

# Asia-Pacific CHANNELS





An open class with Eileih Muir from Studio Wayne MacGregor, at the da:ns festival, Esplanade, Singapore.  
Photo: NAFA Dance.

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World Dance Alliance Asia-Pacific  
Channels, No. 2, December 2022  
Newsletter of the World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific  
ISSN: 1328-2115  
Editor: Bilqis Hijjas (contact@mydancealliance.org)  
Publisher: World Dance Alliance Asia Pacific



Students of Peniel High School of Arts in 'Rain on the Fresh Green', a performance at the Young Dance Festival at the 2022 World Dance ,  
Expo in Seoul, at Seong Center for the Performing Arts, 30-31 August 2022, produced by World Dance Alliance - Korea.  
Photo: Hanfilm.



Ariful Islam Arnab performing his solo work 'Noyone Tomare' at Sangskritik Uthshob-2022, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Photo: Yameen Mazumdar

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 letter

by **Urmimala Sarkar Munsri**

Dear friends all over the world and specifically in Asia and the Pacific,

I write this – not as a report but in the form of a letter – as we all collectively and individually struggle to feel, live, and dance the NORMAL, once again... It seems that to be NORMAL now in the post-pandemic times is tougher than it was before we all had to retreat to our small corners of isolation. We seem to have returned to a changed cultural ecology along with a fast-deteriorating physical environment.

Going back to the pre-pandemic times has been a wish for all through the difficult times spanning more than two years, and more of an effort for some countries than others.

Two oppositional qualities have surfaced in these times – we have become more insular, individualistic, and less connected with our peers as we sat, thought, typed, danced in front of our laptop screen, and emoted, loved, lived, fought on the phone and on social media; at the same time we craved in-person communication, touch, togetherness, attitudes of care. We have understood the grave dangers of caring less for each other and our environment as well. We all know by now that through the time that humans were in hibernation, environmental worries have

become larger than ever.

In these times, strangely, the WDAAP has flourished in some countries. In others, it is already part of regular events and therefore is not feeling challenged. But some other countries really do not know how to explore the possibilities of making WDA contributions more visible, and how to bring it closer to the community of dancers who need care and guidance more than ever.

Hence I ask again:

What is the role of a voluntary organization such as ours in these times? What can we do for the dance ecology and communities of our respective countries? In the past, the concept of contributing in kind to and receiving support from WDAAP was the reciprocity that WDAAP would proudly project as its core reason for existence. Its strength was in the dancers as well as academics it involved trans-geographically, long before diversity and decolonization had become the buzz-words in Euro-American university spaces. But now in changing times, how do we bring care and justice into our charter? Could we then think together of strategies for preparing a new vision document and for choosing our future paths together?

Take care and stay well.



## Vice President's report

by **Stella Lau**

Dear friends and colleagues

I applaud your resilience and hardwork in upholding the mission and vision of WDAAP, promoting and developing dance in the region relentlessly. With the easing of pandemic situation, I am delighted to see the resumption of in-person dance events, exchanges, festivals and activities in performing arts venues; and the forging of new partnerships and collectives in the second half of 2022.

I congratulate the formation of WDAAP Beijing, and am indebted to the immaculate effort of our immediate past president Yunyu Wang. I also welcome Anna CY Chan, former Vice-President (East Asia) of WDAAP from 2007 to 2017, re-joining us as the co-chair of the Education and Training Network. I believe her extensive knowledge, international exposure and networks will strengthen us in the area of dance education.

Last but not least, I would like to extend my sincerest thanks to those who have joined the virtual World Dance Alliance Global Summit 2022 from 22 to 25 June which was co-presented and co-organized by the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) and the Hong Kong Dance Alliance (HKDA); supported by the Hong Kong Arts

Development Council (HKADC). The long-awaited event was originally scheduled in the summer of 2020 and it had been postponed since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

With the theme of Dance Offer/On New Energy, the Summit brought together voices from students, artists, scholars, choreographers, dance companies and organizations to promote dance and wellness in response to the COVID-19 pandemic which severely impacts the wellbeing of dance practitioners globally. By shining a spotlight on wellness, it advocated the role and importance of dance health to everyone taking part in it. The 4-day conference featured 11 sessions of 32 scholarly paper presentations, 4 sessions of 19 Pecha Kucha presentations, 6 screening sessions of 17 dance films, and an Annual General Meeting of WDA on the last day.

I am truly grateful to Board members of WDA, School of Dance of HKAPA, HKDA and HKADC; without their continuous support and trust, the event could not be realized.

I hope that you have enjoyed the programme that we presented and utilized this opportunity to connect or re-connect with people who share similar interests in dance.

Please keeping well and healthy. I look forward to meeting you in-person in dance events in the year of 2023!

## 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*.

'Maha Suci', performed by dancers of Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, choreographed by Raziman Sarbini, for Dancebox on 23 August 2022 at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre, Malaysia. Photo: Michelle Chua

### 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, chair

### Call for Submissions to JEDS

The Guest Editors for the subsequent volume of the *Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship* (JEDS) are:

- Akhila Vimal C., Fulbright-Nehru Postdoctoral Fellow, UCLA
- A.P. Rajaram, Assistant Professor, IIT-Bombay, Mumbai, India
- Debanjali Biswas, TaPRA Fellow, Showtown History Centre, UK

The World Dance Alliance (WDA) announces a call for original scholarly articles and performance reviews for Volume 8 of the *Journal of Emerging Dance Scholarship* (JEDS), from emerging scholars in the discipline of dance. Authors must be currently pursuing a graduate degree (M.A., M.F.A., Ph.D., or equivalent) or be within five years of having graduated (the degree does not need to be in dance, but the article must be focused on dance as an evolving discipline).

#### The Moving Body, Identity, Non-Human Interactions

The JEDS 2022-23 volume ponders issues of identity, knowledges of the moving/dancing body and how non-human conditions shape the path of dance. The guest editors invite original contributions on three themes responding to ongoing questions within the discipline that reaffirm and amplify subjectivities, ideologies, methodologies, microhistories such as: what are we dancing, why is our dance essential, what draws us to dance, and how do we think and write about our dance? Contributions are invited to address, but not limited to:

The **moving/dancing body** has long been the subject of evolving pedagogy of dance. The body is the text itself, or a tool or analysed as both. **Topic I** invite contributions that illuminate a range of phenomenologies to explore questions on the dancing/moving body in performance and the enviroing world. Scholarship that delves into theoretical perspectives, embodiment studies, personal experiences or reflections that reveal insight arising from practice,



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movement as a way of knowing, body perceiving reality through tactile senses, community knowledge and ensemble performance, relationship of movement and feeling are encouraged.

**Topic II** invites contributions focusing on dance and its connection to the **idea of identity**. Bringing together various dance narratives and perspectives on dancing identities and dances with identities, this topic focuses on identity as an important construct that complicates and enables the study of dance through prisms of caste, gender, ability, ethnicity, area, nation, and self. In fact, a further layering of dimensions and combinations beyond classical dance canon and classical bodies in dance are particularly welcome.

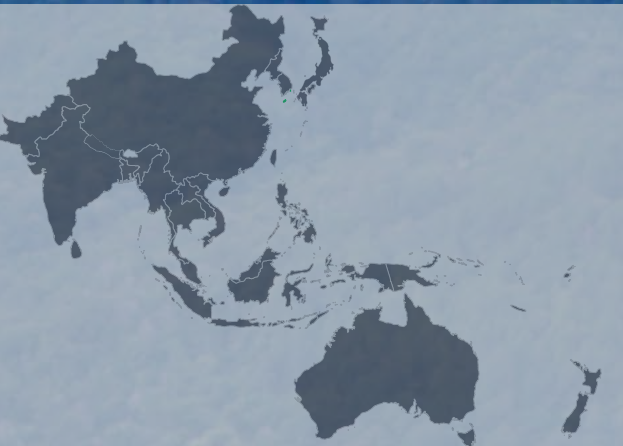
With that with the body as an instrument of dance, what happens when nonhuman elements serve as inalienable points of reference? **Topic III** calls for research that articulates **human-non-human interactions** within the ambit of dance, choreography, corporeality. This theme encourages re-thinking of various non-human conditions that impact dances, dancers and dance knowledge such as: dance and climate relations, machinery, artificial intelligence, care and disease, archives and collections, but also facilitate (un)learning on dance's relation to site, sound, spirituality and belief, animality and anthropomorphism.

Contributions on COVID-19 and Pandemic recovery, including photo-essays and video-essays, are also welcomed, as well as Reviews of Books and Performances. All submissions are double blind peer reviewed. A maximum of eight articles will be selected for publication.

