

## **Hong Kong Dance Alliance**

### **January to December 2016 Chairperson's Report**

#### **By Stella Lau**

#### **OPENING REMARKS**

I am pleased to present the 2015/16 Annual Report of the Hong Kong Dance Alliance. In the past year, the Alliance forged ahead in its continuing effort to promote dance and to give support to the dance community in Hong Kong. In this regard, the Alliance had completed a number of projects which I will report in the following paragraphs.

#### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE & ADMINISTRATION**

There are changes of the executive committee in the past year: Billbob Brown, Winnie Sin, Allen Lam (appointed as member in April 2016), and Raymond Wong resigned from the Board. The Board has appointed Kevin Wong as Vice-Chairperson, Jaime Redfern as Secretary, and Paul Tam as Interim Treasurer. The Alliance welcomed new members, Angela Hang, Cyrus Hui, Shirley Loong, Sylvia Wu, and Dominic Wong joining us this year. We are also glad to receive the acceptancy from Alex Fan, practicing Barrister-at-law, of our invitation to be our Honorary Legal Adviser. We look forward to their contribution to the development of the Alliance.

The Alliance's office presented a very stable and passionate team in the past year under the leadership of Cathy Lau, the Administration and Project Manager. In this period, the Alliance has hired two Part-Time Officers on project base, Megan Lee, who was our colleague in the past, and Katherine Hsuan to assist the 18<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Dance Awards and the sold-out productions - Springboard Showcase. Currently, Akama Chin has been promoted from Arts administration Trainee to Project Officer in November, and Ronnie Lam has joined us as an Editorial Trainee, which is supported by Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) Internship Scheme. Another position supported by the same scheme, Arts Administration Trainee, is currently vacant and under the procedure for hiring. I wish to thank each and everyone of them for their dedication and hard work to the Alliance.

## GRANTS

We are at present in the first year of the Three-Year-Grant (2016 - 2019) scheme under the HKADC. Both Multi Project Grant (2016-18) and Project Grant for the *19<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Dance Awards* and *Hong Kong Dance Awards Fellowship* have been approved. The Alliance would like to take this opportunity to thank Anne Chan and Sky Sum from HKADC who had patiently guided us through all the process of the grant period and had given us support whenever needed.

## ACTIVITIES REPORT (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2016)

### *Hong Kong Dance Awards 2016*

*The 18th Hong Kong Dance Awards* was presented with the sponsorship by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, at Kwai Tsing Theatre on 22 April 2016. We invited Mandy Petty as the Artistic Director and Ms. Florence Hui, SBS, JP, as our Guest of Honor. The technical support was generously supported by the Hong Kong Dance Company.

Professional practitioners were invited to join panels to shortlist nominations and recommendations for nominations gathered from the Alliance Executive Committee, the panels, and the dance community and, together with all members of the Executive Committee, took part in the final vote to decide the Awards. Invited panelists for the production panel included Anna CY Chan, Anna Cheng, Daisy Chu, Elizabeth Farrell, David Liu, Mui Cheuk Yin, Carlo Pacis, Natasha Rogai, Cecil Sze, Wong Hang Fai, which was chaired by Tom Brown, the community panel included Ronly Wong, Tsang Kam-sing, Stella Lau, and was chaired by Allen Lam.

As with last year, the Award results were kept secret until the gala performance. Among the 13 recipients of 10 awards: City Contemporary Dance Company's *Soledad* by Helen Lai was awarded for Outstanding Production and Outstanding Choreography, and shared the award for Ensemble Performance with Hong Kong Ballet's *Bolero*. Unlock Dancing Plaza's *Boy Story - Reborn* received the award of Independent Production. Awards for outstanding individual performance went to portrayals by Hong Kong Ballet's Shen Jie in *Romeo and Juliet* and Hong Kong Dance Company's Tang Ya and Li Han in *L'Amour Immortel*. Lo Wai Luk and Natasha Rogai were honored for their contribution to local dance criticism. Tsang Man-tung was awarded Outstanding Set Design for Dance for his set design in *L'Amour Immortel*. Outstanding Achievement in Youth and Community Dance was given to Passoverdance and The Office of The Arts Administrator, Chinese University Of Hong Kong, for *In Search of Space In A Cramped City: A Moving Exhibition - Urban Bottling*. At last, the newly created Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Sin Yuen.

