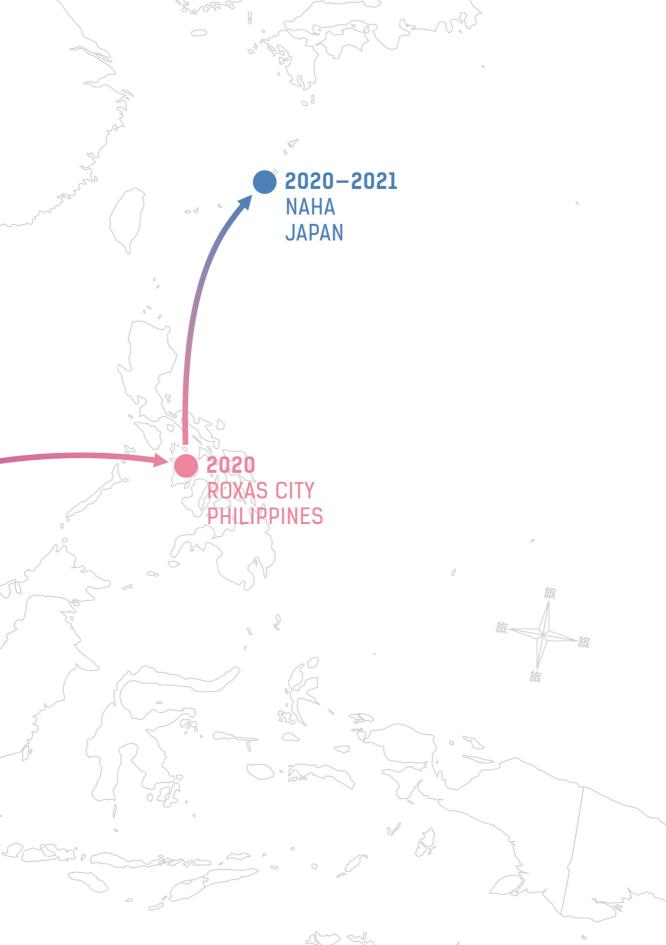
Treading Through Cities, Contexts and Practices







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AFTERWORD

It all started with travelling.

The idea of "Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange: Wandering Asian Contemporary Performance" came out from a series of conversations in Bangkok around mid 2017, initiated by Akane Nakamura. Back then, she was living in Bangkok as part of the Asian Cultural Council (ACC) fellowship. She invited us, Helly Minarti and Lim Howngean, to see a performance by Toshiki Okada she then presented, *Super Premium Double Vanilla Rich* (2016), and in between breezy ways of exploring Bangkok, a singular conversation was being woven.



The time couldn't be more confusing for us as curator, producer and/or dramaturg. Since 2014, we have witnessed the openings (or planning) of some Asia mega centres such as the one in Gwangju (2015), Taichung (2016) and two (then) in the pipelines in Kaohsiung and Taipei. We started to wonder, and question, all colliding with us combing the streets of Bangkok.

From each of our respective practices, we then imagined what would happen if we turn our gaze from these Asian mega cities—all attempting to have a stake on Asianess—towards much smaller cities in Asia, zooming in on finding out how artists create their arts within a certain locality. What connects these cities (are they any in the first place?); what thread of historical experiences are shared, what politico-cultural-economical situation they are negotiating, etc etc.

That is how Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange was born, out of such conversations.

We kept the spirit of journeying from its onset as embedded in its name (*jejak* means step in Malay and footprint in Indonesian, *tabi* is journey in Japanese with shared character in Chinese), learning as we went by following the trails in front of us. At first we aimed for it to be annually organized, only to realize after the first edition in 2018 (that connected Yogyakarta or Jogja with Kuala Lumpur or KL) that much research needed to be done.

The traveling we did has become a journey. Indeed, it was driven by the intention to create an exchange platform that provides a space for artists and other arts practitioners from Asia to engage up and close with certain localities in the region. It had to be smallish and intimate so both the invited—and the host artists and practitioners—could have a deep, meaningful and honest conversation whilst wandering around the city; within and without events.

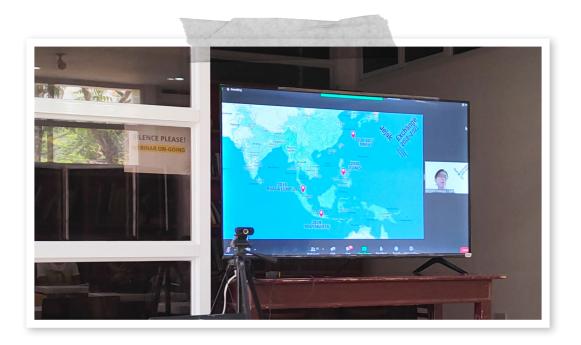


In the span of three years (2018–2021), we managed to hold it in the first three cities as it was planned to (connecting Jogja and KL in 2018, spending 2019 for researching the second, i.e. connecting Naha and Bacolod City/Escalante in the Philippines). The research in Bacolod City/Escalante on Negro island turned out to be much more challenging due to its subject matter (theatre as activism for human rights), so we detoured to a much safer terrain, Roxas City on Panay island. In each city, we co-curated the programmes with our local colleagues, i.e. Cemeti Arts House in Jogja, ASWARA and DPAC (Damansara Performing Arts Centre) In KL, Green Papaya collective in Manila and Masashi Nomura for Naha.

Then the pandemic hit. We had to postpone the Naha edition, originally planned to take place in August–September 2020, replanning for September 2021—with the hope to organize it live. To bridge, we put out an online programme in December 2020, introducing Naha arts scene, while reflecting on resilience in times of continuing our arts practices as a global community.











The year of 2021 has finally arrived, and alas, much has not changed. Once again, we had to adapt, migrating online. This time, instead of only connecting Naha and Roxas City, we expanded to also include the previous Jogja and KL. For each connection, we designed a specific program pertinent to each context. We also did our best to bring a sense of 'liveness' onto otherwise a very stale Zoom screen, by shooting in situ such as at the black box theatre in Naha for a dance workshop, at a museum in Roxas City for discussion, at the office of Green Papaya in Manila where artist Vim Nadera performed a short performance, and at the site of Komunitas Sakatoya (a theatre collective) in Jogja.

This PDF book simply compiles the final reflection and impression from some of those involved. There are seven essays—all freshly commissioned—nuanced by much shorter quotes from the rest selected. We hope that all these will illuminate future conversations, trusting that the traces of Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange, will find its way to various similarly critical endeavours.







JEJAK-旅 TABI: NOTES FROM TWO CITIES

Muhammad Abe

I experienced four editions of the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange: the first in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, then in Roxas City, the Philippines, the bridging online of Naha edition in December 2020 and most recently in another online event between Yogyakarta and Okinawa. My first experience was when Linda Mayasari and I worked on the archive exhibition of Bagong Kussudiardjo and Wisnoe Wardhana, both choreographers from Yogyakarta who contributed to the discourse of the modern performing arts in Indonesia in the 1950s and 1960s. The second experience in the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange was when I got invited to Roxas City to present a small study on the influence of PETA (Philippine Educational Theater Association) on the development of theater in Indonesia in the 1980s and 1990s. Then I was invited to an online panel discussion to talk about resilience in the bridging Naha edition. My most recent experience was preparing for a meeting between Yogyakarta and Japanese theater networks

There are many impressions accumulated in these four editions of Jejak-旅 Tabi, because each edition offers some interesting performances and insightful discussions. However, for this article, I choose a number of performances and discussions that I consider interesting and still "haunt' me. I divide them into two subthemes—the first is the tension between the present and the past; and the second is the tension between aesthetic and non-aesthetic. These two sub-themes are simply tools to help me tie my scattered memories and experiences.

The first performance I watched at Jejak-旅 Tabi was Pichet Klunchun's I Am Demon, performed on a small stage on the second floor of the Kedai Kebun Forum, a restaurant-cum-art space located at the heart of contemporary art scene in Yogyakarta. The show features Pichet reenacting the movement methods taught to him by his teacher, a maestro in Khon dance—a classical court Thai dance, which Pichet learned as a teenager to portray the character of the Demon.