For more information on format, terms and conditions of submission, please go to our website: <https://jedsonline.in/2023-call-for-submissions>

**Submission deadline: 1 March 2023**





## Chapter reports

Countries, cities or defined geographical areas within a regional centre may become organisational members (Chapters), 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, Beijing, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, Taipei and Thailand.

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

Jujuang Talam carnival, a procession of 125 mothers carrying food on their heads, as the opening event of Galundi Singkarak Festival, West Sumatra, Indonesia. Read more about this event in the Indonesia report.  
Photo: Les Mandri



## Australia report

by Julie Dyson



Eileen Kramer turns 108.  
Photo: Edwina Pickles

### National Cultural Policy

Australia's long-awaited National Cultural Policy was delivered at the end of January 2023 by federal Arts Minister Tony Burke, following wide consultation. The policy has been well received across all art forms and includes new directions for the government's arts funding body, the Australia Council and confirms the centrality of First Nations arts and culture.

"Revive is a five-year plan to renew and revive Australia's arts, entertainment and cultural sector. It delivers new momentum so that Australia's creative workers, organisations and audiences continue to thrive and grow, and so that our arts, culture and heritage are re-positioned as central to Australia's future.

"Revive is structured around five interconnected pillars which set out the Government's strategic objectives:

- First Nations First: Recognising and respecting the crucial place of First Nations stories at the centre of Australia's arts and culture.
- A Place for Every Story: Reflecting the breadth of our stories and the contribution of all Australians as the creators of culture.
- Centrality of the Artist: Supporting the artist as worker and celebrating artists as creators.
- Strong Cultural Infrastructure: Providing support across the spectrum of institutions which sustain our arts, culture and heritage.

- Engaging the Audience: Making sure our stories connect with people at home and abroad."

Ausdance National notes that "To ensure that policy isn't just a vision for the future that stays on paper but can be effectively implemented, further investment will be imperative so that policy can be safely, efficiently and appropriately actioned with positive and transformative effect. ....

"Our advocacy helps to inform and influence key stakeholders and is focused on driving cohesive solutions that grow dance sector capacity, and improve creation, delivery and access to safe, diverse and effective dance and dance practices across Australia. We want to see more people living in Australia benefiting from dance activities that improve health, comfort and wellbeing."

### Child Safety standards

Ausdance National and the State/Territory Ausdance network are currently developing new child safety standards based on those developed by [Ausdance Victoria](#).

It is hoped that, with the assistance of First Nations artists, the standards can be further developed to reflect a First Nations perspective to make them more accessible, culturally appropriate, understandable in multiple languages and equitable.

In the meantime, [Child Safe Organisations](#) offers excellent resources and national principles, including their implementation, an important aspect of keeping children safe.

### A new Australian dance festival: Dance X

Dance X was a three-part festival conceived and curated by The Australian Ballet's Artistic Director David Hallberg. It showcased the depth, range and diversity of nine of the nation's dance companies at the Arts Centre in Melbourne during October.

Companies participating included The Australian Ballet, Bangarra Dance Theatre, Australian Dance Theatre, Sydney Dance Company, Chunky Move, Lucy Guerin Inc, Queensland Ballet, Marrugeku and Karul Projects. Over three weeks, Dance X was reviewed nationally:

[Part One – Artshub](#)

[Parts One & Two – Dance Australia](#)

[Part Three - Artshub](#)

### Eileen Kramer turns 108

Happy 108th birthday to former Bodenwieser dancer Eileen Kramer, whose advice to 'start dancing early. And keep on until you're 108' is being widely applauded. Film maker Sue Healey – a close friend and collaborator – says that their latest project, a series of three dance films, was made during the pandemic and through this year.

Healey says it is Kramer's "constant state of creativity" that keeps her going. This article appeared in the [Sydney Morning Herald](#) on 7 November 2022 to celebrate Eileen and her amazing 108 years.

### Shirley McKechnie AO

We record with great sadness the passing of Professor Shirley McKechnie AO, one of Ausdance's founders and perhaps the most influential artist and educator in Australia's recent history.

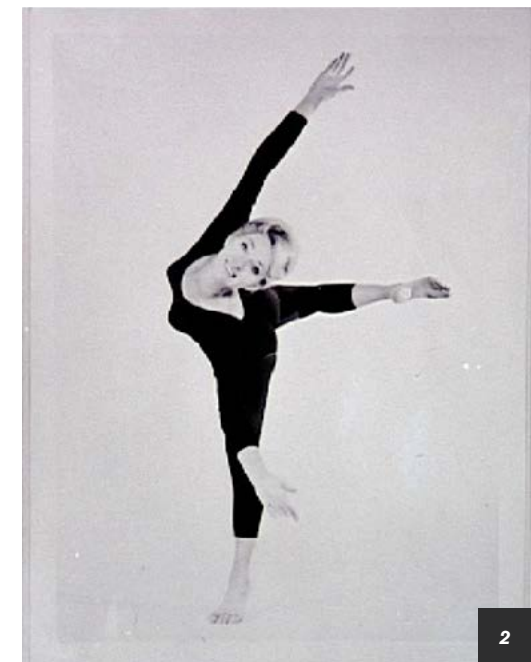
Shirley's passion for dance, her unwavering faith in the ability and potential of young artists and educators, and her understanding of the core values of dance, made her one of our greatest and most articulate advocates and mentors. Her life was marked by generosity, intellectual rigour and support for artists across the whole dance spectrum.

As well as an impressive career as a choreographer, performer, teacher and mentor, Shirley led several seminal research projects from 1999–2008 that were at the forefront of a new research interdisciplinary area – dance and cognitive science.

Shirley had recognised – years ahead of other research groups – that the intellectual, creative and collaborative

processes involved in the conception and development of dance works have much to offer psychology, sociology, anthropology, cognitive science and cognitive neuroscience as a lens on human thought, expression, communication, problem solving and decision making.

Ausdance is proud to have been associated so closely with our founder and mentor, and as publisher of much of her research. [See [Ausdance's full obituary](#), and another by [Jill Sykes](#), dance writer of the Sydney Morning Herald.]



1. Poster for Dance X, from The Australian Ballet.  
2. Shirley McKechnie in 1969. Photographer unknown.  
3. Shirley McKechnie in 2005. Photo: Julie Dyson



## Bangladesh report

by Zuairiyah Mouli

**Nrityanchal dance company performing 'Phire Chol Matir Tane' (directed and choreographed by Shibli Mohammad and Shamim Ara Nipa) at the open stage of Sohrwardi Uddan. Photo: Rain Music**



Each country of the world is unique. This uniqueness comes from the different culture and heritage that belongs to that country. History, identity, and land is all interconnected. People can enhance their knowledge by understanding their heritage because all these traditions evolved from the lifestyle of the communities. For instance, if we analyze the characteristics of folk dances in Bangladesh, we will be able to understand that these dances are created and acted based on the stories and beliefs of the particular community. For example, Poddar Nachon is a ritual-based performing art form based on the story of Monosha Mongol. It is mainly performed in the Kushtia, Nator, Rajshahi, and Pabna districts of Bangladesh. At the village, when someone asks for something or faces any kind of trouble, they pray (in their language they called it 'manot', meaning pledge) that if their wish gets fulfilled they will organize Manasa Puja through Poddar Nachon. And once their wish is fulfilled they arrange this play as a ritual-based festival to fulfill their 'manot'. This performing art is dependent on their belief. The artists mainly come from the Muslim community, which is an example of liberal and non-sectarian mindset of the people of these regions.

But in Bangladesh these authentic folk dances are not as popular as Indian classical or contemporary dances. As Lubna Marium

has described it, "In the case of dance traditions of Bangladesh, the 'wicked reality' is that indigenous dance and its 'fascinating field of innovation, alternatives, and creativity' do not reach our news or our universities. It does not reach our theories either because our theories are sometimes part of an 'epistemology of blindness,' in that they allow us to see certain things but blind us from seeing other things' (Santos 237-258)." (Marium 2022). And yet these dances are our identity and it is important to safeguard them while preserving their authenticity. The wellbeing of the community and hereditary artists should be given the highest import, while safeguarding and practicing these dance forms. We should always remember that the art will truly survive only if the artist or community survives.

