

Hong Kong Dance Alliance January to December 2015 Chairperson's Report By Stella Lau

OPENING REMARKS

I am pleased to give my first chairperson's report since becoming the chairperson of the Hong Kong Dance Alliance in December 2014. This is indeed a huge challenge for me as I have little experience in administrative works. I am most fortunate to have the support of a group of dedicated executive committee members to ensure the smooth operation of the Alliance. In particular, I must thank the outgoing chairperson Helen Ng who had given me invaluable advice during the transition period. 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 were a few changes to the executive committee in the past year. Joseph Morrissey resigned from the board due to his departure from Hong Kong. Our long-serving board members Willy Tsao, Helen Ng and Ringo Chan left for various reasons. Helen Ng was named Chair Emeritus for her longstanding contribution to the Alliance. Natasha Rogai resigned as vice-chairperson to remain as member of the executive committee. The Alliance welcomed new members, Billbob Brown, Pearl Chan and Pablo Guzman joining us this year. We look forward to their contribution to the development of the Alliance.

The Alliance's office presented a crisis in the past year in the form of rapid turnover of staff. In this regard, the Alliance was fortunate to have Cecil Sze to be our Executive Manager to provide support, assistance as well as training to the Administration and Project Manager. I would also like to thank Tom, Natasha, Winnie and Kevin of the core management team who had contributed tremendously in the smooth running of the office so that all projects could be completed satisfactorily. Currently, Cathy Lau is our Administration and Project Manager and Akama Chin is our Arts Administrator Trainee who is supported by Hong Kong Arts Development Council (HKADC) Internship Scheme. 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 third year of the Three Year Grant scheme under the HKADC. We have applied for the Multi Project Grant (2016-18) and results will be announced at end of December. The Alliance would like to take this opportunity to thank Anne Chan 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 2015)

Hong Kong Dance Awards 2015

The 17th Annual Hong Kong Dance Awards were presented at a sold-out gala performance at Kwai Tsing Theatre (with Balcony opened to the public for the first time) on 17 April, 2015. Leisure and Culture Services Department (LCSD) continues to sponsor the venue for the gala performance. We invited David Liu as the Artistic Director and Michelle Li Mei Sheung, JP as our Guest of Honour. The technical support was generously supported by the Hong Kong Ballet (HKB).

It was an evening which showcased the depth and diversity of talent in the local dance scene. Performances ranging from ballet to ballroom, Chinese dance to hip-hop and modern dance to musical theatre delighted the packed house. With the results of the secret ballot to decide the Awards not revealed until the night itself, suspense was high as each envelope was opened. A total of ten Awards including the prestigious Distinguished Achievement Award were presented.

We continued to invite professional practitioners to join panels to shortlist nominations and together with all members of the Alliance's Executive committee, to take part in the final vote to decide the Awards. Invited panelists included Daisy Chu, Elizabeth Farrell, Allen Lam, Carlo Pacis, David Liu, Cecil Sze, Wong Hang Fai, Daniel Yeung, Mui Cheuk Yin, Anna Chan, and the panels were chaired by Tom Brown, Natasha Rogai, and Helen Ng.

Emerging Choreographers

This was the fourth programme since 2007 in a series that provides a platform for the up-and-coming choreographers to create and present new work. The Alliance selection panel which included Stella Lau, Jaime Redfern, Ringo Chan and Yang Yuntao chose three talented young choreographers: Li De, Joseph Lee Wai-nang, and Cliff Huen Tin-yeung from amongst a field of 18 applicants. Mentored by Daniel Yeung, one of Hong Kong's most active choreographers, each artist created an original dance work for the programme that showcased different dance styles and addressed a range of topics.

The final two public performances were held in Kwai Tsing Theatre Black Box Theatre on 3 and 4 July 2015. The house averaged over 90% capacity. We received positive feedback and good reviews from the dance community, press and audience. There was also a student matinee on 2 July in order to promote dance to reach different sectors to the public and to nurture potential audiences.

***REAL Showcase New Series*– co-presented with 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 14 productions in the *Series* have been presented. As co-presenter, the Alliance provides the selected candidates with a mentor and arranges for reviews to be written and published in dance journal/hk. On 4 and 5 July 2015, Fiona Zhou presented her solo work *Wall* and her mentor was Yang Yuntao.

Dance Enhance

We launched the 6th programme of the Dance Enhance in October 2015. This dance appreciation and criticism writing project has been offered since 2009. 35 participants enrolled and the project will be completed in January 2016. Besides four lectures that cover a wide range of topics including history of dance, choreological framework, relationships between dance reviews and dance development, dance appreciation/observation skills (the Lexicon of Dance), advice and tips from media experts on review writing, movement and creativity, and the narrative form in dance, the participants also attend four performances by Zuni Icorsahedron, HKB, HKDC and CCDC. For each of these productions, each participant writes a review for which a Mentor provides comments.

dance journal/hk

The dance journal/hk continues to play an integral part in local print media as a platform for dance reviews, related dance articles, and news related to the art form.

Starting from December issue, we have increased the circulation to 5,000 copies. Apart from the increase of copies, the number of pages is also increased from 32 to 36. A new designer is employed for the production of the issues from October as well.

We have also launched a new online version this December. This is to attract more readers to help the public develop greater knowledge about dance, its practice, and about dance appreciation.

DanceHub

The DanceHub is a new initiative by the Alliance in our current three-year plan. It is a combination of a Consultancy Desk on Arts Administration and Dance Information & Exchange Centre.

We have adopted a more active role in reaching out to the potential beneficiaries. We have initiated a focus group meeting with HKADC one year and two year grantees and has lined up with Hong Kong Jockey Club Music and Dance Fund to organize two consultation sessions with students and lecturers at the HKAPA, and a talk on the post-graduate scholarships for the HKAPA graduating students, Alumni and dance practitioners in Hong Kong.

FUTURE EVENTS AND OTHER PROJECTS

- Creative Space & Spring Board Showcase 2016
- Hong Kong Dance Awards 2016
- Dance Hub
- Dance Enhance
- REAL Showcase

CONCLUSION

Taking up my new role as chairperson, I am honoured to be able to work with such a brilliant and passionate team. Together we will strive to uphold the stated missions of the Alliance – to connect, to promote and to advocate dance in Hong Kong.