

Hong Kong Dance Alliance - Annual General Meeting 2017 (14 Dec 2017)

January to December 2017 Chairperson's Report

By Stella Lau

OPENING REMARKS

I am pleased to present the 2016/17 Annual Report of the Hong Kong Dance Alliance. In the past year, the Alliance continues to forge ahead as the primary support group for dance in Hong Kong, promoting development and communication of the local dance community. 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: Anita Donaldson resigned from the Board. We would like to express our gratitude towards her continuous support to the Alliance over the past few years. The Alliance welcomed new members, David Steele and Septime Webre joining us this year. We look forward to their contribution to the development of the Alliance.

The Alliance's office presented a very passionate and collaborative team in the past year under the leadership of Cathy Lau, the Administration and Project Manager. To support the office operation and project management, two staff was hired in March, Thalia Wong joined as an Arts Administration Trainee under the support of HKADC Arts Administration Internship Scheme, and Chloe Wong joined as a Project Assistant. Together with Ronnie Lam, who join in 2016 as Editorial Trainee and promoted to Assistant Editor in November with the support of HKADC Arts Production Internship Scheme, and Akama Chin who joined in 2015, the office has delivered an excellent work over the year, I wish to thank each and everyone of them for their dedication and hard work to the Alliance, and a special wish to Akama Chin, who has resigned from the Project Officer in October after her 2 years' service, for her very best luck to her future endeavor.

In November, the Alliance's office has moved from the CCDC Dance Centre in Wong Tai Sin (G/F, 110 Shatin Pass Road, Wong Tai Sin) and settled into the new

location in San Po Kong (7/F, 26-28 Tai Yau Street, San Po Kong). I would like to express my gratitude to our founding member and Chair Emeritus, Willy Tsao for his generosity on sponsoring the venue of our new office. The Alliance is also thankful to CCDC Dance Centre for offering such a vibrant working environment for the past few years.

To adapt new company ordinances and to fit current needs of the Alliance, the amended *Articles of Association* was approved in the last AGM on 8 December 2016 and has filed to Company Register in 2017.

GRANTS

We are at present in the second year of the Three-Year-Grant (2016 - 2019) scheme under the HKADC. Multi Project Grant (2016-18) and Project Grant for the **20th Hong Kong Dance Awards, Collaborative Creative Lab, Creative Space 2018, Dance Journey (short film for Dance Award)** and **World Dance Alliance (WDA) Global Summit Hong Kong Delegation** have been approved. The Alliance would like to take this opportunity to thank HKADC, LCSD and other funders who had patiently guided us through all the process of the grant period and had given us support whenever needed.

ACTIVITIES REPORT (JANUARY – DECEMBER 2017)

Hong Kong Dance Awards 2017

The Hong Kong Dance Awards (the Awards) acknowledge outstanding achievements in Hong Kong Dance industry annually and raise public awareness of the diversity and excellence of local dance scene. ***The 19th Hong Kong Dance Awards*** was presented with the sponsorship by the LCSD and HKADC Project Grant, at Hong Kong City Hall on 10 May 2017. We invited Allen Lam as the Artistic Director and Elaine Yeung Chi-lan, Assistant Director (Performing Arts) of the LCSD as our Guest of Honor. The technical assistant was generously supported by the City Contemporary Dance Company.

Nominations were collected from the dance community, the production panel, the community panel and the Alliance Executive Committee. Professional practitioners were invited to join in these panels to shortlist nominations and together with all members of the Executive Committee, they took part in the final vote to decide the Awards. Invited panelists for the production panel included Anna Chan, Anna Cheng, Daisy Chu, David Liu, Carlo Pacis, Cecil Sze and Wong Hang Fai, chaired by Tom Brown and Natasha Rogai, the Community Panel included Ronly Kong, Tsang Kam-sing and Stella Lau, chaired by Allen Lam.