There are many organizations in Bangladesh working to sustain the traditional folk dances of Bangladesh. In search of the root of Bengali folk dances, Nrityanchal dance group arranged a three-day festival titled 'Fire Chol Matir Tane', conceived and directed by Shibli Mohammad and Shamim Ara Nipa, from 2-4 November. This festival included a seminar, workshop and performances on Bengali folk dances. The first day started with a seminar, 'Defining folk dances of Bengal – Present & Future'. Eminent dancers of Bangladesh including Dr. Shoma Mamtuz, Minu Haque, Amanul

Haque, Monira Parveen and many more were present at the discussion. On day two, a day-long workshop was arranged on Brotochari Nritto, conducted by Nadimul Islam, and the festival ended with an hour-long performance at an open stage at Sohrwardi Uddan.

Also, Shadhona Cultural Centre has been working on indigenous artists and dance for almost 25 years. Kolpotoru, the sister organization of Shadhona, along with Dhaka Lathial Academy, has arranged a training course on Lathikhela (stick dance) which will be conducted by hereditary artists. There are some other organizations which are working with indigenous dance and dancers. Trishul, headed by Trina Mazumdar, started its journey in 2019 working with the Santal community. Tapassya, headed by Fifa Chakma, started its journey in 2014 and works with eleven indigenous communities of the Chittagong Hill Tracks. Colour of Hills, headed by Arpon Tripura, is also working with indigenous dance and dancers. Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy has a special division which works with indigenous community and on 18 September 2022, Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy arranged a special program on the indigenous dances of Bangladesh.

Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy also arranged a classical dance festival and a solo dance festival in September where more than 200 dancers from all over Bangladesh had an opportunity to perform solo. Also, six students of Kolpotoru dance school have received their Diploma Degree Certificate on Bharatnatyam dance on the



occasion of Kolpotoru's second diploma awards ceremony. One of the students, Madhurima Roy, was awarded the Gold Medal. Kolpotoru's first diploma award ceremony was held in 2017 when seven students received their diploma award.

Nrityajog together with the Department of Dance, University of Dhaka, arranged a week-long online reading and discussion of South Asian Dance Intersections (SADI) in November this year. Participants and the authors of SADI's first edition had discussed the articles and the participants were taken through some guidelines for the academic writing of Dance Studies. To spread awareness about dance forms and dance practice of Bangladesh and to let the world know about our culture, there is no alternative to proper research and documentation.



1. Dikha dance group performing 'Deshacharja', directed and choreographed by Sweetie Das Chowdhury, at the Nritto Natto Uthshob-2022 at Bangladesh Shilpakala Academy. Photo: Asish Sengupta
2. Diploma awardees of Kolpotoru Dance School (headed by Lubna Marium) performing at the Second Diploma Award Ceremony 2022 at Chhayanaud Auditorium. Photo: Yasmin Koli



# Beijing report

by Tang Yi and Wang Miao



Screenshot of all the students and teachers in an online group photo for the LMA Introductory Courses.

enjoy scenes from all over the world, despite the relatively isolated time and space due to the pandemic. This first-ever experience to be part of a WDA Global Event is significant for all who took part in the process during those nine days, packed with paper presentations, online showcases, Pecha Kucha, and performances, as well as the special presentation of ArtsCross by four cities: Beijing, Hong Kong, London, and Taipei.

WDAAP Beijing chapter would like to share news of the events sponsored by our members in the first half-year of 2022:

In May 2022, World Dance Alliance Asian Pacific Beijing (WDAAP Beijing) was formed, housed under China Laban Research Center based in Beijing Normal University. China Laban Research Center focuses on the sharing of Laban theory as well as dance education. The establishment of WDAAP Beijing was encouraged by Prof. Yunyu Wang who is the immediate Past President of World Dance Alliance – Asia Pacific (WDA-AP). It is with great honor that we become a chapter member of the WDA-AP, named officially as WDAAP Beijing. The goal is to provide a platform for people from not just Beijing but from mainland China to participate in the dance activities of WDA.

Within two weeks of the establishment of WDAAP Beijing, sixty-nine members have signed up through the online channel of BNU Laban Center and thirty-two of them immediately registered and participated in the wonderful SWEAT International Dance Festival hosted by Hong Kong Dance Academy as the 2022 World Dance Alliance Global Summit held from 17 to 25 July.

Through the smooth communication of the Internet, we can feel the dance passion and

In June 2022, there was an online discussion and sharing on applying Laban Theory to teaching practice and research, sponsored by BNU China Laban Research Center.

Due to the restrictions of the pandemic, regular public discussions and sharing activities of BNU Laban Center were all held online, which allowed more colleagues who are willing to apply Laban theory to dance teaching and research to be able to learn about “Laban”, on an easily-accessible platform. The center invited nine dance teachers from universities, primary and secondary schools, who are also partners of the center, to share their learning experiences, teaching experiences and research directions.

In July 2022, Beijing Normal University (BNU) and China Laban Research Center, a member of WDA Beijing, hosted Laban Movement Analysis Introductory Courses.

As a popular training course of BNU Laban Center, the organization chapter of WDA Beijing, Laban Movement Analysis (LMA) Introductory Courses were held online for the first time after 2019. Also for the first



1

time, our LMA course tutor Wang Yunyu led three new Certified Movement Analysts – Tang Yi, Chen Yamei and Wang Miao – which formed a new way to adapt to online teaching, for dance educators, researchers and LMA fans recruited by Laban Center with members from all over China, bringing fresh LMA information and training.

From September till November 2022, an online course of Mind Movement Technique was provided by BNU China Laban Research Center.

Dance and movement therapy is also an endeavor of BNU Laban Center, which also reflects the living situation and new needs of people in this era. In September 2022, we invited Mylène Mathieu, a France

self-hypnotherapist, to conduct three open Internet sessions for dance or non-dance-trained people to utilize Mathieu's self-created Mind Movement Technique (MMT). The course involved thirty students doing weekly exercises and learning. We are looking forward to the results and impact of this project.

BNU China Laban Research Center is trying to bring dance lovers, educators and researchers from all over mainland China to pay attention to the information of WDA-AP. We also look forward to sharing more online activities overseas or participating in a variety of online activities from other regions of World Dance Alliance.



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1. The nine speakers for the online discussion about applying Laban Theory to teaching and research (l-r, top to bottom): Zhang Yi, Fang Yao, Wei Xuying, Zhang Xiaomei, Xu Man, Zhang Wei, Jing Zhiwei, Zeng Qiao, Guo Lu.
2. Poster of the Mind Movement Technique online course.



# Hong Kong report

by Nicholas Wong

Multidisciplinary dance theatre composed of immersive installation and contemporary dance, in *Meeting In-between Time* by City Contemporary Dance Company. Photo: Yvonne Chan, provided by City Contemporary Dance Company



After the 5th wave of the pandemic, our local performance venues have reopened. As if to make up for lost time on stage, productions have sprung up and the venues are lively again! Learning and evolving from the experience of the pandemic, we are seeing experimental attempts at expanding the potential and resilience of the dance ecology, whether it be the incorporation of art tech, or returning to the community, the Hong Kong dance scene is thriving and full of potential.

The long-anticipated World Dance Alliance Global Summit was planned to be held in Hong Kong, but to adapt to the 'new normal' of the COVID-19 pandemic, Hong Kong Dance Alliance co-presented the Global Summit as part of the umbrella events of SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Festival by The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. Pressing matters of this new age, such as the wellbeing of dance practitioners, digitisation of arts, suspicions surrounding personal data, and sustainability were explored in the virtual conferences featuring different mediums of presentations, screenings, and sharing from dance companies and independent artists. Participants examined different facets of dance not only in scientific research, but

also in community projects, education, and training for dancers.

Recently, Freespace of West Kowloon Cultural District curated a wide range of performances, installations, and digital and virtual experiences that pushed the boundaries of live performance, human bodies, physical and digital dimensions. Hong Kong artists Chan Wai-lok, Zelia ZZ Tan, and Tsang Tsui-shan were featured in this exploration in art tech. Chan Wai-lok's *In the Cloud* was a digital choreographic work shaped by soundscapes, modulated text and visuals, and the sound of the human voice. Dance artist Zelia ZZ Tan invited the audience to become co-creators in a multisensory, interactive dance adventure, exploring motion through a variety of physical and virtual dimensions. Hong Kong film director Tsang Tsui-shan's *Chroma 11* documents a magical tale of artistic collaboration and an otherworldly lovers' reunion after heart-wrenching loss.

The dance landscape is changing rapidly – so is the cityscape of Hong Kong. City Contemporary Dance Company crafted a unique response to this phenomenon in their latest site-specific work *Meeting In-between Time* by renowned choreographer Sang Jijia. The show incorporated contemporary dance,

visual arts, and installation with the Pokfulam Farm, a heritage site located in the southern part of Hong Kong; a thought-provoking contrast of the past and present.