The performance features a video of Pichet's interview with his teacher, as well as footage of Pichet and his teacher practicing the movement. This autobiographical piece provides an overview of delivering the past into the present and how the present interprets the past in a different way.



Another performance is Padmini Chettur's *Beautiful Thing 2*. Padmini performs her work in an empty room in the basement of an art gallery. She dances at a very slow pace between the pillars of the space. She creates momentum with the flexibility and strength out of her body not moving quickly. Like Pichet, Padmini also borrows the motion method that she got from her teacher, Chandralekha, a modern choreographer from India.

I noticed that in the Yogyakarta edition there was an emphasis on the trajectory of the present and the past through some specific examples of performance in Asia by tracing this trajectory through performances, archive exhibitions and public discussions. The two works above show a change from one generation to the next in terms of the choreographer/performer's view of the body and performance. Padmini sharpens the techniques of her teacher Chandralekha and focuses on playing with timing and duration of motion as important elements in her choreography. While Pichet puts his character as a demon in Khon's performance in a completely different context. He converses his character with himself as a choreographer and reflects on his bodily knowledge as a traditional dancer in a contemporary stage circuit. But it is still unclear to me: what agency influences the change in interpretation from one generation to the next? Does it come from the inside or does it come from the influence of the outside world (art market for example)?

This tension between the present and the past is also put into dialogue with cases in Indonesia, such as the archive exhibition that I worked on with Linda Mayasari which showcased the archives of Bagong Kussudiardjo and Wisnoe Wardhana while they were studying modern dance in America and how they created new works. then considered strange (one of Kussudiardjo's works was considered as sport by the media) when they returned home and worked in Indonesia.

After the first edition of Jejak-旅 Tabi in Yogyakarta, I have had an impression that Jejak-旅 Tabi will focus on the trajectory of performing arts in Asia, especially on the tension between present and past, and how the





(Yogyakarta) works as an actor and researcher.

dynamics of performing art in the Asia are connected but also sometimes disconnected, mediated by producers or festivals in Europe.

Two years later, I found myself onboard in a plane to Roxas City. It took almost 24 hours before I arrived at the final airport. I found the city quite similar to cities like Maumere or Larantuka of Indonesia's eastern archipelago. I brought along some instant noodles that I gave some to the staff in the lodging who thanked me profusely. I came to Roxas City to present the impact of Peoples Education Theatre Association (PETA) to performing arts in Indonesia,

and also followed all Jejak-旅 Tabi agenda in Roxas City. To be honest, my presentation was not a good one, but I was surprised that all the high school students attending were following it very well.

I found it quite surprising that they tuned into a seminar/discussion so seriously. In Indonesia, rarely art events or art festivals take place in a high school complex, let alone inviting students to be part of such a festival. Roxas City students were enthusiastic for all the discussions and performances, though maybe they never heard of Yogyakarta before. I remember that there were some quality questions from them.

In another session, one of the audience gave a tearful testimony about how art is a tool to fight for something-at this point, art no longer relies on aesthetic exploration or artistic achievements, but as a medium to convey injustice and protest against tyranny. Roxas City was a memorable experience, giving me a completely different picture of Jejak-旅 Tabi that I experienced in Yogyakarta. All works displayed at Roxas City, both in the form of videos and performances, are based on the work of the artists with the grassroots community, especially those of the lower middle class. These artists know that they take a big risk in their choice; the risk in question is not an artistic risk but a security risk in the form of possible physical threats from other parties.

One of the strong performances in Roxas City is a documentary theatre about the war on drugs in Manila. Titled *Monster's War*, it was directed by Edwin Quinasayas from SIKAD. The performance featured people who are directly affected by the controversial extrajudicial killing policy. From the performance we understand that the war on drugs policy, which included a license to kill everybody suspected as a drug dealer had resulted in the loss of many lives in Manila's slum area. One of the actors in the performance is actually the sister of the first victim of this controversial law, which was only unveiled toward the end of performance.

The performance from SIKAD doesn't use complex staging, only video projection as background and the actors reenact some scenes from the video footage screened behind them. As they reenact the scene they also explain indepth information about what actually happened in the footage—the actor narratives are collected from interviews of the families of the victims. Though the performance is simple and direct, as a theatre it has its own aesthetic appeal to deliver the in-depth information to the audience. What is interesting to me is the fact that common people and students in Roxas City do not know that the war on drugs has taken so many lives of innocent people. At this point I find that even though we have a lot of information from the media about what is happening in our region, we don't know much of what has actually happened. Maybe that is also the case with Asian art community.

I think through Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange we started to get to know more about Asian art community by way of mapping the trajectory of performing arts in the region. Jejak-旅 Tabi had wandered to three cities (Yogyakarta, Kuala Lumpur, Roxas City, plus Naha in Okinawa albeit the last was an online exchange), and from each city there had been questions raised on history and the future of performing arts in Asia. So I hope Jejak-旅 Tabi will keep wandering around Asia, linking Asian art communities through this project.



Ficky Tri Sanjaya (Actor, Yogyakarta)

I think Jejak-旅 Tabi is one of the unique and interesting international events since it also linked what's local and grew to be part of it. The involvement of small spaces from various groups or foundations around Jogja as part of the organizing partners was a particular and distinct part compared to festivals in other areas. Involving people who are active in the art group/studio/community's creative process, both as workshops participants and audiences, made this event intimate and heart-warming.

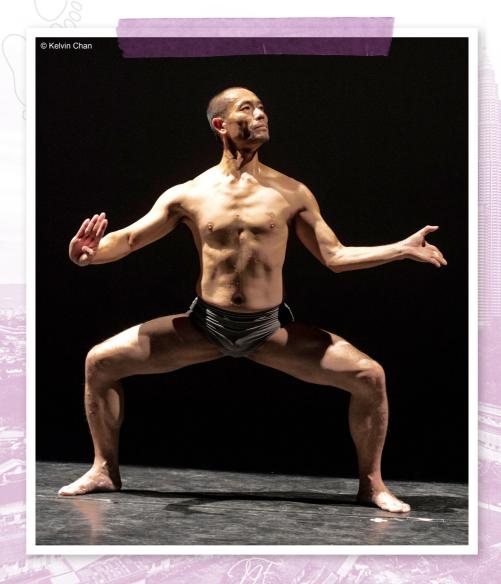


Linda Agnesia Mayasari (Director of Cemeti - Institute for Art and Society, Yogyakarta)

If As a small, traveling festival, Jejak-旅 Tabi, has given me a complex experience. Its modus operandi lay between curatorial and production works which were interchanged and negotiated. Important works performed on big international stage were brought into the peripheral one, to meet with a public who most possibly—could not access them otherwise; and those works were put into a dialogue with the local works. Apart from being an exchange of artistic realms, one of Jejak-旅 Tabi's strengths was its willingness to touch upon the production relations where the local partners treated not simply as a host but also being involved in research, in structuring the curatorial framework and had a say in deciding the production policy. So, imagine how intense the speculation of these curatoris/initiators; as well as those artists performed at Jejak-旅 Tabi who got used to work with world class stage, now had to be hands on, treading on every street (in Jogja), immersing the living spaces in Mantrijeron area of Jogja to work with a particular local situation which despite being carefully organized, remained speculative. That way, indeed, could make one exhaustive and yet it was so exhilarating at the same time, since this later became a multiple sited projects where aesthetic experience and knowledge about the body could be scooped not only from the staged events, but also from within the production relation, and random conversations taking place in smallish food stalls or cafes around Cemeti.









ON JEJAK-旅 TABI

Mark Teh

As I attempt to write this, at the end of a particularly fraught August in Malaysia, it's the eve of Merdeka—the 64th anniversary of Malaya's independence from the British in 1957. We have 30 days left to pack and leave the building that Five Arts Centre has been based in since 1998. The days and weeks ahead are filled with anxiety and uncertainty. Under the confusing Movement Control Order restrictions, we are allowed to move, but prevented from carrying out deinstallation works. We're trying to take out the wooden floor of our studio, located at the edges of Kuala Lumpur, to bring it with us to the new space in the old centre of the city. The ground beneath our feet also wants to jejak-tabi. We'll see.

The mind is scattered, and while the body is not quite shattered yet—it's getting there.