## ***Creative Space 2016: Residency for Mid-Career Choreographers & Springboard Showcase 2016***

***Creative Space 2016: Residency for Mid-Career Choreographers*** is a five-month residency program targeting local mid-career choreographers by providing comprehensive support, including regular studio time and dancers to create new works, studio space to rehearse the piece, and administrative support. The Residency was held in early 2016 to the end of May followed by the Springboard Showcase to perform their world premiere choreography. The selection panel included Tom Brown, Stella Lau, Jacky Yu, and Yu Pik-yim to review the proposals. Justyne Li Sze-yeung and Lam Po were selected amongst 14 proposals, and Nguyen Ngoc Anh was offered a place as “Guest Artist” to present his ready-made work.

An open dancer audition was held and 7 dancers were selected amongst 35 dancers, with Chan Wing-yip, Cheng Wai-pan, Ma Sze-nga and Wu Cheng-fang casted in Li’s work, Li Yin-wai, Poon Chun-ho and Yang Jingxian in Lam’s work, and the Guest Artist, Nguyen selected Kelvin Mak, Heidi Yu, and Poon Chun-ho to be dancers to rehearse during April to June.

During the Residency, morning technique classes were held and instructed by the participants by shift, in order to maintain, to share and to further develop their technical expertise and artistry with the teams. Workshops were provided based on the stated needs and suggestions from advisors, dancers, and choreographers. These consisted of a vocal-production technique workshop led by Priscilla Leung, a somatics intensive conducted by Aaron Wan, a physical theatre workshop led by Tang Shu-wing, and a lighting workshop given by Leo Cheung.

Followed by ***Springboard Showcase 2016***, which is a platform to present the outcome of the Residency. It was shown from 17 June to 19 June, which took place at Kwai Tsing Theatre Black Box Theatre, and had a total of 434 audience members including 3 sold-out public performances and 1 student performance, with 2 world premiere works – *Human Internship* and *That Day* by Li and Lam respectively, and one Hong Kong premiere work – *Cham’s Soul* by Nguyen.

## ***Supporting Partner of REAL Showcase New Series – Organized by CCDC Dance Centre***

This ***Series*** provides opportunities for new choreographers to present their debut full-length works at CCDC Dance Centre Jockey Club Dance Theatre. Since 2010, a total of 15 productions in the *Series* have been presented. As a supporting partner, the Alliance provides the selected candidates with a mentor and arranges for reviews to be written and published in *dance journal/hk* and/or other on-line platform. The past year, we have presented *On|Off?* With 3 choreography of Evains Lui, Li Long-hin, and Rex Cheng, and performed by Janet Wu, Ming Pak, Man Liu, Evains Lui, Li Long-hin. The Alliance appointed Victor Ma as a mentor for the production during their rehearsals in the project. Also, 3 writers were invited to watch and review on the production for documentation, and 1 Chinese review written by Bonny Wong was published in the journal issue 18-4.

### ***Dance Enhance 2016-17***

First established in 2009, the program aims to nurture a new generation of dance writers and promote dance criticism and dance appreciation. The Alliance launched the 7<sup>th</sup> programme of the ***Dance Enhance*** from September 2016 to January 2017. This year, the program gained an overwhelming response with 43 participants enrolled.