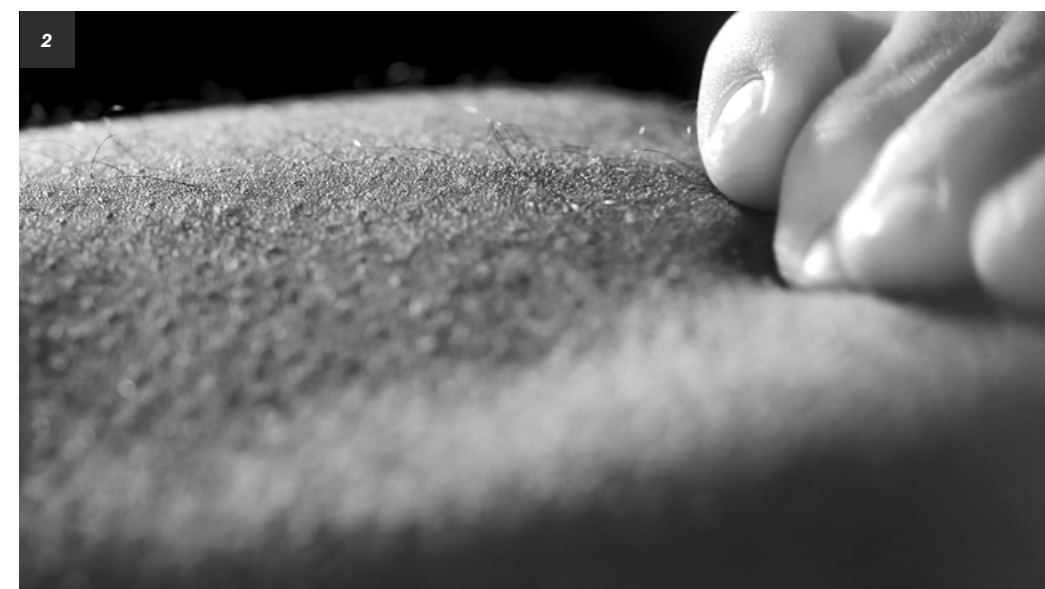
We have seen dance used as an educational tool – how may we understand movement? Who is fit to dance? In exploration of these fundamental questions, Unlock Dancing Plaza's #danceless Public Participatory Project aims to extend these boundaries. It will be their second time hosting the Children Creative Movement Forum, where they will discuss the importance of the concept that movement is a 'game'. And *Body in Time* is a series of workshops and showcase of elderly dancers' imagination of body movement.

Looking forward, the Hong Kong Dance Alliance will be presenting the 'New Force in Motion' series 2022! We aim to present new dance works of emerging choreographers, and to encourage development and stimulate choreography through artistic mentoring. This year's choreographers are Duncan Tung, Kammy Lau, and Pang Chun. With rehearsals underway, words can't encapsulate how excited we are for the premiere on the 9 December.



1. The poster for the 'New Force in Motion' series featuring Pang Chun, Kammy Lau, and Duncan Tung  
2. A still from Jian Feng's *Organ Play*. Source:

SWEAT Hong Kong International Dance Festival, World Dance Alliance Global Summit – International Dance Film Screening V





## India report

### Building a Bridge with our Contemporaries by Paramita Saha

It is with great excitement that we announce a collaboration between World Dance Alliance- Asia Pacific and Khajuraho Dance Festival. The Festival is 48 years old and is one of the oldest classical dance festivals of India, organised by the Madhya Pradesh Kala Parishad, through Ustad Alauddin Khan Sangeet and Kala Academy. WDAAP is delighted to curate a first-ever International Contemporary Dance Platform: A Stage for Our Contemporaries at this week-long festival of classical dances held annually against the spectacular backdrop of the 1000-year-old World Heritage Site Khajuraho temples, in Chhatarpur District, in the state of Madhya Pradesh, in Central India. The Khajuraho Festival of Dance is conducted every year, from 20-26 February.

We are currently in discussion with teams from Malaysia, Canada, Korea, Singapore, India and Taiwan to be part of this week-long curation of lectures, performances and workshops.

We look forward to sharing more details of the program soon. Keep following us for more updates!

### South Asian Dance Intersections by Dr Arshiya Sethi

*South Asian Dance Intersections* (SADI) is the new international, open access, double blind peer reviewed, online dance journal, which is housed at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte. SADI was conceived during the pandemic as a transnational feminist project. It proposes a field-defining modality of looking at scholarship around South Asian Dance studies emerging within the field across values, theories,

and practices. A brainchild of UNCC's Department of Dance, especially Assistant Prof. Kaustavi Sarkar, it was launched on 23 September 2022 by the US-based Dance Studies Association (DSA) as an Asian and Asian Diaspora Working group event. SADI in Punjabi (a language common to India and Pakistan: two countries included in the geographical conglomeration) means 'ours'.

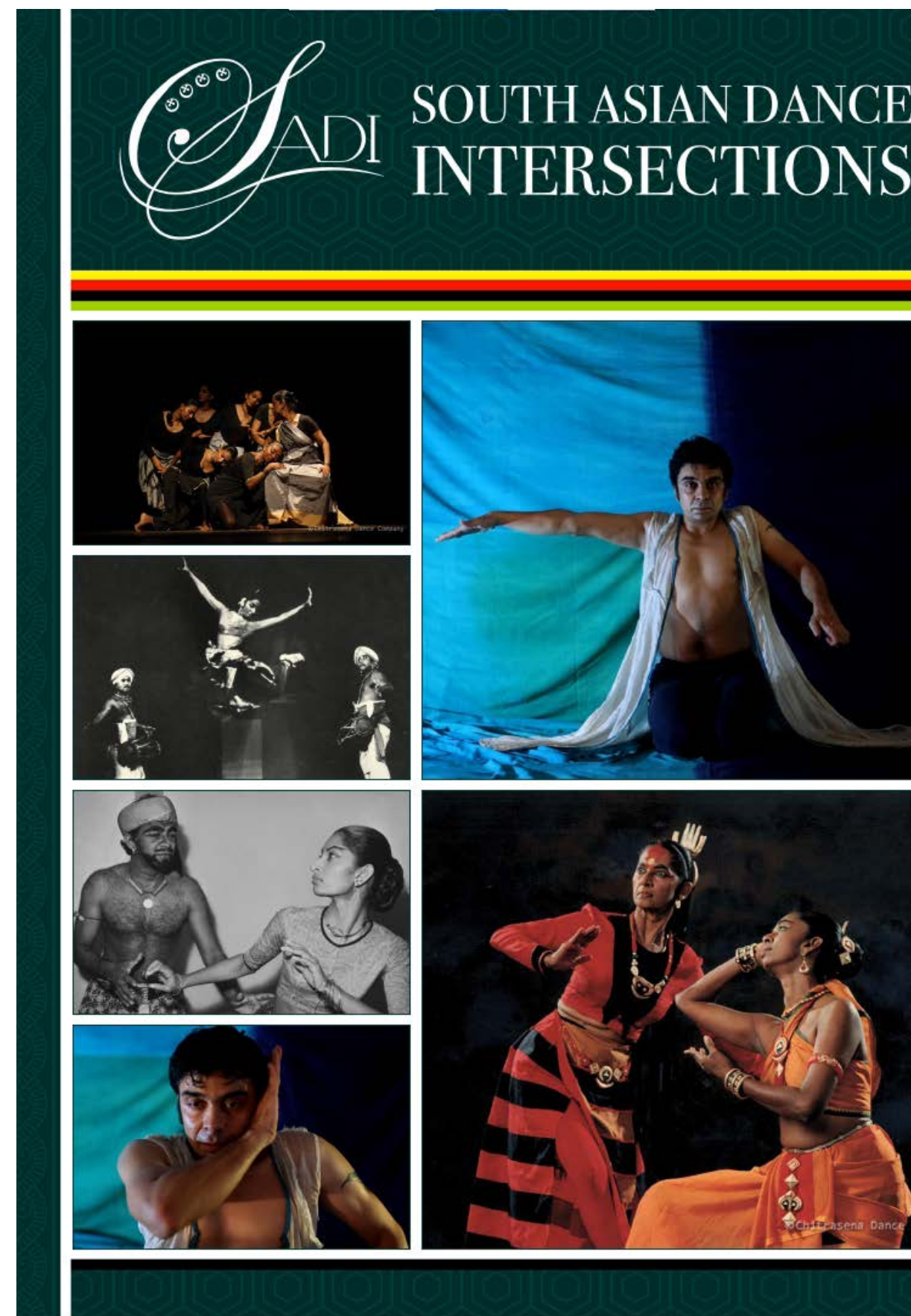
SADI exemplifies Our Dance, Our Voice. SADI is an example of the ongoing efforts to decolonise dance scholarship, self-represent the region's artistry, as per its own theories, values and aesthetics and amplify normally neglected local voices that were silenced by the incubus of the supremacy of unitarian scholarship models. We believe that it will encourage diversity and give a truer picture of the dance reality of the region.