This year, 14 awards were presented to recipients, in which 12 awards were kept secret until the announcement on stage. Among the 17 recipients, Helen Lai was honored for her Outstanding Choreography in *While the Dream Unfolds* (Hong Kong Dance Company) and Hong Kong Ballet for *Lady of the Camellias*, the Outstanding Large Venue Production. Awards for Outstanding Performance went to Kelvin Mak in *Mother, I am Sorry* (City Contemporary Dance Company), Chen Zhi-yao as Odette in *Swan Lake* (Hong Kong Ballet), and Pan Ling-juan as Wah Man-ying/ King-tin in *Chinese Hero: A Lone Exile* (Hong Kong Dance Company). The Distinguished Achievement Award was presented to Lau Siu-ming and the Lifetime Achievement Award was posthumously awarded to Ringo Chan. These two special awards were presented to honor their continuous contributions to Hong Kong dance development over the past decades.

Under the artistic direction of Allen Lam, the evening came along with 6 superb performances by 27 local performing artists from different performing groups: City Contemporary Dance Company: Preview of *Why Not Kill Us All...*; Hong Kong Ballet: Excerpt of *Lady of the Camellias*; Hong Kong Dance Company: Excerpt of *L'Amour Immortel*; School of Dance of the HKAPA: Excerpt of *Under This Weight*, and two Premiere by the Hong Kong Dance Award Fellowship recipients Pak Wei-ming: *Toilet Pump* and Wayson Poon *Intersection*. This fabulous evening closed with a finale directed by Allen with renowned pianist Colleen Lee and video artist Adrian Yeung.

Collaborative Creative Lab and Hong Kong Dance Awards Fellowship

The Alliance strives to foster dance and performing artists' research and development capabilities by providing a platform to encourage interdependent and interactive learning strategies in the creative process and research; enhance artistic standards; and support artistic development.

The 1st *Collaborative Creative Lab* was held from January to February, facilitated and curated by cross-media artist, Dick Wong. In December, a call for application was announced through online platforms, and the application result was finalized by the panel which consisted of Tom Brown, Dick Wong, Stella Lau, and Kevin Wong. 14 participants from various performing arts backgrounds were selected. The dynamic composition of the group enabled the growth of creativity, and unleashed the talents of the artists through collaborative learning.

The 3-week workshop focused on creative research through collaborative learning, as well as creating an interdependent environment to inspire and be inspired. Guest speakers included Joanna Lee, Enoch Cheng and Low Kee Hong. The Sharing Session was held on 10 February 2017 in Studio 7, CCDC Dance Centre. 30 art practitioners attended the session, including Executive Board of the Alliance, Hong Kong Dance Awards panelists, representatives of the HKAPA, CCDC, HKADC grant recipients, West Kowloon Cultural District Authority, independent artists, writers and

so forth. At the end of the workshop and showing, two artists were selected by the panel to receive the *Hong Kong Dance Awards Fellowship*.

Supported by HKADC Project Grant, *Hong Kong Dance Awards Fellowship* was introduced this year to expand the scope of the Awards, recognizing up-and-coming cutting-edge choreographers. Fellowship recipients receive commission to develop a dance piece of about 3-6 minutes drawn from the topic they researched in the workshop. Their completed dance works were featured on the *Hong Kong Dance Awards Presentation and Gala Performance* on 10 May 2017.

Pak Wei-ming and Wayson Poon were selected by the panel including the Alliance Executive Committee Chairperson Stella Lau, Chairperson Emeritus Tom Brown, 19th Hong Kong Dance Awards Artistic Director Allen Lam and Producer Cathy Lau. Pak Wei-ming and Wayson Poon presented their new work *Toilet Pump* and *Intersection* in the Gala Performance.

The 2nd *Collaborative Creative Lab* is held from 4 to 22 December at studios sponsored by Studiodanz. This time, the project is co-facilitated and curated by Dick Wong and veteran art critic, independent producer Joanna Lee. 7 dance artists have joined the project. The Sharing and Presentation session will be held in the last session of the project. We would like to express gratitude to our Board member Angela Hang for sponsoring the venue for the CCL workshop.

New Force in Motion Series 2017

New Force in Motion Series has been presenting by LCSD. It aims to offer a professional platform for young choreographers to showcase choreography, to encourage development, and to stimulate creativity through artistic mentoring and collaborative research. The Alliance was invited to be the Producer this year, offering professional support for the production.