Eras / Errors

The first edition of the *Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange* which unfolded from July to September 2018 across Yogyakarta and Kuala Lumpur simultaneously belongs to an entirely different era now, but remains suspended in the palpably recent past. The Covid-19 pandemic has rendered our prior notions and desires to jejak—to wander, exchange, cross borders—improbable and problematic. Many things have changed fundamentally and existentially which we are still learning, unlearning, and coming to terms with.

The past three years have also witnessed waves of accelerating authoritarianism and political polarization across most of Southeast Asia. This has correspondingly reinvigorated people's movements and resistance frontlined by a new generation. In 2019, Emperor Akihito's abdication in Japan drew the 30-year Heisei epoch to a close, marking a generational shift to the age of Reiwa (beautiful harmony)—which has already played host to a controversial, delayed Olympics, staged eventually in empty stadia in 2021. Meanwhile in Malaysia—where one racialist political coalition remained in power for 61 years, from 1957 until 2018—we've had three changes of government in three years. To put things in perspective, I was born in 1981—the first year of Mahathir Mohamad's premiership—and I only knew one Prime Minister until I was 23. My son Liam was born in early 2019—also within the first year of Mahathir's (second) premiership. This two and half year old has already had three Prime Ministers. The glass remains half full—just barely.

Meals & Metabolisms

Vivid images and memories remain from the *Jejak-i Tabi* exchanges I participated in—the brave and generous performances offered by Padmini Chettur, Pichet Klunchun, Natasha Tontey and Gusbang, Ayu Permata Sari, Yennu Ariendra, Natsuko Tezuka and Venuri Perera, as well as the stimulating discussions and roundtables comparing the contexts, challenges, and potentialities navigated by cultural workers in Asia. However, what resonates the most at present are some fragmented moments or snatches of conversations that took place over meals, drinks, and waiting around between events. Those looser moments on the sidelines, the *jalan tikus** amidst the main thoroughfare of the scheduled programs.

At a post-show meal one night, I asked Helly Minarti about her recent relocation from Jakarta to Yogyakarta. I recall Helly sharing the feeling of exhaustion and perhaps even disillusionment with Jakarta, the city where she was born. She spoke about the differing characteristics, charms and contradictions embedded in each city's cultural communities, and how it might be to work and be present in each. She also teased out with great nuance the contrasting pace and rhythms of Jakarta and Jogja, speaking of a desire to locate a metabolism more in tune with her body and sensibility.

^{*} jalan tikus, literally means rat street, is a Malay or Indonesian phrase for hidden alleys.

At another meal—this one during the day, the big welcome lunch for all the participants and organisers in Jogja—I observed Akane Nakamura with her rambunctious toddler Mone. Two different metabolisms, in concert and counterpoint, mother and daughter. Akane, a study in multi-focality, with an alertness of peripheral vision only those with small children can unlock—still producing, programming, parenting. Meanwhile Mone in perpetual motion, weaving around tables and adults—playing, pretending, pointing. I seem to remember Akane saying, upon discovering that my wife was expecting, "I am interested to see how your work changes when you have children".



Yudai & I

At the first Jejak-旅 Tabi, the curators Akane, Helly and Lim How Ngean paired theatre maker Yudai Kamisato and I in a double-bill presentation at Cemeti, to speak about intersections of the historical, personal and national in our work. Perhaps they anticipated a shared sensibility between us, despite the slightly overblown and humourous contrast in the supposed ways we research and make works—Mark does super nerdy reading and field work, while Yudai's alcohol-as-method unlocks fantastical tales from total strangers, heh.

Eventually Yudai and I embarked on separate but parallel research projects together in the Okinawan / Ryukyu islands in December 2019. We drifted and drove across eight islands, visiting local museums, alcohol distilleries, bullfighting arenas, as well as sites of suicide and war memorialization. We discovered the preponderance of women who had migrated to these islands for work and marriage, from the Philippines and other regions of Japan. We ate, drank (too much), and met strangers and new friends—staying open to chance encounters and improvisations. Along the way, Yudai and I became friends.





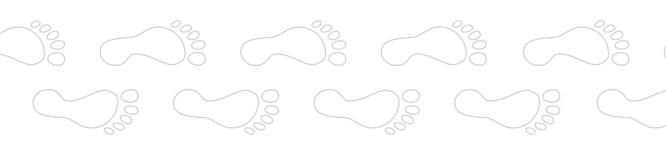
Here are two photos I took of Yudai. The first is in Cemeti (Jogja), on the first day I met Yudai—at the opening of Jejak-旅 Tabi. He has just gotten a haircut—Yudai maintains a personal ritual of cutting his hair in each city he visits. The second image is the last time I saw Yudai physically, in February 2020. He is standing in front of the Okinawa Kinjo restaurant in Bangkok—I had invited Yudai to come to Chiang Mai as part of my curatorial project, The Breathing of Maps, where he continued tracing the genealogy of the

Okinawan alcohol awamori, and its roots in trading relations between present-day Thailand and the Ryukyu kingdom in the 1400s. I love this image because it reminds me that Yudai is always searching for traces of Okinawa all over the world—in his travels across South America, and now Southeast Asia. Yudai was very excited to eat at this Okinawan restaurant in Bangkok, but during the very delicious meal we spoke to the chef and found that he was from Tokyo, heh.









Changes / Collectives

In recent years, independent spaces and cultural institutions ranging from Green Papaya Art Projects in Manila to The Substation in Singapore have had to reckon with profound questions and challenges of sustainability and survival-even before the pandemic devastated the cultural sector. The Jogia leg of Jejak-旅 Tabi allowed me to revisit some of the artist-run spaces and collectives I first encountered on an extended road trip across Jogja, Penang, Bangkok, Chiang Mai and Chiang Dao in 2006. In particular, conversations with members of Teater Garasi and Cemeti - Institute for Art & Society remain particularly relevant now as Five Arts Centre confronts a new beginning.

The trajectories of Garasi and Cemeti provide parallel lines of comparison with our 37-year old collective-raising ongoing and necessary questions about relevance, regeneration, and institutionalization. What is being sustained, besides the institution or organization? How to work with change as an ingredient in cultural collectives—critically, dramaturgically and reflexively? How to go beyond selfserving notions of membership or ownership, to produce, embody and circulate knowledge with many others? What are the metaphors, tactics and values of interdependence, resilience, and openness between 'independent' initiatives? What are new and forthcoming gaps in the larger ecosystem—artistic, cultural, socio-political, ecological; and how is collective creation as well as artistic and knowledge production dialectically involved with this?

Conversations with Linda Mayasari across Jogia and KL brought much mutual recognition, laughter and release as we traded the joys and pitfalls of assuming or 'inheriting' responsibilities for decadesold organisations and collectives-processes that are not always easy or linear. Linda shared Cemeti evolution, from its founding as Cemeti Gallery in 1988, to the Cemeti Art House, and subsequently to Cemeti - Institute for Art & Society, beginning in 2017. The latest incarnation articulates new directions, with a commitment to socially and politically engaged arts practices and civic action, led by a new team of directors and curators.

As Five Arts Centre moves to a new space after 23 years, the disappointments and inertia of the past 18 months under the pandemic are giving way to a guarded optimism and the promise of new chapters. As we attempt to pack and make choices about what to keep and what to throw or give away, these questions and conversations provide a compass for the future.



MARK TEH (Kuala Lumpur) is performance maker, researcher, curator and a member of Five Arts Collective.



Naque Ariffin (Dancer/Choreographer, Kuala Lumpur)

First of all, it's a great honor to be part of this special program called Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange. Back to 2018, I was able to exchange opinions and suggestions on my work with other artists. This is what will make an artwork grow. From the Okinawa 'Kumiodori' workshop, I also learned a lot from it! The instructors were experts who explained the concept with easy to understand the technique and clear instructions. Thank you for inviting us.