Helmed by a distinguished board of leading scholars of dance and South Asia, including Urmimala Sarkar Munsri, Anurima Bannerji, Pallabi Chakravorty, Ananya Chatterjea, Rumya Putcha, Sarah Morelli, Lubna Marium, Sheema Kermani, Kaustavi Sarkar (who also serves as interim Journal Manager) and Arshiya Sethi, SADI's first issue brings you seven crackling articles and one editorial, written by ten scholars from six countries around the themes of 'Nation and Citizen' and 'Dance and the Covid Pandemic'. It also includes a call for papers for the next issue.

SADI has an active mentoring programme to help young scholars, accepts different kinds of writings, especially on intersections and even accepts strong pieces written in the vernacular. Being an online journal, we encourage the liberal use of copyright-owned digital and video media by our authors.

Visit us at <https://journals.charlotte.edu/sadi/issue/view/126/9>

Opposite: The cover of the first edition of *South Asian Dance Intersections* online journal.





## Indonesia report

by Galih Prakasiwi



In this report, I want to inform Channels readers about various kinds of performances in Indonesia, using three case studies of dance shows in different styles and places.

On 29 August 2022, two contemporary dance pieces were shown at Societet Militair Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, both choreographed by Pulung Jati Ronggo Murti, a dancer and choreographer from Yogyakarta. Six female dancers performed *Unbalance*, while seven male dancers presented *Counterbalance*. These two works were a continuation of the explorations in *Balance* – another dance piece of Pulung's performed at Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiardja in 2021. Pulung explored his consciousness about balancing, not only related to the body but also reflecting on his life journey and balance in the world.



This page: Two works choreographed by Pulung Jati Ronggo Murti; above *Unbalance*, and below *Counterbalance*. Photos: Nanang Setiawan

*Unbalance* is Pulung's first project with all female dancers. From the movement, we can identify that these two pieces are highly intimate and strong since they intensively explore repetitive body movements – the six female dancers moved their bodies forward and backward over a minute. In starting the motif, one dancer moved, then one or two followed her until all the dancers moved together, before they switched to another motif. Apart from being a contemporary dancer and choreographer, Pulung is a dancer of Yogyakarta classical dance. In the *Counterbalance* piece, he explored one of Yogyakarta classical dance's balancing body techniques called *ngawet*. I could clearly see it, especially when the dancer moved their right leg straight to the front and then moved it to the right side very slowly, keeping their leg straight and toes upward (Javanese: *nylekenthing*). Both repertoires show well-qualified dancers as individuals and groups. They could perform each dance motif with the same feel, particularly in the *Unbalance* repertoire. Their schedule of six-hour rehearsals, four times a week, paid off with an incredible performance.

In the western part

of the Indonesian archipelago, I observed a festival initiated by the people of Nagari (village) Batu Taba, Batipuh Selatan, West Sumatera, named Galundi Singkarak Festival (GSF). This festival was held on the edge of Singkarak Lake, surrounded by rice fields and hills. The local people had worked together every single day for two months to prepare the venue. *Jujuang Talam* carnival opened the festival on 29 October 2022 morning. 125 mothers brought trays of food balanced on their heads as they walked to the venue. Everyone then ate the food in front of the stage. This kind of activity is adapted from the Minangkabau tradition called *Makan Bajamba*. Dedy Novaldi, the curator, said that GSF was meant to be an annual agenda, but they missed two years because of the pandemic. The first festival was held in 2019 and the second one will be held this year.

During the two-day festival, there were various performances such as traditional sports competitions, *silat*, *randai*, ethnic music, and dance. Local performers, from children to adults, danced traditional dances based on their culture such as Bagurau dance, Mahelo Upiah, and Piriang Badarai. The performers were students from the village, members of the art community nearby Batu Taba, and students of Indonesian Institute Padang Panjang. Dedy also said that this festival is intended not only for the villagers who live there, but also for villagers who have migrated to other cities.

Let's move now to the eastern part of Indonesia. There a young woman named Theodora Melsasail is concerned about dance and education for children in Manipa, Seram Bagian Barat, Maluku. She is one of the choreographers who showed her dance



film in the Layar Terkembang program of the Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF) 2022, in which she presented the work *Taulang*, inspired by verbal abuse. *Taulang* in the language of Maluku means 'repeat'. She said that many children in her village experience verbal abuse from their parents. The dance consisted of three dancers representing the human life cycle: a child, a teenager, and an adult. Theodora wants to declare the drawbacks of abuse on human beings through her works.

Theodora has also opened her house for children to practice dancing and studying. She initiated a nonprofit organization named Theo Dance Family and Ruma Balajar (meaning 'study house'). Now, there are 42 children who meet her twice a week for telling stories, singing, dancing, drawing, making poems, learning to read, etc. This month they make a wall magazine to display their artwork and also campaign about mental health and climate change issues as well as solicit donations for this activity.



1. Dancing children at Galundi Singkarak Festival, West Sumatra. Photo: GSF Team  
2. Activity at Ruma Balajar, Manipa village, Seram Bagian Barat, Maluku. Photo: Theodora Melsasail



## Korea report

by Kim Geung-soo

All photos in this report: highlights from the Young Dance Festival at the 2022 World Dance Expo in Seoul, at Sejong Center for the Performing Arts, 30-31 August 2022. All photos: Hanfilm

1. 'Tree of Life', performed by AnYang Arts High School students, choreography by Min Ji Kim.
2. 'Hello, Ludwig!', performed by SunHwa Arts High School's students, choreography by Seh Yun Kim.
3. Luc Forskett and Scarlett Harvey of the Royal Ballet School, in *The Sleeping Beauty* Act 3 Blue Bird pas de deux, coached by Iain Mackay.
4. Kaywon High School of Arts in creative ballet 'The Presents'.
5. Goyang High School of Arts in *Paquita*, Act 3.
6. Participants of the Young Dance Festival in final bows.



I hope everyone in the Asia-Pacific branch of World Dance Alliance is healthy and happy.

The Korean headquarters of World Dance Alliance (Chairman: Kim Geung-soo) held the second Young Dance Festival from 30 to 31 August 2022, at Sejong Center for the Performing Arts.

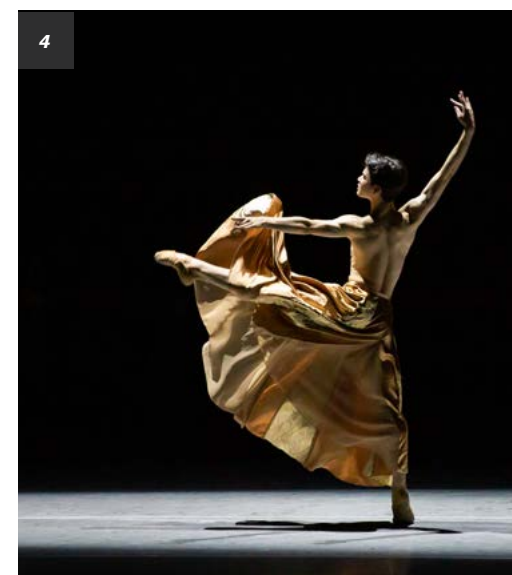
For two days, 20 teams with over 700 dancers in total took to the stage full of youth and passion with various genres, including Korean dance, ballet, and modern dance. This year, the Young Dance Festival took its first step toward internationalization with participation from the Royal Ballet School, UK, represented by Luc Forskett and Scarlett Harvey.



As if BTS were performing, a frenzy of cheers and applause shook the theatre with each team's performance.

This event was created to provide opportunities for young dancers who have not been on stage since COVID-19, and is now turning into a stage that gives dreams and hopes to young people with various works. Also, through competition in good faith, the event encourages the development of dance and friendship between members of the same generation. It's becoming a real even to look forward to.

We expect more organizations and foreign teams to take part in this event next year. We look forward to your participation.