Two local young choreographers, Rex Cheng and KT Yau, were selected by the LCSD Art Form Panel (Dance and Multi-Arts). Together they brought two new works in a double bill performance, namely ***New Force in Motion Series: Solitary*** by Rex Cheng and *Unmixed* by KT Yau. The four performances were held at Black Box Theatre, Kwai Tsing Theatre from 8 to 10 September, with about 85% attendance and received positive feedback from various parties, including the LCSD, choreographers and audience.

Auditions were held in April to select dancers for these two new works. Odette Leung, Andy Lee, Soames Lee and Chan Wing-yip were selected out of 24 candidates for Rex Cheng's audition. While Kerry Cheung, Carman Li and Kingsan Lo were selected out of 8 candidates to be KT Yau's devising dancers. Pewan Chow, Artistic Director of Passoverdance, was invited to be the Artistic Advisor of the production. Rehearsals started from May at venues sponsored by CCDC Dance Centre and

HKAPA. In addition, three workshops were organized for the choreographers and dancers in June, including Taekwondo, Magic and Wing Chun, to facilitate innovative ideas on their research and developmental process.

Dance Enhance 2017

Established in 2009, the program aims to nurture a new generation of dance writers and promote dance criticism and appreciation. The Alliance has launched the 8th programme of the ***Dance Enhance*** from September to December 2017. This year, the program is an advanced edition with 24 passionate participants, carrying experiences in review, writing and publication.

From September to December 2017, participants attended four lectures with various topics: Text, Article, Culture – From Dance Analysis to Dance Discourse by Dr. Lo Wai Luk; Contemporary Chinese Dance Choreography: Style of Movement and Structure of Form by Felix Chen Lei; The Feature of the Aesthetics in Ballet and Movement Analysis by Prof. Ou Lu; and Reading Dance – Choreographic Structures, Inventions and Trends by Dr. Tom Brown. Two sharing sessions were held with local dance artists on their recent works: independent artist/emerging choreographer Ivy Tsui on *Water Lilies*; and veteran ballet dancer/repetiteur/choreographer of Hong Kong Ballet, Yuh Egami and musician Mike Orange on their collaboration in *Carmen*. A movement workshop was also conducted by renowned choreographer, Yuri Ng, to explore on dance composition and appreciation. Participants also attended four live performances with discussion sessions led by experienced dance critics who were also their mentors - William Chan, Kuh Fei, Shirley Loong, Natasha Rogai, and Catherine Yau. The four performances were Hong Kong Dance Company's *Vipassana* co-directed by Yang Yuntao, Tsang Man-tung and Law Wing-fai, LCSO's Dance On: *Water Lilies* choreographed by Ivy Tsui, Hong Kong Ballet's *Le Corsaire* choreographed by Anna-Marie Holmes (after Konstantin Sergeyev and Marius Petipa), and City Contemporary Dance Company's *Testimony* choreographed by Helen Lai. After each performance, each participant was requested to write a review, which would be reviewed and given comments by their mentors. This project will be carried on until 19 December 2017, to be finished by a concluding session with all participants and mentors to review the assignments and the whole project.

dance journal/hk (19-1 to 19-6)

In 2017, *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.

Among the six categories, dance review has remained the major focus of the *journal* as usual. In the past year, the journal published over 80 pieces of dance reviews, majority of them are local dance productions. The people interview on the cover has

been developing into another major focus. In the past six issues, the cover stories were in-depth interviews with outstanding dance artists and practitioners from local and overseas, including: Helen Lai, Lo Wai-luk, Kelvin Mak, Qiao Yang, Feng Ying, Dominic Wong and Julio Bocca.

Starting from issue 19-1, published in February, a newly launched column “In Search of a dance Story”. This column focuses on telling interesting stories of people in the dance community, and aims to extend its reach to a bigger audience group. The editorial team featured a variety of topics, such as street dance school, community art group, dance comic and animation artist, dance educator, artists retreat house and costume maker in the past year.

The journal this year was again in collaboration with Hong Kong Dance Awards. As media partner with the Dance Awards, the journal published two video interviews in featuring two awardees, namely the set designer Tsang Man-Tung and Dominic Wong, the choreographer of the awarded production *Travelogue*.