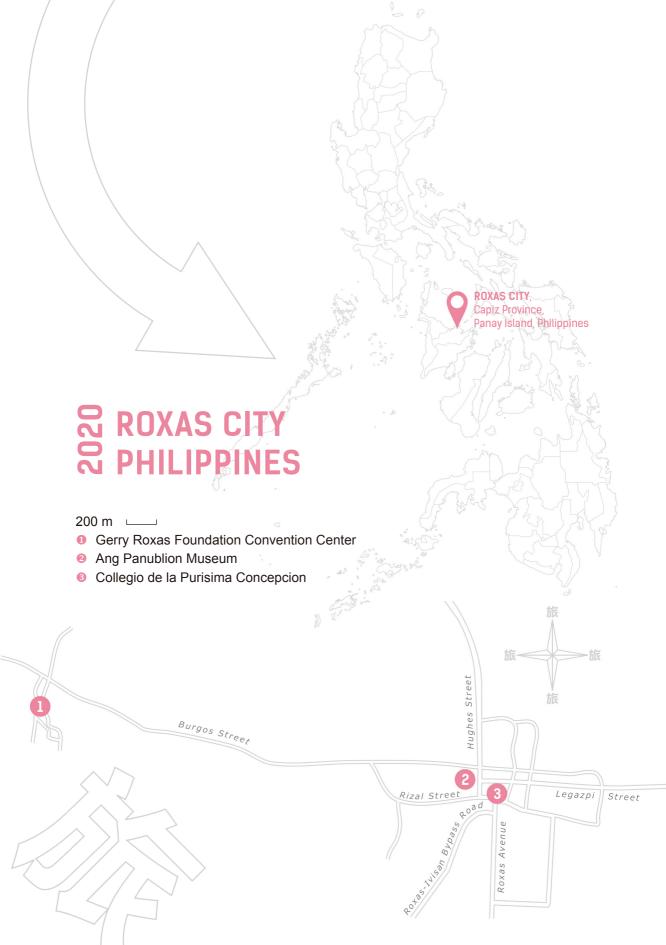
lefiz Alaudin (Theatremaker, ASWARA, Kuala Lumpur)

Art is a form of communication, Jejak-旅 Tabi serves as a onestop destination for contemporary performing artists to exchange their ideas and practices with one another with so much openness and warmth. So lucky and proud to be part of the first edition (Jogja & KL 2018), it was such an eye-opening experience and I am grateful to meet artists from different backgrounds and practices!



Fasyali Fadzly bin Saiful Bahri (Theatremaker, ASWARA, Kuala Lumpur)

I have been involved in Jejak-旅 Tabi since the first edition in Yogyakarta as a participant and the second edition as a co-organizer in KL along with colleagues at ASWARA. In 2021, once again, ASWARA co-hosted one of an online workshop series. This program allowed me to get to know about art, culture and its people in the fringe city. I must say that even though KL is not a less-known city compared to other editions, it has many artists that practice and perform work under the commercial radar and has alternative perspectives and practices. I really hope that I can participate in this program again in the future to update my understanding of the practice of arts and culture in less-known cities and its people.









DANCING WITH THE WANDERING QUEENS: REFLECTIONS ON JEJAK-旅 TABI EXCHANGE

Norberto Roldan

I first met Helly Minarti via an email she sent to Green Papaya Art Projects sometime in 2018 informing me about Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange: Wandering Asian Contemporary Performance. This is not to say I did not know who she was before that email. I have heard of her from common friends in Jakarta. I also heard about her from Donna Miranda, Green Papaya's co-founder and a contemporary dancer and choreographer, who has been aware of her curatorial projects like the Asia-Europe Dance Forum and the Indonesian Dance Festival (IDF). Helly discussed with me the possibility of involving Green Papaya in this new project. Although Donna was already less active with Green Papaya at this time, we still saw it fit for her to attend the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange in Yogyakarta in July of 2018.

I met Akane Nakamura in person during the VIVA ExCon (Visayas Islands Visual Arts Exhibition and Conference) in Roxas City in November of 2018. But even before that meeting, I knew who she was. Nibroll, the Japanese kick-ass dance collective managed by Akane's production company Precog has a following in the small contemporary dance community in Manila with which Donna and Green Papaya had worked with on the Manila Contemporary Dance Map and the WiFi Body Contemporary Dance Festival. During my conversation with Akane at the closing of the conference in Roxas, she expressed her interest in holding a Jejak-旅 Tabi edition in the Philippines, following the Kuala Lumpur edition in September of 2018. She was proposing to bring Jejak-旅 Tabi either to Bacolod or Cebu in 2019. Green Papaya's initial role was to help determine the most suitable destination.

But I had another venue in mind. Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange is a convergence of artists, choreographers, theater workers, scholars, and researchers of contemporary performance in Asia. It is an international platform with participants coming from Japan, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and the Philippines. So I thought Jejak-旅 Tabi could lend that reputation to a small city like Escalante (three hours by bus north of Bacolod City). The occasion can be an opportunity to witness and discuss the Escalante Massacre Commemorative Festival, an annual reenactment and performance commemorating the massacre that happened during the remaining year of the Marcos regime. The military opened fire at a rally in front of the town hall that wounded hundreds and killed 20 rallvists. It was not difficult to convince Akane and so before she left Roxas, we decided to study the possibility of holding Jejak-旅 Tabi in Escalante to coincide with the anniversary of the massacre on September 20, 2019.

Helly came to Manila sometime in August of 2019, and after our meeting with Donna, we have firmed up Escalante as Jejak-旅 Tabi's next destination. Helly then flew to Bacolod and proceeded to Escalante to meet with contacts and make an

ocular of available facilities and venues. The Escalante Massacre Commemoration was to be a big part of the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange program and the participation of Teatro Obrero, the theater arm of the peasants' movement in Negros that has been staging the reenactment for more than 30 years, was expected to play an important role. Mayumi Hirano, an independent Japanese curator based in Manila, and MJ Apatan, a member of a community theater organization in Escalante, were recruited as program manager and coordinator respectively.

We never expected that the plan for Escalante would have to be aborted. On September 18, 2019, cultural workers and activists were preparing for the commemoration of the Escalante Massacre when policemen and soldiers flagged down their vehicles along the highway approaching the city. They were arrested and charged with illegal possession of firearms and explosives and were brought to the police station. Of the eight, four were members of Teatro Obrero including its vice chair. According to the Northern Negros Alliance Rights Human Advocates (NNAHRA), the firearms explosives were planted by the police. Those who were arrested have remained in jail up to now.

The incident in Escalante stunned us. But it was more shocking for the cultural workers, activists, and the peasants' organization in Negros to see that the Duterte regime is determined to crush any form of

dissent against the government, like the way it sees the Escalante Massacre Commemoration. For the first time in 33 years since the annual commemoration started in 1986, the National Federation of Sugarcane Workers and Teatro Obrero who are at the forefront of this important event failed to stage the reenactment on its actual site. The reenactment is not simply a gesture of remembering and a tribute to those who perished in the massacre. The reenactment indeed is a form of protest, a demand for justice for the victims, but most of all, an enactment of the realities of an oppressive feudal system in the sugar plantations that has been the scourge of thousands of sugarcane workers since two centuries ago.

The precariousness of the political situation in Negros and the entire country under the fascist regime forced us to rethink and examine if it was still feasible to bring the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange to Escalante. Not only are arrests of activists a regular occurrence, killings of peasants and human rights advocates have been going on in the countryside since President Duterte was elected president in 2016. A risk analysis was conducted in cooperation with our partners

on the ground. We tried to identify potential problems that could undermine the ob-jectives of Jejak-旅 Tabi. The ultimate recom-mendation made by our colleagues: it was not the right time to do this kind of an activity in Negros.

The next option was to see if Iloilo City in the neighboring island of Panay could host the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange. But my gut feel was pointing me to Roxas City instead. In 2018 we held two international events in this small third class city, the second Southeast Asian Artists Residency Meeting (SEAARM) and the VIVA ExCon biennial. Both projects were accomplished with nary a major problem. Green Papaya still enjoys the support of the local government and the community, and its headquarters in the city that has been maintained can be put to good use.

Helly and Akane agreed to move Jejak-旅 Tabi to Roxas and the dates were finalized for January 22 to 25, 2020. The only difficult decision we had to make was whether to take the risk for two members of Teatro Obrero, one of them was to make a presentation on the Escalante Massacre, to travel from Bacolod to Iloilo on a ferry, and take the 3 hours bus ride from Iloilo to Roxas. Knowing that the possibility of a surveillance and arrest looms over the two cultural workers while in transit, we had to make a painful call to cancel their participation for their own security, but not without substituting their absence with their own colleagues who spoke on their behalf. Mayumi and I flew to Roxas earlier to look for local partners, and arrange the venues for the activities and accommodations. Despite the limited time, we had everything ready when the participants landed in Roxas on January 22.