## Malaysia report

by Bilqis Hijjas

'Seekor Manusia' choreographed by Mohd Nuriqam, performed by Iqram Company, at Dancebox, 29-30 December 2022, at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre. Photo: Nazir Azhari



Just before the New Year, MyDance Alliance hosted our final Dancebox event for 2022 at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre (klpac). This was our second Dancebox of the year; the August edition was produced by local choreographer Kenny Shim, and included 7 short dance works, including one by Kenny himself. Kenny has been involved with many productions this year, including creating a full-length contemporary dance work, *Psychosynthesis*, with Asia Ballet Theatre which will premier early next year, and we welcome him to our roster of Dancebox producers. Dancebox is not only a great platform for Malaysia's independent and emerging dance practitioners to stage their works in a professional context, it's also a wonderful place for budding producers and stage crew to cut their teeth.

The August edition was so popular that there was a bunfight in the lobby for the tickets sold at the door. With the support of klpac, we have decided to move to a more formal ticketed format for Dancebox for the very first time, using local online ticketing and streaming platform CloudJoi. We also had two nights of performance for the December edition instead of the usual one, and we were delighted to see our fans take advantage of the new ticketing convenience, and join us to ring in 2023 with 8 exciting new dance works.

MyDance Alliance now has partnerships with two major performing arts venues in

the Klang Valley. Aside from Dancebox at klpac, we also have recently confirmed the continuation of our series MyDance@PJPAC, with Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre. For this series in the second half of 2022, MyDance committee member Kyson Teoh produced Malaysia Day Dance.lebrations in mid September, turning the spotlight on East Malaysia with dance classes in traditional dances from Sabah and Sarawak, followed by a mini showcase of cultural dances and other popular dance forms.

At the end of November, MyDance President JS Wong and committee member Faillul Adam organised Dancing Duet at PJPAC, a choreographic platform for duo choreography which offered two workshops and a mentoring rehearsal, and concluded with a work-in-progress showcase of 12 choreographic studies. The project involved many international students of the postgraduate dance programmes at Universiti Malaya, as well as other keen emerging choreographers from the community. This series of mentoring projects began in 2019 with Dancing Alone, a choreographic platform for solo choreography, and continued during the pandemic with Dance on Camera for dance video making in 2020-2021. It continues to provide targeted choreographic skill building, mentoring, feedback and performance platforms; it also brings independent choreographers together to engage with and

support each other.

The 2023 season at PJPAC will see the return of this choreographic mentoring series, as well as an event for International Women's Day and a site-specific Dancing in Place event. We are also pursuing the support of the National Department of Arts and Culture in 2023, possibly even the return of our much-loved MyDance Festival.

We hope that Malaysia is now emerging from its past few years of political unease. Federal elections took place peacefully in November, and a new 'unity' coalition government has just come into power. Despite some initial teething problems (including the title 'Arts and Culture' being inadvertently left off the nomination of the new Minister of Tourism), we are hoping that the new government will champion Malaysia's unique identity as the home of many different ethnicities. That diversity is exactly what makes our dance community so vibrant and strong, and it is something that MyDance Alliance tries to showcase in all of our programmes.



1. Leo Yap and Chloe Tan in Mak Foong Ming's 'Adaptation' in Dancebox, 23 August 2022, at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre. Photo: Goh Bong Hiang
2. Kenny Shim, producer and MC at Dancebox, 23 August 2022 at Kuala Lumpur Performing Arts Centre. Photo: Bob Tan
3. 'Xiao Hua Dan', performed by Art Room Studio, for Malaysia Day Dance.lebrations, 18 September 2022 at Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre. Photo: How Jie Yi
4. 'Lekat' [Sticky], performed by Muhammad Azamuddin Bin Hajijul and Syndie Anak Enggong, choreographed by Mohammad Azmi Muhajir bin Mohd Nor and Nadia Hazirah binti Nazren, for Dancing Duet at Petaling Jaya Performing Arts Centre, 27 November 2022. Photo: Keith Way



## Philippines report

by Joelle Jacinto  
and Nicole  
Primerio

Beauty Balaga in her work 'The Banquet' with Teatro Ambahanon at the Last Quarter Intensives in General Santos City.  
Photo: Ricky Cañete.



The performing arts was an industry most palpably affected by the 2020 pandemic, but theaters are finally opening up and dancers finally have larger spaces in which to move. In the last few months, several “live” performances were staged at Cultural Center of the Philippines (CCP), which closes in January 2023 for scheduled renovations, as well as in several other performing spaces across the country.

The 25-year slumber of the Metropolitan Theater ended in December 2021; freshly renovated, it hosted several dance performances this year, including standing-room only performances by the Ramon Obusan Folkloric Group in September. The Samsung Theater at Circuit, Makati, hosted a ballet festival by the Association of Ballet Academies in the Philippines and the Philippine leg of the Youth America Grand Prix, both in September. Meanwhile, Philippine Ballet Theater's first post-pandemic onstage performances were on tour in the Visayas and in the US.

The regions have also been busy. In November, Novy Bereber, returning from Australia, launched a new dance company and dance therapy center, and hopefully cultivating an audience, in his hometown in Iloilo. Meanwhile Bing Cariño and Teatro Ambahanon pushed through with this year's *Last Quarter Intensives*, offering compelling site-specific works in a program that ran for most of October. It seems more performances and venues will be opening up

soon.

The CCP has been fully booked this last quarter: Ballet Philippines' new Russian artistic director, Mikhail Martynyuk, presented new work for the company on 17-18 September at the CCP. Most of their old repertoire had transferred to the newly formed Alice Reyes Dance Philippines, an independent company supported by the CCP, following the intellectual property rule that the choreographer owns the rights of a dance work, not the company it was mounted on, allowing the ARDP to stage two shows over two weekends in September, to pay tribute to their iconic choreographers, Edna Vida, Denisa Reyes, Alice Reyes and Agnes Locsin, then new works in *Premieres and Encores* on 28 October, featuring Redha Beintefour, JM Cabling, Erl Sorilla, John Ababon, AL Abraham, and Ronelson Yadao.

The contemporary dance initiatives of Myra Beltran and Denisa Reyes continued at the CCP, as new directors Christine Crame and Ricca Bautista have stepped up to facilitate the CCP Choreo Series. They ended their virtual season with the online showcase of Neo-Filipino: Ground Zero on 27 August 2022, with dance films by Rhosam Prudenciado Jr., Christine Crame, Al Bernard Garcia, Dingdong Selga, and Buboy Raquitico, which streamed until 9 September. Then, they moved to the CCP Blackbox on 15 October for the biennial WifiBody PH competition.

Aptly entitled *Emergence*, the twelve new talents ventured away from the previous dance and/or film format the pandemic has limited productions to. Jury members Elena Laniog-Alvarez, Redha Beintefour, and Ronnie Mirabuena debated extensively but finally agreed on Erica Patoc as first prize winner, and runners up Mary Evangeline Recto and Jansen So. Encouragement awards were given to Lloyd Pilapil, and Andrew Carlo Simangca, while LikhaPH Founder Rhosam Prudenciado Jr. and Creative Director Nicole Primero awarded the Community Prize to Sherwin Santiago, whose piece *Wiyawi* was deemed essential in contributing to artistic dialogues with the community on Philippine culture and heritage.

The pandemic also effected more involvement, more nurturing and empowerment among dance artists, who have been supporting each other as a primary mode of survival. LikhaPH Outreach Program (the Filipino word “*likha*” translates to “create”) continued to engage with Philippine dance artists throughout the community's adjustment towards 2022's

“new normal,” finally realizing what we imagined the Philippine chapter could be.

LikhaPH also joined the successful *Kalat Kiki Ball* organized by The House of Dirty in early October 2022 to celebrate the local ballroom scene. The family of individuals has long promoted Voguing as an artform and provided a safe space for education of stigmatized contexts.

Galaw.Co Dance Theater, one of the dance companies supported by LikhaPH, produced *Work in Progress*. Participants of Galaw Co Performance Lab, and Raflesia Bravo & the Artist Collective headlined the late October 2022 show, a culmination of a month-long residency project.

In November, the outreach program teamed up with UNICEF in celebration of World Children's Day. Rhosam Prudenciado Jr. and Nicole Primero held a workshop and choreographed for the children of Maasin City, Southern Leyte, to honor this year's theme: *Walang Iwanan (Don't Leave Anyone Behind)*. It was a welcome change from working with professional artists, as young hearts told their own community stories through dance.