From September to December 2016, participants attended three lectures with various topics: Editors' View on Dance Reviews by Stella Lau, Kevin Kwong, and Natasha Rogai; Knowledge on Classical and Modern Ballet by Yuh Egami and Irene Lo, with live demonstration by Liu Yu-yao and Wei Wei; and, Introduction to Chinese Dance by Felix Chen and Catherine Yau, and demonstrated by Rex Cheng and Lee Hoi Tung. A sharing session with choreographer Chen Kai and two workshops conducted by renowned Hong Kong choreographers about their works - Movement Workshop by Pewan Chow and We See What We Want to See – Reflection on Seeing by Dick Wong were held. Participants also attended four live performances with discussion sessions led by experienced dance critics who are also the mentor for their critic assignments - William Chan, Kuh Fei, Kevin Kwong, Natasha Rogai, and Catherine Yau. The four performances were *Movement with Fan* choreographed and performed by Chen Kai, Hong Kong Ballet's *Lady of the Camellias* choreographed by Val Caniparoli, Hong Kong Dance Company's *Chinese Hero: A Long Exile* choreographed by Yang Yuntao, and City Contemporary Dance Company's *She Says, He Talks* choreographed by Noel Pong and Nguyen Ngoc Anh. After each performance, each participant was requested to write a review, which would be reviewed and given comments by mentors from the profession. The project will be carry on until the January 2017 to be finished by the last discussion session with all participants and mentors to review the assignments and the whole project.

### ***Dance journal/hk (18-1 ~ 18-6)***

In 2016, *dance journal/hk* continues to play an important role in local print media as a platform for dance with more diverse content for different readers, including 6 categories - *News, Reviews, Feature Articles, People, Columns, and Events*.

Starting from Starting from issue 18-1, published in February, the editorial team invited the Head of Artistic Development (Dance) of the West Kowloon Cultural Dance Authority, Anna CY Chan, to write a Column 'An Eye On Dance' to share her experiences in different dance festivals, performances, and meetings during her overseas trips.

Another new endeavour of the *dance journal/hk* in this year is a collaboration with Hong Kong Dance Awards. Aiming to make known the celebration of the excellence of local dance as well as dance practitioners and projects to readers, issue 18-3 was a special edition with a special feature covering the results of the ***18th Hong Kong Dance Awards***. The issue was distributed after the gala performance in Kwai Tsing Theatre to audience members as they exited the theatre.

There were also more stories of the Hong Kong Dance Awards Awardees being covered to share with readers of their lives after received the Award, also interviews with dancers from various fields like local independent artist, street dancers and overseas arts practitioners were also included. Features regarding issues like dance movie, Macao dance community, DanceAbility, and dance projects and forums organized by different parties have been covered.

### ***DanceHub***

DanceHub is a service provided by the Alliance with the combination of a Consultancy Desk on Arts Administration and Dance Information & Exchange Centre.

This year, DanceHub has provided consultancy to individual artists, Consultancy Desk also proactively identified services needed by the community, and organized a series of Focus Group meetings, lectures and morning classes. The Consultancy Desk has assisted local choreographers – Lam Po, Li De, and Joseph Lee Wai-neng to attend WDAAP AGM this summer for the Showcase and Choreolab. There were 3 focus group meetings in February, May and October concerning issues like marketing strategy, and HKADC funding schemes. An E-Marketing Talk was held in March, and Funding Proposal Writing Talk was held just in early December. In respond to local dancers' demand in regular body training, a Morning Class Series of Feldenkrais Method instructed by Paul Lee have been started since mid-November. DanceHub has also assisted the first and second phases of the 2016 Nomination of Representatives of Arts Interests for the Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) for local dancers and art practitioners' registration as voters.

### **FUTURE EVENTS AND OTHER PROJECTS**

- Dance Enhance 2016/17 & 2017/18
- 19<sup>th</sup> Hong Kong Dance Awards and Hong Kong Dance Awards Fellowship
- Dance Hub – Lecture Series
- REAL Showcase Series

### **CONCLUSION**

I am proud of what the Alliance has accomplished through the continuous support of our committed executive committee members and our dedicated administrative team. We shall continue to strive to uphold the stated missions of the Alliance – to connect, to promote and to advocate dance in Hong Kong and Hong Kong dance worldwide.