Roxas City gained so much from the turn of events. Again, the local participants composed mostly of students and teachers stood as witnesses to a unique gathering of artists, scholars, and cultural workers from Southeast sharing a fully packed program of presentations, film screenings, a play, and a theater workshop. It was moving to see participants engaging the resource persons in serious discussions about the theater movement in the Philippines and Southeast Asia in the 70s and 80s, a few of them in tears while reliving the pains left behind by the Martial Law years. The pains kept coming back brought by the play Sa Digma ng Halimaw (In the War of the Monster), a docutheater presentation on Duterte's drug war; and the screening of Chikako Yamashiro's Mud Man.

Perhaps the adaptability, social relevance and universal appeal of the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange to go anywhere in the region outside the big cities were the main factors for its success wherever it ends up unfolding and unpacking its goal. After Roxas, everyone was looking forward to the next edition in Naha, Japan, but the pandemic shut down the whole world in March 2020. To our consolation, the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange – Roxas edition was our last international gathering filled with good and meaningful memories.

As the pandemic continued to wreak havoc globally into 2021, the only option left to fulfill the promise of Naha was to go online. And so online we went for the Jejak-旅 Tabi Manila-Roxas Program last July 17. Assembling a working team and gathering an audience under the lockdown in Manila was the most challenging part. With Mayumi joining us again, the team set up the coordinating and technical hub at the Green Papaya office in Quezon City (Manila), and organized two satellite online viewing venues in Roxas City. We did it again despite the enormous obstacle. Under the clouds of uncertainties and anxieties, working for the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange has remained challenging, fun and rewarding, like dancing in the rain, with the wandering queens Helly Minarti and Akane Nakamura.

September 6, 2021

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THE EVOLUTION OF THE FILIPINA IN WESTERN VISAYAN LITERATURE AND HISTORY*

Ma. Cecilia Locsin-Nava, Ph.D.

Western Visayan folk literature is replete with stories of how pre-Hispanic women held real power. Accounts range from the awesome might wielded by the divinity Lallahon who, when angered hurls fire from the bowels of the mountains of Negros but whom Negrenses of yore likewise invoked for good harvests to how Lubluban's incredulous but firm refusal to upset the material world's natural order by returning home to her newly resurrected husband, puts an end to the dead being brought back to life.¹

More than mere chattels or mediums of exchange, women in precontact times were valued not just for their procreative powers but for their sagacity and perspicacity. Thus, it is the astuteness of Suklang Malayon that saved Datu Paubari, the mighty mortal ruler of Halawod and his wife, Alunsina, goddess of the eastern sky from the great flood that her rejected god-suitors sent. As a consequence of which, humanity's survival was ensured through their offsprings, the epic heroes of Panay: Labaw Donggon, Humadapnon and Dumalapdap.² Similarly, when Humadapnon and his half-brother Amarotha fail to work out their differences after a seven-year combat for the hand of the stunning and sagacious Nagmalitung Yawa Sinagmaling Diwata, it is Laun Sina, their wise grandmother who decisively puts an end to the fraternal strife with the Solomonic gesture of dividing the object of their desire into two persons.³

In like manner, when the powerful Masangladun who rules Panibyungan, the realm underneath the sea, abducts and refuses to return Matan-ayon, the ravishing wife of Labaw Donggon in the epic, *Kalampay*, it is Luyong Kabig, the female arch deity assigned to the undersea world who works out a solution that proves satisfactory to both contending parties by decreeing that Abaw can bring his alluring wife home but every seven years when the *buruhisan* ritual is performed, he must return her to Masangladon.⁴

Finally, in the Panay epic, *Hinilawod*, the heroine, Nagmalitung Yawa is portrayed not only as a sage and seer but also as a compassionate and sensitive savior who assumes the manly persona of Buyong Sumasangkay to spare the hero Humadapnon from the embarrassment of discovering that the person who rescued him and his brother from their enemies is the stunning object of his desire.⁵

Since folklore, according to Bascom, provides a revealing picture of people's thoughts, beliefs, feelings, goals and aspirations, it is not surprising to discover that history





Excerpts of the long version of the essay, taken from the beginning of the essay, which is about ½ length of the original. Please go to this link to read the full version: https://bit.ly/3zylfMZ or scan the QR code above.

reinforces these accounts. Significantly, of the three pillars of Philippine pre-Hispanic society, namely: the datu (political leader), the panday (craftsman) and the babaylan (the shaman), the last who was generally a woman essayed the most complex role. Imbued with extraordinary powers, she was healer, historian, artist, ritualproducer, priestess, psychologist and proto-scientist in charge with the economy through her knowledge of astronomy.6 Thus, when the towns of Miagao and San Joaquin in Iloilo experienced a three-year dry spell, it was the babaylan Estrella "Tagsagod sang Kalibutan" (caretaker of the world) Bangotbanwa who summoned heavy rains in a complicated ritual that ended the three-year drought.7

As priestess, the *babaylan* likewise acted as mediator between the material and spiritual world. Significantly, when the eponymous hero in the Panay epic *Humadapnon*, is enthralled by witches who imprison him for seven years, only the *babaylan/binukot* (kept maiden) Nagmalitung Yawa, who is the object of the hero's affection succeeds in saving him by slaying his antagonists then quartering him and performing an elaborate *babaylan* ritual that reconstitutes his body and brings him back to life.⁸

Babaylanes also wielded tremendous political power when they took up armed struggle against our foreign invaders after the latter co-opted our local political elites. Thus, Spanish chroniclers are filled with accounts of frustrated attempts to stamp out indigenous animism in Panay due to vigorous resistance led by famous babaylanes like Dupinagay, Monica Gapon and Agustina Hiticon.9 Their male equivalents like Gregorio Dios of Panay and Dionisio Magbuela "Papa Isio" Sigobela of Negros who emerged as strong counterparts to the Spanish friar in the male-led Catholic religion sustained these efforts. In the latter's case by leading the longest struggle against Western colonizers in Negros island. 10 In the case of Capiz, the animosity Spanish friars had for activist women who carried on their revolutionary activities at night was such they were demonized as aswangs. Consequently, centuries after when efforts were expended to come up with an aswang festival for touristic purposes as well as to remember two freedom fighters during the Spanish period from Bailan, Capiz, named Canitnit and Cauayuay, church resistance

was so violent as Cheryl Anne del Rosario showed in her paper in the recently concluded Roxas City VIVAEXCON, the effort had to be given up.

Meanwhile, Iberian chroniclers from Chirino to Plasencia attest to the privileged status of the precolonial Filipina who was prized over their menfolk for being "the more serious and formal partner in the making of contracts" aside from being "gifted with a sensible and affective temperament ... showing more tenacity and strength in the face of the necessitudes in life."11

Thus, she oftentimes provided economic stability for the family even under adverse conditions:

Impelled by her personal situation and recognized moral supremacy, the india found herself the *real* chief of her landholdings and in spite of communal deprivations by her industrious and general labor and thanks to the fertility of her soul, the *india* not only succeeded in attending to the ordinary necessities of the house but she also *frequently improved* its economic situation achieving a position of relative prosperity (Italics provided).¹²

Educated alongside their brothers, precolonial Filipinas enjoyed substantial equality with their men folk. Hence, like their male siblings, they inherited property and succeeded their fathers as rulers if first-born in the family. After marriage, they held onto their paraphernal property, kept their maiden names, were free to decide on the number of children they would bear, could divorce and remarry by simply returning their dowries to the men or their parents. In case of separation, they were entitled to a part of the conjugal earnings, and to a share of the children. ¹³

Ironically the influence of a "superior" Spanish culture resulted in a sea change in the Filipinas' position from which she never completely recovered. Thus, with

the advent of colonization these feisty females eventually gave way to the fragile, helpless, lachrymose heroines of the Spanish period—virginal before marriage, fecund after, and forbearing to the end. The key lies in the patriarchal structures and the value system of the Siglo de Oro that Spanish colonizers brought to the Philippines. When the Spanish conquistadors brought in their own institutions and transplanted them on Philippine soil, the social construction of the Filipina was transformed. From her status as co-equal to man by virtue of having sprung form the same node of split bamboo, she suddenly became his inferior because in the patriarchal Judeo-Christian context she was the "second sex." The implication of all these was:

...the new Filipina (or female indio) was now her father's meek daughter, her husband's faithful subject, the church's obedient servant, and before marriage, a chaste virgin who would yield only to her husband (and occasionally to the friar).¹⁴

Thus, women's educational opportunities were diminished. Only upper class women were educated and the sum of their education was embroidery, catechism and other related concerns that were intended to circumscribe their existence into church, kitchen and children. Monogamous marriages became the rule and though couples could separate they could not remarry. Spanish marriage law even stripped the mother who remarried of parental authority over her children and unless her deceased husband had expressly anticipated in his will that his widow should remarry, could not do so. The new laws likewise deprived women of the right to hold public office, join professions or engage in business without the consent of their husbands who could dispose of their paraphernal properties. Religion became their main preoccupation eliciting in them an infinite capacity for tolerance, forgiveness, and suffering.¹⁵

Women's subjugated status was preached not only from the pulpits but circulated in countless conduct books. These included, among others, first Filipino Archbishop and Capiz' own Bishop Gabriel Reyes' Urbanidad con Maayo nga Pamatasan (Urbanity or Good Manners), Mariano Perfecto's translation of Paluzie and Cantalozella's Diutay nga Talamdan para sa Kabataan (A Little Guidebook of Conduct for Children), and Maria Pilar Sinues' manual de urbanidad for adults, thinly disquised as an epistolary novel entitled Ang Babae Caron con Ang Mga Sulat ni Felicia cay Julia (Woman Today, or The Letters of Felicia to Julia). Serialized in the nationalist bi-weekly *Makinaugalingon*, the last lays down all rules of conduct from holding a conversation with one's social superior to choosing a marriage partner. 16 Meanwhile on the pages of the pasion, novenas and saints' lives was propagated the cult of the Blessed Virgin and her votaries emphasizing her virginity and purity as well as her feminine virtues of humility, obedience, modesty, and selfeffacement. Free from sex, painful delivery, age, death and sin, the Blessed Virgin, in contrast to the temptress Eve, became an impossible ideal, women were exhorted to emulate.17

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MJ Apatan (Cultural worker, Escalante)

Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange Roxas was a very engaging Arts Exchange of Contemporary Asian Artists. It recognized and show-cased the diverse, unique, and colorful spectrum of Asian culture and politics. The different contemporary performances helped open the minds of the audience to the social realities.

As for my personal experience, the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange had motivated me to redefine and reestablish my stand points as a volunteer cultural worker which then was threatened by the antipathic forces. The sharing of experiences with the fellow artists had given me a glimpse of their own personal struggles that they had to hurdle just to continuously educate their respective communities through their artworks.





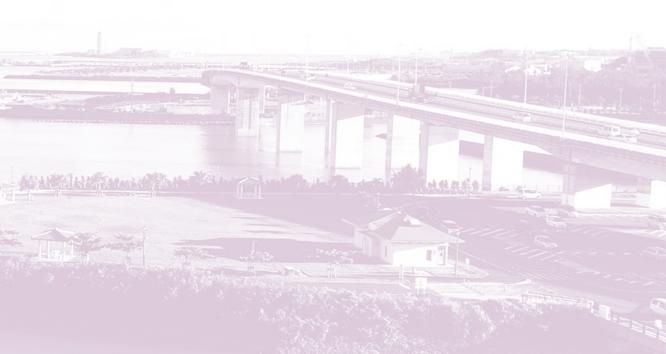
BRIDGING EDITION



ROXAS CITY to NAHA, 2020 + Pandemic



From 'Khao Khao Club.mp4' – Khao Khao Club Online © Yudai Kamisato





REFLECTIONS ON NINE STRAY OKINAWANS

Alfian Sa'at

In February 2018 I made a trip to Okinawa. I was accompanied by members of "shelf", a Japanese theatre company based in Tokyo. We were planning to work together on a play about war memory. We had already made research trips to various sites in Tokyo, such as the infamous Yasukuni shrine and the right-wing Yushukan museum, as well as museums on comfort women and injured soldiers.

I wrote some notes from that trip:

On our first night in Okinawa, while being driven around by our actor-collaborator and local Takashi Okito, it struck me what it meant to live in a place where 36% of the land area is occupied by US military bases.

It is too often skirt fencing while on the road, to feel displaced to the periphery. Fencing that separates the civilians from the military. Except that this distinction is also one between locals and foreigners. And not just any foreigner—a former occupier, a security guarantor, a jobs provider, and an environmental polluter.

The next day Takashi brings us to an observation deck overlooking Kadena air base. He was born in a town beside the base. What was most surprising for me was how close some of these bases were to various town centers—they seemed inseparable from the fabric of Okinawan life.

I couldn't help but reflect on issues of exclusion, ownership, sovereignty. Okinawa itself is a melange of Japanese, Chinese and American influences, laid over its indigenous Ryukyuan culture. What is assimilated becomes part of one's blood. What is not becomes a scar.

Our research trip in Okinawa consisted of visits to museums as well as sites such as underground caves and memorials. We did not get an opportunity to watch any cultural performances. In 2020, when the Jejak-旅 Tabi exchange threw a spotlight on the city of Naha in Okinawa for its second phase, I found myself being able to access a belated yet essential supplement to my research trip. This was the recording of a play called *Nine Stray Okinawans*.*

The play, written by Gakuji Awa and Seiichiro Kuniyoshi, and directed by Shoichi Touyama, first premiered in 2015, to mark 70 years since the end of World War 2. The "Nine Stray Okinawans" in the title refers to a group of nine people who gather in 1972 to discuss some possible future trajectories for Okinawa as they approach the date for its planned reversion to Japan. Among them are a housewife, an old woman, a traditional actor, an "expert", a pro-independence advocate and a "theorist" advocating reversion.

At the same time, the title also refers to the nine actors, in the present, who are playing those characters. We learn that what we are watching is a play within a play, with contemporary actors taking on the roles of Okinawans who debated the fates of their islands around 50 years before. The play elegantly shuttles between these two time periods with blackout transitions which are filled with the ominous sounds of planes and helicopters.

The scenes set in the present allow the actors to comment on the characters that they play, as well as some of the ideas that were presented. Among some of these are issues such as whether it was possible for Okinawa to be economically self-sufficient, whether it could divest itself of the US military bases, and whether Okinawan culture would be preserved after its absorption into the Japanese nation-state.

This blending of multiple temporalities is one of the most intriguing aspects of the play. The actor-characters speak from a position of hindsight, adjudicating the actions of their forebears by placing them in relief against the reality of contemporary Okinawa. Yet, as they play their 1972 characters, they are required to become amnesiacs—to embrace fully the naivete and utopianism of those who were blind to the future. There are complex layers of dramatic

^{*} The play was live streamed during Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange, the bridging edition for Naha, 1–7 December 2020.



irony: the present-day actors have to feign ignorance of the viability of the predictions made by their 1972 characters, while we as the audience know what they are trying so hard not to know.

Two moments in the play seized my attention. At the 56 minute mark, the "expert" opined that Okinawa could secure its independence by becoming a "hub for global economy and logistics". He goes on to say, "first, become a country like Hong Kong under UK rule, then a country like Singapore. If Okinawa becomes a global economy hub like Singapore, invading us would be difficult."

Indeed, there were some parallels between Singapore, my home country, and Okinawa. Singapore had hosted one of the largest British naval bases in Southeast Asia. Completed in 1938, it was an Imperial fortress designed as a deterrent to the then aggressively expanding Japanese Empire. Two decades after the war, however, the British announced plans to withdraw its troops from its major military bases in Southeast Asia. By 1971, withdrawal was complete.

In preparation for the resulting unemployment, Singapore invested heavily in manufacturing industries and ultimately emerged as one of the most dynamic economies in Asia. It is tantalising to speculate as to whether a similar pathway could have opened up for an independent Okinawa.