Janine Arisola and Biag Gaongen in Agnes Locsin's *Elias* at the CCP Main Theater, 30 September 2022. Photo: Erica Marquez-Jacinto



## Singapore report

by Filomar Cortezano Tariao

Fairul Zahid's *Allocentric* performed by students of LASALLE College of the Arts at the 41st Battery Dance Festival in New York. Photo: Phil Mahabeer



The second half of 2022 proved to be a boon for Singapore's arts scene with mask-wearing becoming optional indoors and in performances. Masks were required only in public transport. Testing for COVID-19 before entering Singapore was also lifted for fully vaccinated individuals, ushering a steady return of tourism to the island state and bringing in more audiences for local shows.

The iconic performing hub Esplanade took the opportunity in stride with in-person performances showcasing both local and foreign artists. Its Concert Hall once more hosted Singapore Ballet's (formerly Singapore Dance Theatre or SDT) dance appreciation series, while contemporary dance company The Human Expression (T.H.E.) opened Esplanade's newest addition to its performing spaces, the Singtel Waterfront Theatre. Esplanade Library joined in on the fanfare with *Phenomenon III* by Peter Gn's contemporary dance ensemble. In its third iteration, this popular contemporary dance platform featured 37 works from local schools and notable professional artists, enlivening dance enthusiasts in a non-traditional performance venue.

August also heralded the Ministry of Education's announcement for the first round of applications to the University of

the Arts Singapore (UAS) to begin in 2023. An alliance between the two local arts institutions, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA) and LASALLE College of the Arts, UAS synergises the strengths of these 2 schools while they remain distinct entities. The formation of the UAS aims to enrich the cultural landscape of the region.

With borders opening, the dance programme of LASALLE began its semester overseas by restaging lecturer Fairul Zahid's *Allocentric* in front of an audience of 3000 at the 41st Battery Dance Festival in New York. The performance had Jerry Hochman of CriticalDance.org applauding the dancers as an "outstanding group." Zahid also presented his award-winning duet *Sopan* on national television in Malaysia Tari Live 2022, with dance diploma students performing in front of the Crown Prince of Pahang. This itinerary of performances saw the school return to Singapore to work with Liu I-Ling, former member of Bill T. Jones/Arnie Zane Company. In a 7-day residency centred on the Taiwanese dancer's autobiographical work *Normal Life*, students revisited their lives during the pandemic, and reflected on their dance journeys, and how their bond with the art has evolved over time. Their formative work was presented on the final day of Esplanade's da:ns festival. Ending

the semester with *Tipping Points 2022*, LASALLE's black box theatre featured street dance duo ScRachMarcsan with an exhibition of student choreography.

NAFA's dance programme had a jam-packed calendar for its first semester. Students and alumni performed in a variety of works by local and international artists. To open the school year, student creations by Joseph Chua, Pia Custodio, Ng Yun Ying, and ballet solos restaged by former SDT principal Rosa Park were presented in *Phenomenon III*. Performance Making student Kirill Chastukhin also screened his dance film in the show. Following the event were back-to-back performances in September starting with *Amalgamation*, National Contemporary Ballet's inaugural full length piece. Helmed by artistic director Jeffrey Tan, the 12-strong dance ensemble spotlighted 10 NAFA alumni, including Brian Rodriguez, Edina Handali, Eurie Lascano, Natalie Cheong, Natalie Lin, Sophie Lim, Supatchai Lappakornkul, Terence Pek, Ting Wei Wong, and Valerie Tan. The undergraduates were not to be outdone, under the guidance of programme leader Susan Yeung, with performances for *Into The Abyss*, SCAPE's 2nd residency showcase, and for Esplanade da:ns festival. Selected dancers then worked with Eileih Muir, an artist with critically acclaimed Studio Wayne McGregor. Her week-long residency, in collaboration with Esplanade, culminated in a presentation of devised work by the students.

In November, NAFA dancers explored post-colonial culture academic Homi K. Bhabha's theories on hybrid identities to portray Singapore's cultural complexity. Together with student choreographers,



Albert Tiong (formerly of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre) headlined this exposition on diversity and convergence in *The Third Space*.

Newly formed and homegrown Kirishima Dance Corps 霧嶋舞踊隊 (KDC), together with filmmaker Zachary Yap, premiered the dance film *Imagine The Fire* 火念 for SCAPE's Movement Lab 2022 in December. This follows the successful release of KDC's first dance movie, *Take Me to Your Darkest Hour*.

Capping the highlights of the year is the election of a new Executive Committee for WDA Singapore, with the following young leaders steering the future of the local dance scene:

- President: Xenres Krishima
- Vice President: Lauren Blaire Smith
- Secretary: Maybelle Lek
- Treasurer: Adelene Stanley Chea

An exciting year lies ahead of WDA Singapore, with the new officers forging the way to a more holistic and integrated approach to dance and movement.



1. A still from Kirishima Dance Corps' dance film *Take Me To Your Darkest Hour*.  
2. A performance in *Phenomenon III*, presented by Peter Gn's The Presence Project, at library@esplanade on 20 August 2022. Photo: Peter Gn



# Thailand report

by Pornrat Damrhung



Live dance is back in Thailand. The uneven exit from the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a resurgence of many different public forms of rhythmic movement in the Kingdom, involving young and old performers, and showcasing the value of moving together with others in shared live spaces. This short report will highlight three recent movement-focused events in Thailand: a new spectacular Khon performance at the Thailand Cultural Center, young performers from a community arts school in central Thailand learning to move differently with young people in Copenhagen, and a new mode of collective choreography led by Pichet Klunchun that centers on timed walking together in living spaces.

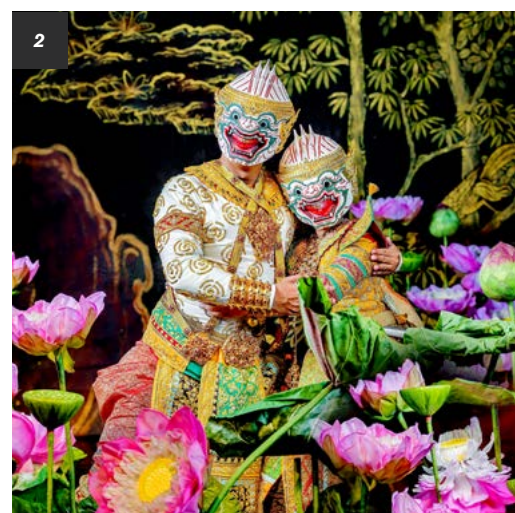
After three years off, Royal Khon returned to the Large Hall of the Thailand Cultural Center in Bangkok from 30 October to 5 December 2022. As before, the restaged

*Sakot Thap* was sponsored by The Support Foundation of Her Majesty the Queen, i.e., Queen Sirikit, mother of Thailand's current King Rama X. *Sakot Thap* narrates the tale of the underworld demon Maiyarap, who cast a sleeping spell on Rama's army, kidnapped Rama, and took him to an underworld prison, while Hanuman, Rama's loyal monkey warrior, entered into the underworld to rescue Rama.

Royal Khon performances recruit new young artists from around the country for special Khon training by masters at the national Bunditpatanasilpa Institute. Among others, four young boys were selected and trained as monkeys to perform the role of Matchanu.

COVID-19 still held surprises for *Sakot Thap*. When the female demon lead caught COVID, the 81-year-old National Artist Master Rajana Phuangprayoon replaced her onstage. Master Rajana had been involved in the production from its beginning and specialized in the female demon character. Her surprise performance became the talk of the town, as she still improvised her dance to the music and the offstage narrator's mouthing of her banter with demon jesters.

Her improvised performance impressed audiences and performers, showing her mastery of spontaneous dance to the verbal jousts with the jesters, as well as how talent has no expiration date and how creativity is central to classical Thai dance. Her initial accidental performance led Master Rajana to perform a second time for young people and public audience, showing her energetic movement onstage as she improvised with the narrator and jesters.



1. 81-year old National Artist Master Rajana Phuangprayoon improvising her dance as the demon Nang Pirakuen with demon jesters in *Sakot Thap*. Photo: Krit Tanasomboondee

2. One the four young boys who played Matchanu in *Sakot Thap*, accompanied by Hanuman, his father, at the Thailand Cultural Centre in Bangkok, 30 October to 5 December 2022. Photo: Krit Tanasomboondee



Young Thais have been involved in community-based dance exchanges abroad, too. The Moradokmai (New Heritage) home school in Pathumthani, north of Bangkok, was founded by Janaprakal Chandrueng, a recently designated National Artist in the performing arts, as a boarding school focusing on the performing arts that gives opportunities for young people to study and live there, with minimal pay. Now about 60 young students stay there, learning various traditional and modern musical instruments, forms of dance, and stage performance. They focus on language, literature and other types of knowledge through project-based performance activities focused on artistic expression, giving them the vocal, corporeal, and creative abilities to communicate on issues of the day, including through performances.