Apart from the video, the online platform dancejournalhk.com which was launched in 2015, also has been playing an important role in extending the journal’s coverage in the online world. A new category E-journal, publishes content exclusive from the printed version. The E-journal covers wide-range of topics, from performance previews/reviews to people interview. Two E-journal highlights in the past year included interview of two interdisciplinary artists, Xiao Ke and Zhou Zihan from Shanghai invited to HK by the i-dance(HK) Festival and Japanese Butoh artist Mushimaru Fujieda.

Through the journal, the Alliance strives to bring up-to-date trend of the dance scene to readers’ attention and to solicit discussion among them. In October issue, the journal covered a dance artist meet up hosted by another project “DanceHub”, in discussing the trend about overseas exchanges and festivals; another article in December issue addressed the trend of dance festivals by interviewing two curators of dance festivals in Hong Kong.

World Dance Alliance (WDA) Global Summit Hong Kong Delegation

With the support of HKADC Project Grant, the Alliance led a delegation to attend the triennial WDA Global Summit held at Memorial University, St. John’s Newfoundland, Canada from 23 to 28 July 2017.

This year’s Summit gathered WDA regional organizations from the Americas, Asia Pacific, and Europe to explore resistance and support of formations of power through dance under the theme of *Dancing from the Grassroots*. The programme included roundtable discussions, parallel international conferences, masterclasses, performances, a choreographic lab, and digital dance concerts.

The Hong Kong delegation presented two performances during the Summit – *Babel 3.5* choreographed by Iris Lau and *Never Stop Blooming* by Judy Yiu. Hong Kong delegates Rex Cheng and Judy Yiu also conducted masterclasses in *Tai Chi Movement* and *Contemporary Dance with Gymnastics* respectively. Two post-delegation workshops and sharing sessions were held in September, with around 8-10 participants attended each session.

DanceHub

DanceHub is a service provided by the Alliance with the combination of a Consultancy Desk on Arts Administration and Dance Information & Exchange Centre. In the past year, DanceHub continued to provide consultancy to individual artists, and Consultancy Desk also proactively identified services needed by the community, and organized a series of Focus Group meetings, lectures and workshops.

The Alliance co-hosted 3 Focus Group Meetings for Independent Artists with the HKAPA alumni in late August and early September. 15 artists who had previously gone on tour for cultural exchanges joined the meetings. These gatherings aimed to provoke conversation and to cultivate the exchange of information among independent artists. Brian Yu and Daisy Chu were invited to observe the meetings, they then wrote articles in the *dance journal* and *Wenwei Pao* respectively. The Alliance also organized a meeting with the Chairman of ADC's Dance Group, Mui Cheuk-yin, to facilitate communication between the local dance artists and their representative in the Council.

An Insurance Talk conducted by professional experts was held on 23 January for dance participants, and a Grant Application Talk conducted by the Manager was given to dance students of the HKAPA on 24 October.

The Alliance co-hosted a Private Salon with Alonzo King LINES Ballet on 3 September at The American Club. Moderated by Anna Chan, the Salon Artists Talk featured Alonzo King and Lisa Fischer from the LINES Ballet along with local dance company directors Septime Webre and Willy Tsao.

In addition, the Alliance co-organized the *NDT Workshop for Professional Dance Artists* with Nederlands Dans Theatre (NDT) and LCSO on 8 November at the Studio Theatre of HKICC Lee Shau Kee School of Creativity. The workshop was instructed by NDT dancer Lydia Bustinbuy and 30 professional dance artists joined the event.

Last but not least, the Alliance has launched a *Production Calendar* in August to strengthen communication of production plans among dance organizations. With data provided by dance companies, the Calendar gives basic information of upcoming programs, with the aim of facilitating the coordination of promotion plans among companies.

FUTURE EVENTS AND OTHER PROJECTS

- Dance Enhance 2017/18
- Celebration of the 20th *dance journal/hk*
- 20th Hong Kong Dance Awards
- Creative Space 2018
- New Force In Motion 2018

CONCLUSION

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