The second moment involved the actor playing the "expert". In the present-day scenes, it was revealed that he had been spotted at the hospital, along with his mother and some police officers. Later on, while in character as the "expert", he expressed his anguished ambivalence at the presence of the military bases—they had provided his mother with a iob, but later a US soldier had knocked her down with his vehicle and could potentially escape justice.

At that moment, it seemed as if the actor and the character had fused, stitching together two different timelines. It was unclear at times who was speaking—was the actor still in character, and how much of the character's pain drew from the actor's own? A fistula had formed between the past and the present, joining one wound to another.



The actors in Nine Stray Okinawans were reenacting a past that could no longer be altered. Or rather, it was a past that could only be altered through reenactment, and even then within permissible boundaries, tied to certain facts, lest one strays too far from history. And what then is history? A sum of paths not taken, what is left after the subtraction of countless unrealized futures. Where Okinawa did not become another Singapore, where it dreamed and woke up and found itself still inside the dream.



ALFIAN SA'AT (Singapore) is a playwright, poet and writer.





ON TAKING PART IN THE JEJAK-旅 TABI EXCHANGE PROJECT



Sei Kamida (Actor, Okinawa)

Roxas City 2020

When COVID-19 started to spread in China in 2020, I did not imagine that the pandemic would continue for such a long time.

In Roxas City in the Philippines, we met artists and creators from different parts of Asia, had meals together, talked about our experiences and visions, and exchanged information on the arts scene in respective countries. I think it was indeed a great opportunity that allowed us to

share our sensibilities for being fellow Asians in the broad sense, going beyond frameworks defined by nationalities such as Japanese and Okinawans.

During the sessions in Roxas City, I became strongly aware that I knew hardly anything about the political situation in the Philippines, such as the Escalante massacre in 1985, and the clashes between the workers and the authorities over unhumanitarian issues at the sugar plants as well as the ongoing drug issues that we learnt through a play presented as part of the program.

It was shocking when I realized that these facts had not been reported at all in Japan. It was also a precious experience to have heard about the issues directly from the local people.

There were two points that helped me relate to the history and the current situation of the Philippines.

Firstly, the historical incidents have come to stay in my mind as immediate experiences felt through the local atmosphere and culture as well as through the exchanges, as I had attended the project physically and learned about them face-to-face instead of merely through text and information.

Secondly, I became more aware of the fact that the Philippines had been occupied by foreign countries several times just like Okinawa.

I was able to expand my scope of vision by taking part in the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange project

Postscript:

I had a reunion with Rudy Reveche through the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange project. We first met at the Bangkok Theatre Festival (BTF) in 2019, when he was heading the team from the Philippines. He invited me to the Philippines to give performances but due to the spread of the new coronavirus pandemic, the project was postponed and our performance was screened instead at the Online Art Event that Rudy had organized at his university last year. And this year, the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange project has brought us together again.

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The 2020 Naha Online Edition

The project took place when the pandemic had spread all over the world, and many stage performances and live events in Okinawa and mainland Japan had been cancelled. At a time when many artists were feeling anxiety and were questioning "whether art is necessary or not," we were able to share our current situations and discuss what could be done under such circumstances, how to spend our time and about post-pandemic visions. It was encouraging to learn how other artists abroad were responding to the pandemic.

I remember thinking that we are all pioneers who are experiencing an unprecedented situation and that it is perhaps important to stop at times to look back at the past.

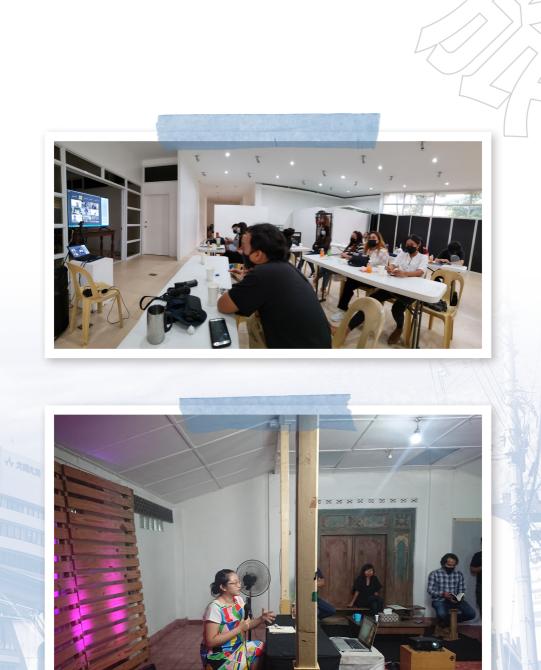
I was especially inspired by the notion of "regionality". It was because I could strongly relate to the idea of having another look at the local community.

I could also relate to the opinion that in the post-COVID world, the fact that the entire world was experiencing the pandemic almost simultaneously would be referred to on many occasions in future art scenes as a memory of the past that cannot be overlooked.









,大同火災

マニラ、フィリピン Manila, the Philippines







Ishikawa Mao, from the series Philippine Dancers (1988-89)

MAO ISHIKAWA'S PHOTOGRAPHY AND THE PHILIPPINES

Fumiaki Kamegai

Mao Ishikawa is a photographer who was born in Okinawa in 1953. In 1971, when Okinawa was under U.S. occupation, there were large-scale general strikes held against the reversion of administrative rights to Japan. and Ishikawa, who was still a high school student back then, witnessed the clashes between the riot police and the demonstrators. Having seen the Okinawans fighting among themselves, she hit upon the idea of "expressing the paradoxical realities of Okinawa through photographs". In 1974, she started her career as a photographer under the pen name of Mao Ishikawa. The photographs in her first series Akabanaa were shot between 1975 and 1977. She had taken photographs of women working in bars in the downtown areas in Koza City, where there is a U.S. military base, and in Kin Town as well as photographs of Afro-American soldiers who frequented those areas. As Ishikawa had worked in one of the bars. she was able to take photographs based on the intimate relation between the subjects and herself, which later developed into the uniqueness and the charm of her photography.

From 1988 up till 1989, Ishikawa shot the Philippine Dancers series in Kin Town. She had not been there for eleven years since she completed the Akabanaa series. She visited the bar where she used to work and she found out that dancers from the Philippines were working there instead of Okinawans. Having told the dancers that she also used to work there, they allowed her to take photos of them performing and during their downtime. When you see the expressions of the Philippine dancers relaxing in their bedrooms and inside the bar, you could tell that she had established intimate relations with them. Ishikawa then headed off to the Philippines to accompany two Philippine dancers who had to go back to their home country temporarily to renew their visas.

This year, which is 2021, we were able to introduce the forty-seven years of Mao Ishikawa's career as a photographer alongside her fifteen series through an exhibition held at the Okinawa Prefectural

Museum and Art Museum. Looking back at her past series, you notice that she has been shooting not only in Okinawa but also in Japan's mainland as well as other countries. She has consistently taken photos of Okinawa and the people who had something to do with Okinawa. In her journey to find out the meaning of the U.S. military presence in Okinawa, she had visited the veterans living in the U.S. mainland and had also interviewed the locals in Southeast Asia who knew about the traces of war left by the Japanese military dur-ing the Second World War. You can say that the photographs in the *Philippine Dancers* series were shot when Ishikawa had started to turn the camera outside Japan. It is also an important series that gives us clues about how her works had developed afterwards.

Mao Ishikawa is a photographer whose works are housed in museums in the United States and Australia. She is also an important creator whom I would like to intro-



From the series Philippine Dancers, Philippine (Olongapo), 1988–89 © Mao Ishikawa



From the series *Philippine Dancers*, Philippine (Olongapo), 1988–89 © Mao Ishikawa



From the series *Philippine Dancers*, Kin Town (Shinkaichi), 1988–89 © Mao Ishikawa



From the series Philippine Dancers, Kin Town (Shinkaichi), 1988-89 © Mao Ishikawa

duce to the people living on the islands in the Asia and Oceania region. This feeling became even stronger when I talked to the artists and researchers who live in the Philippines at the Talk & Discussions sessions. Each island has gone through unprecedented history, which has led to conflicts among the people living there. The islanders are still being rocked by various problems occurring on their islands. And so is Ishikawa. Witnessing the people in Okinawa who were torn apart by the conflicting views on reversion was what initially motivated her to become a photographer. "National history" is one of the modules of history. By sharing each island's history, and overlapping a few of them from respective standpoints, we may discover new sources of inspiration. I think that the idea of capturing the situation in each island based on units beside nations has already sprung here and there and the Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange project* certainly did provide opportunities to rediscover these facts.

