

24.6 Paper Presentation X “Sustainability” Abstract

Forging Traditional Dance in Malaysia

By Joseph Gonzales and Imran Syafiq Mohd Affandi

The multitude of traditional dances in Malaysia reflect the diverse ethnic constitution of the nation. With the passage of time and urbanization, these traditional dances are less practiced to the point of extinction. The paper records the efforts of ASK Dance Company that has championed the preservation, revitalization, and propagation of traditional dances through its outreach projects. It will provide an overview into the research, and delivery of the program. Through consistent funding of projects by Sime Darby Foundation since 2011, more than 20,000 people have been taught these dances. The funding has enabled the company of young artists to sustain themselves in a challenging professional landscape. With the onset of the Covid-19 crises, Forging Traditions Beyond Borders was launched in 2020, to deliver 2 dances each year through an online mode. This is another milestone for dance in Malaysia.

Keywords: Traditional Dance; Online Learning; Cultural Heritage; Professional Dance

Rethinking gesture in choreography, embodiment of stories and memories through movement

By Iris Lau

In this presentation, I would like to share my experience in choreographing with gesture and address the potential development of this specific creative approach. I have been driven by the challenge of creating with everyday movement since 2012. This choreographic approach blends everyday experience with the abstract of dance and narrative of theatre, in order to bring awareness to the topic that related to our everyday physical experience.

We notice the theme of work would interact with choreographic devises and gestural movement in one city specifically. I conceive that the meaning of a gesture is decided by a city’s social events, mutual memories and norms. In order to de-familiarize the original meaning of gesture, I would suggest several choreographic devises to kinaesthetically engage our audience, but also offer them a space for imagining toward the designed direction.

DEI and online dance: Whose dance is it anyway?

By Juliette O'Brien

Dance unites and moves the body, mind and spirit; it promotes strength, stamina, coordination, balance and memory. Dance is holistic, and dance is for everyone.

Across the globe living rooms have become the new dance studios and nightclubs. From professional practice spaces, through online classes, to zoom parties, our homes became our primary dance spaces. And so did the internet, bringing a new inclusivity to dance practice. Since Merce Cunningham and the pioneers of postmodernism first questioned “what is dance?”, others like Jerome Bel have increased diversity on stage, while Septime Weber has brought ballet to new audiences. The trend continues.

This paper will look at the new global trends of online and at home dance, and examine ways in which this has and can further be utilised to increase DEI in dance, and promote it as a holistic wellness practice, while increasing the outreach of dance companies.