From May to August 2022, the Morodokmai youth company toured high schools in Thailand and Europe, performing original pieces and holding workshops where they performed. They recently reprised them at the Bangkok Arts and Culture Center, along with holding an open house at their Pathumthani home base.

Finally, in the first two weekends of December 2022, the Pichet Klunchun Dance Company offered a new way of moving through our less infected world in its new *Take a Walk* piece, led by Pichet himself. Although billed as a solo dance piece, it was highly participatory and immersive, with Pichet and those attending walking and chatting for an hour through the large Thonburirom public park near his home park amid the movements of other people,

flowers, birds, trees, and occasional water monitors. As a new mode of recognizing and restoring health through simple, collective and interactive movement in an outdoor living space, the performance was framed by a brief introduction and a concluding stationary cool down and discussion, and consisted of what Pichet calls "three acts," each marked by him taking an increasingly quicker walking pace. Those following Pichet's pace throughout the hour will have walked 5 kilometers. Recognizing the need for collective and interactive movement in the fresh and living spaces, Pichet will move the piece to parks in Chiangmai and Chiangrai in the last two weeks of December, and sees the possibility of expanding to other places in Thailand and the world. Each performance so far consisted of a half dozen or so non-Company participants, and was followed up by moving to his theatre for coffee, water, and fruit, along with more conversation.



1. Members of the Morodokmai youth troupe (in red) working with young artists in Copenhagen, July 2022. Photo courtesy of Janaprakal Chandrueng

2. From the Pichet Klunchun *Take a Walk* performance in Thonburirom Park, 10 December 2022. Photo: Lowell Skar



## Tso's Dance Association (Taiwan) report

by Su-Ling Chou



Hung Dance at Festival d'Avignon OFF, 2022.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic spread in the first half of 2022 in Taiwan, all performances, conferences, and exhibitions had to be cancelled. The situation continued till around July. In August, the COVID-19 pandemic started slowing down and the restrictions in the performance theaters were gradually relaxed. Most of those performances that were cancelled returned to the theaters in the second half year of 2022. Because of this situation, the performance schedule this fall was very tense in all theaters, as were the performance groups in catching up with their presentations. The performing arts are suddenly blooming everywhere throughout the island of Taiwan. Through these times, it is also wonderful to see online theater is growing so fast.

There was an international project from the four cities of Taipei, London, Beijing, and Hong Kong organized by WDA Tso's Dance Association member Yunyu Wang. The project is entitled ArtsCross Dance Project and was presented as part of the SWEAT International Dance Festival held by Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts from 23 May to 17 June. The activities included four-week online rehearsals by choreographers and dancers, with the participation of dance

scholars from the four cities online observing or interviewing the choreographers and dancers. It ended with an online final performance and scholarly presentation on 17 June. This one-day event included 16 presenters and four project speakers from Taipei, London, Beijing and Hong Kong.

Another exciting dance project is that four groups were selected by Ministry of Culture, Taiwan, to join Taiwan Season 2022 at Edinburgh Fringe. Three groups for Edinburgh Fringe were Daibolo Dance Theater which performed at Assembly, Hung Dance at Dance Base, and Anarchy Dance Theater in the Shinehouse Theater at Summerhall. Hung Dance was also chosen to join 2022 Festival d'Avignon OFF together with two other groups, Tai Gu Tales Dance Theater and Acro Physical Theater. It is a great honor that at Edinburgh Fringe, Hung Dance received Mervyn Stutter's Spirit of the Fringe Awards and the evaluation of five stars from Seeing Dance, Mervyn Stutter's Pick of the Fringe, Scottish Field, The Scotsman and The List. Jeff Hsieh, artistic director and choreographer of Anarchy Dance Theater was awarded The Bobby Award by the arts professional medium Broadway Baby. We can see that the Taiwanese performing groups presented



great arts energy on the international stages and received approval from all over the world.

Locally, Shu-yi Chou was invited by National Kaohsiung Center for the Arts (NKCA) Weiwuying to be the city-sited artist planning 2022 Taiwan Dance Platform from 22 October to 22 December. The theme was "Island Connection, Body Online" that included four performances on the main stage; four performances on the outdoor stage; five topic exhibitions and three forums in NKCA. On the main stage performances, there were nine choreographers presenting seven dances. On the outdoor stage, Kaohsiung City Ballet and Tjimur Dance Theatre worked together with two choreographers to present their ideas at Banyan Plaza. The exhibitions presented Dance through Films, Dance through Sound, Dance through Photography, Screendance Showcase and Dance Livestream. In the same event, one of the three forums was 'Dance Writing in English from Taiwan' - in memory of Diane Baker, a dance writer at Taipei Times who lived in Taiwan for most of the second half of the life.

Hung-Chung Lai, the artistic director of Hung Dance, founded the Stray Birds Dance Platform project in 2018. It was hoped to create a bridge and provide opportunities for young choreographers to publish works on the platform. The platform invites international choreography competitions and art festivals to present awards for those selected dance works. This is an opportunity to connect with the world for the talented young dance artists.

The International Young Choreographer Project (IYCP), a long-term project hosted every other summer by WDAAP-Taiwan that was postponed from 2022 is still in uncertainty due to Taiwan's closed borders. With great anticipation, we plan to make the announcement for the next edition of IYCP around the beginning of February 2023, depending on COVID restrictions.

The past three years has been a depressing period for most of the performing groups of Taiwan. Fortunately, in Taiwan, after August 2022, we managed to return to the theater. We hope to welcome those from abroad to join us soon. We cannot wait till then to see all our WDA friends be together.



1. See You, performed by Hung Dance, and choreographed by Hung-chung Lai, which appeared at Edinburgh Fringe and Festival d'Avignon OFF. Photo: Chen Chang-Chih  
2. Participants of Taiwan Season 2022 at Edinburgh Fringe: Daibolo Dance Theater, Hung Dance, and Anarchy Dance Theater. Photo: Lukas Kao





See *You*, performed by Hung Dance of Taiwan, and choreographed by Hung-chung Lai, which appeared at Edinburgh Fringe and Festival d'Avignon OFF.  
Photo: Ren-haur Liu

## 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.

There are two significant events and developments to report on.

### World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) Summit

The next World Alliance for Arts Education (WAAE) Summit will be a blended, (face to face and online) summit. This exciting gathering will be hosted by the Conservatory- Professional School of the Arts, Madeira, 1-3 March 2023. The language of the event will be English.

The main topic of the Summit is 'Heritage & Sustainability: Sustaining Islands of Culture and Arts Education'.

Details for preparing to join the summit in the township of Funchal, Madeira, may be found in the following Summit website <https://waae.conservatorioescoladasartes.com/>

More information about the World Alliance for Arts Education may be found at <https://www.waae.online/world-summits.html>

If you are interested in arts education advocacy, networking and research please JOIN US in this world event, 1-3 March 2023 in Madeira!

### UNESCO Framework for Culture and Arts Education

On the back of the UNESCO Seoul Agenda 2010/11, UNESCO is developing a new Framework for Culture and Arts Education. The proposal to develop the framework was proposed by the United Arab Emirates at the 211 Session of the Executive Board of UNESCO on 30 March 2021. In short this is an updated agenda-style framework document that aims to bring arts education and culture education back on to the agenda of UNESCO and establish its future-facing relevance in terms of transdisciplinary education, sustainability, and a world undergoing massive change in terms of technology, climate change and socio-economic inequities.

The UNESCO plan is to develop a policy/framework for Cultural and Arts Education, and that this framework will be developed from now until the signing of the declaration/framework in December 2023 at a World Summit to be held in Abu Dhabi. The WAAE has asked UNESCO that the arts education community, including the dance community, with WDA as a member of WAAE, and daCI and other regional dance networks, be involved in the consultation and development process. The WAAE is recently liaising with UNESCO regarding the next steps. A key moment will be at the WAAE Arts Education Summit, Funchal, Madeira, 1-3 March 2023, to which we have in the last week invited UNESCO to offer a large consultation session and meeting.

This is all quite sudden and new. But UNESCO has made it very clear that they want to hear arts educators' voices.



# 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 local Chapter Head (contact list on back of this issue) or go to our website <http://www.wda-ap.org/membership/> for details on how to join.

## Visit our websites

[www.wda-ap.org](http://www.wda-ap.org)  
[www.facebook.com/WorldDanceAlliance/](http://www.facebook.com/WorldDanceAlliance/)

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