and pride in their art, as well as bringing pride and interest in the dormant art of Khon back in Thailand, too.

Khon has shown signs of resurgence elsewhere in 2022. In March and April 2022, a project presented a multimedia event – live, in film and in print – at Lido Connect and the Siam Society called “Melancholy of Demon” by contemporary choreographer Jitti Chompee, supported by the Thai Fine Arts Department and Than Phu Ying Sirikitiya Jensen, which received attention in the foreign embassies in Thailand. Another new Khon project emerging beyond borders and in transnational media was the piece “Matchanu,” a contemporary Khon piece based on the Thai Ramayana story of the mermaid-monkey son of Hanuman. It emerged through the collaboration of the Canadian Khon-trained performer Benjamin Tardif and was put to French baroque music by the Thai-Canadian violinist Salini Amarawat. “Matchanu” appeared on Vimeo and was shown as an online performance at UCLA.

Most recently, in May 2022 Pichet Klunchun started showing new work under the umbrella term Evolution. This has included new and old live performances, held free for audiences, along with interactives spaces with robots and VR-technologies, in a new Bangkok arts space called Playspace run by Noble House on Ploenchit Road. On June 4, 2022, the company reprised “The Combat of Rama and Todsakan” to wild acclaim for the general public at the Chang Chui Plane Market in Thonburi.



1-2. Stills from the dance film *Matchanu*, choreographed by Benjamin Tardif, performed by dancers from the Department of Fine Arts at the Thai National Theater. Photos courtesy of Benjamin Tardif.
3. Tas Chongchadkhlang performing *I am a Demon* as part of the Pichet Klunchun Dance Company’s ‘Evolution’ Series at Noble House, Bangkok, 21 May 2022.
Photo: Lowell Skar

Nora, the living dance tradition of Southern Thailand, has also been reviving for the post-pandemic world, both in Thailand and abroad. In December 2021, Nora was inscribed on the list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO as the second traditional performing art from Thailand on that list. As an art tied to southern communities in Thailand, Nora has become more lively than ever as the pandemic has waned.

Celebrations of Nora have begun in southern Thailand, as the rituals and entertainments have been re-emerging in towns and cities around Songkhla Lake in Southern Thailand, where Nora artists have been practicing their arts both in ancestry rituals and as community entertainment for centuries. The celebrations were given focus by an event organized on March 25-27, 2022 by the Thai PBS Arts and Culture Media Center and the Institute of Thai Studies at Chulalongkorn University, at the base of Wat Pakho, in Sathing Phra, Songkhla Province.. It included exhibitions and demonstrations of Nora-related traditions and arts, including the artistic genealogy of Nora traditions, along with presentations by Nora scholars and masters, but the focus was on Nora as a complex living performance tradition. This included a welcoming performance for a local goddess to open the event led by Master Thummanit Nikomrat and more than 300 Nora performers, as well as performances by 20 Nora troupes from across Southern Thailand, a community “Rongkhru” ritual performance, and a spectacular performance of contemporary Nora by the noted performer Khailiem. All of these activities helped to celebrate Nora’s listing in the ICH.

In mid-April 2022, Thummanit Nikomrat, a third-generation student of the great Nora Master Phum Theva, was named a


Thai National Artist. Nora Thummanit had not only spent more than a quarter century running a Nora dance program at Thaksin University in Songkhla, he also refined parts of the Nora tradition into artistic stage dance and music performances that he toured with his students both in Thailand and internationally. A remarkable dancer, singer and scholar of Nora, he introduced Nora to other parts of Thailand outside of the south and also to the wider world.

Paris was not the only European city to welcome Thai performers or to get media attention in Thailand in recent months. In late May 2022, Venice welcomed Nora artists to the city of canals. To help celebrate both Nora’s ICH listing and kru Thummanit’s recognition as a National Artist, the Thai Pavilion was themed “The Spirit of Nora” at the Palazzo Pisani a Santa Marina as part of the Venice Biennale 2022. This Pavilion included work by other visual and installation artists, tied to the visual aspects of Nora, supported by the Songkhla Pavilion, Thai Culture Council of Venice and Department of Cultural Promotion, Ministry of Culture. The highlight was the opening event, held on May 26, which had Nora Thummanit dance on a gondola as it floated through the Venetian canals, carrying the living spirit of Nora to the Palazzo for the opening, complete with prosecco and cicchetti. This event was filmed by a Thai PBS team and received wide attention in both mass and social media back in Thailand. Kru Thummanit was later filmed in San Marco Square, at the Thai Day in Venice, and along Doge’s Palace, helping to fulfill the dream of Thai dancers like Nora Thummanit and his student to move again on the world stage.

All told, after the pandemic, Thai dance is up and moving again and ready to move ahead.

Thummanit Nikomrat, master of the Southern Thai folk art of Nora, performing with Nora drummer Wiradet Thongkam on a gondola in Venice on 25 May 2022, as part of the opening of the Thai Pavilion for the Venice Biennale.
Photo: Lowell Skar





From *Melancholy of Demon*, a dance project choreographed by Jitti Chompee, a 18 March 2022 performance at Lido Connect in Bangkok, Thailand. Photo courtesy of the artist.

Partner Organisation Reports

In addition to its country chapters and internal networks, WDAAP furthers its vision and mission by working in partnership with other like-minded organisations throughout the world. We are proud to support their efforts, as we develop and strengthen networks for dance.

World Alliance for Arts Education report

World Dance Alliance is one of the four key international arts education organisations that form the World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE). The WAAE aims to advance research, advocacy and networking for arts education globally.

by Ralph Buck, WDA elected representative on the WAAE Presidential Council.

The World Alliance for Arts Education is an alliance of four international arts education organisations. The first ideas of the alliance were outlined in Viseu, Portugal, 2006, and then in 2012, in Rovaniemi, Finland, the Alliance was formally ratified by each respective organisation.

The primary aim of the WAAE is to utilize the strength and knowledge within trans-disciplinary, trans-national and trans-cultural arts education associations to the benefit of arts education in the 21st Century. WAAE will advocate for arts education at strategic political forums and levels, providing expert advice to pertinent key decision makers such as UNESCO and WHO while concomitantly seeking and distributing policy through respective networks.

Annually the WAAE advocates for the UNESCO International Arts Education Week (IAWE), which is held on the last week of May each year. In 2022, the IAWE activities focused on the theme of Arts Education for Peace. On 23 May 2022, the IAWE opened with an internationally coordinated ringing of bells. This was followed by a series of webinars and zoom conversations that included:

- Arts Education for Peace, with Emily Akuno, Sanja Krsmanović Tasić, Ralph Buck and Teresa Torres de Eça.
- "A Life Dedicated to Peace Education" with Sanja Krsmanović Tasić and Tintti Karpinnen.
- Open House with Dr Penny Hay, Alex Borovenskiy and Alina Zievakova, Maja Milatovic-Ovadia, and Christopher Williams.
- Stories about WAAE with Dan Baron, Diedrik Shonau, Douglas Boughton, Rita Irwin, Robin Pascoe, Joachim Reiss, Larry O'Farrel, Emily Akuno, Sanja Krsmanović

Tasić, Ralph Buck and Teresa Torres de Eça.

- Closing Reflections with Emily Akuno, Sanja Krsmanović Tasić, Ralph Buck and Teresa Torres de Eça.

These sessions spoke both to the past and the future of WAAE and arts education. Throughout the week were many ideas but the recurring themes that people spoke to included:

- The importance of arts education developing 21st century competencies.
- The importance of valuing and protecting diversity – culture, place, people, practices, desires.
- The role of arts education in fostering life-long education in formal and informal contexts.
- The vitally important role of PEACE in fostering personal and social accord.
- The focus of arts education on doing the arts.
- The importance of valuing beauty and the intrinsic value of the arts as we also utilise the arts for wellbeing and other needs.
- The role of arts education in building the collective, our communities and appreciating the significance of each other as we build solidarity.

I'm sure other ideas surfaced, but these were my 'take home' messages.

The WAAE in the past has organised strategic plans around the actions of Networking, Advocacy and Research. In looking forward I ask you, the members of WDA, how you would like to be involved in the WAAE, and what type of activity would you like to see happen in the WAAE?

The Next WAAE World Congress is being planned to occur in Madeira, Spain, in early 2023. Once more details are available, I will let you know. For more information about WAAE and to keep up to date with trans-disciplinary activities go to the WAAE website: <https://www.waae.online/>

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 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.wda-ap.org
www.facebook.com/WorldDanceAlliance/

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