* The author did a presentation on Mao Ishikawa's work in a panel organized by Green Papaya collective (Manila and Roxas City) during Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange, Naha Edition, online, 13–18 July 2021.

FUMIAKI KAMEGAI (Naha)
is a curator of Okinawa
Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, curated "Mao Ishikawa:
Bad Ass and Beauty – One
Love," an exhibition presenting
fifteen projects spanning Mao
Ishikawa's career.





ON PARTICIPATING IN THE JEJAK-旅 TABI EXCHANGE PROJECT

Shoichi Touyama

Early in 2020, we got an offer to take part in this project. The content seemed extremely promising as it would provide Asian theater practitioners opportunities to get together at symposiums to discuss ways to carry out exchanges and to present their works in the Asian region in the future. The program also contained workshops and performances. I was thrilled to hear that Atelier Mekaru Base, which opened in 2017, was chosen as the venue for the project that has set such a grand vision. I was even more excited to find out that "Nine Stray Okinawans - 50 Years Since Then" was chosen for the public performance.



However, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, to our disappointment, the entire project had to be reprogrammed. Still, due to the hard efforts of the members of the secretariat, we were happily able to carry out the program online

After the "Nine Okinawans" was presented, a participant from Singapore gave us a valuable feedback and I was convinced that the message implied in the play had got across to people from other countries.

During the dialog between the participants from Yogyakarta and Mr. Makoto Sato, who is the artistic director of the Wakabacho Warf, we discussed how the works were created in the respective regions, whether the creators were conscious of the intended audience when they created their works as well as other topics.

I attended the workshop on Ryukyu Buyo, which is Okinawa's traditional dance, and I was moved when I saw the participants from



SHOICHI TOUYAMA (Naha) is an actor and is part of Okinawa Art Culture Theater and a representative of Atelier Mekaru Base.

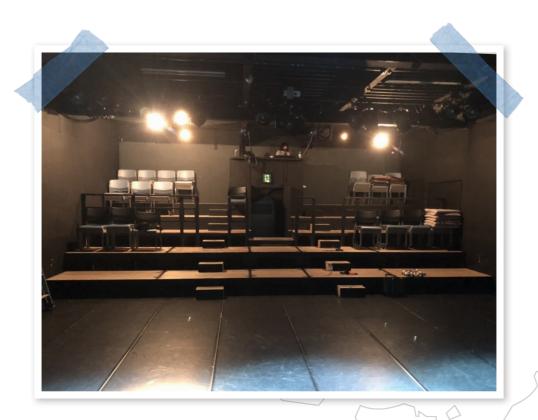




other Asian countries dance together with the Okinawan dancers, whose movements were projected fullscreen. The lecture on makeup was about suddenly changing makeup for women into makeup for men, which is unlikely to happen on site, but it was a very interesting and valuable experience.

I hope that the relationship between Okinawa, which is an Asian hub, and the other Asian countries that took part in the project this year will continue, and that there would be more opportunities in the future to have crosscultural exchanges with people from other parts of Asia that we have not yet met.

https://www.tjf.or.jp/deai/contents/teacher/mini_en/html/ryukyubuyo.html













2018 YOGYAKARTA INDONESIA

13 July 2018 | 7:00-9:00 pm at Cemeti - Institute of the Arts and Society Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange Opening Night

13–17 July 2018 | 10:00 am–5:00 pm
[Archive-based Exhibition] Choreographic Traces:
Body, History and Lines of Investigation

at Ace House

Pichet Klunchun - Translating Theppanom: (Re)Creating the Contemporary from the Classical

at Ruang MES 56

Padmini Chettur - The Rigorous Practice of Freedom

13 July–11 August 2018 | 10:00 am–5:00 pm at Cemeti - Institute for the Arts and Society [Archive-based Exhibition] Choreographic Traces: Body, History and Lines of Investigation

Peeping the Archive: Drunk Anything American Vis-a-vis National Identity: The Archive of Bagong Kussudiardja & Wisnu Wardhana in the 1950s-1960s

14 July 2018 | 7:30 pm at Kedai Kebun Forum

[Main Performances] Pichet Klunchun - I Am Demon

15 July 2018 | 7:30 pm at Langgeng Art Foundation

[Main Performances] Padmini Chettur - Beautiful Thing 2

16 July 2018 | 10:00 am-5:00 pm at Concert Hall, Pascasarjana ISI Yogyakarta

Master Class Pichet Klunchun

16 July 2018 | 7:30-9:30 pm at Langgeng Art Foundation

[Panel Discussion] Between Theory and Practice: Getting to Contemporary

Speakers:

Padmini Chettur (Chennai) Pichet Klunchun (Bangkok) Yudi Ahmad Tajudin (Yogyakarta) Donna Miranda (Manila)

Moderator:

Lim How Ngean (Kuala Lumpur)

17 July 2018 | 10:00 am-5:00 pm at Concert Hall, Pascasarjana ISI Yogyakarta

Master Class Padmini Chettur

17 July 2018 | 7:30–9:30 pm at Langgeng Art Foundation

[Panel Discussion] Creating Works, Carving a Path: Strategies and Tactics

Speakers:

Thanapol Virulhakul (Bangkok) Sekar Putri Handayani (Surakarta) Satoko Ichihara (Tokyo)

Moderator:

Joned Suryatmoko (Yogyakarta)

17–18 July 2018 | 10:00 am–6:00 pm at Artist's Studio

[Open Studio] LA DANSE MACABRE (Process in Progress)

by Gusbang Sada (Bali-Yogyakarta) and Natasha Tontey (Jakarta-Yogyakarta)

18 July 2018 | 7:00-9:30 pm

at Cemeti - Institute for the Arts and Society

[Performance Lecture] Histories of The Personal, National and Communal: Home and Abroad

by Mark Teh (Kuala Lumpur)
and Yudai Kamisato (Tokyo-Kawasaki)

19 July 2018 | 7:00-10:30 pm at Cemeti - Institute for the Arts and Society [Performances]

TubuhDANGTubuhDUT (Research in Progress) by Ayu Permata Sari (Lampung-Yogyakarta)

Samar-samar Karya Kolaboratif (Work in Progress) by Fasyali Fadzly (Kuala Lumpur) and Iefiz Alaudin (Kuala Lumpur)

Image of the Giant by Yennu Ariendra (Yogyakarta)

2018 KUALA LUMPUR MALAYSIA

20 September 2018 | 8:00 pm at Black Box, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

[Lecture Performances/Work-in-Progress Presentation (followed by post-show Q&A)]

Floating Bottle Project
by Natsuko Tezuka (Toshima/Fukuoka & Berlin)
Venuri Perera (Colombo)
Yeong Ran Suh (Seoul/Copenhagen)

Maharajawana by Teuku Umar Ilany (Kuala Lumpur)

21 September 2018 | 8:00 pm at Studio Petalawati, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA) [Lecture Presentations] Methods and Histories of the

Personal to National
by Linda Agnesia Mayasari (Yogyakarta)

22 September 2018 | 3:00 pm at Studio Petalawati, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

and Mark Teh (Kuala Lumpur)

[Panel Presentation] On Curating/Programming Festivals

22 September 2018 | 8:30 pm at Black Box, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

[Panel Presentation] Indonesian/Malaysian Play-Reading Showcase

23 September 2018 | 10:30 am at Studio Petalawati, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

[Roundtable Discussions] Tangent Practices of Articulating the Artistic

23 September 2018 | 3:00 pm at Black Box, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

[Works-in-Progress Showcase (followed by post-show Q&A)]

LA DANSE MACABRE
by Natasha G. Tontey (Yogyakarta)
and Gusbang Sada (Denpasar, Bali)

TubuhDANGTubuhDUT by Ayu Permata Sari (Yogyakarta)

Merespon Trauma
by Naque Ariffin (Kuala Lumpur)

25 September 2018 | 6:30–10:30 pm at DPAC Black Box

Masterclass by Pichet Klunchun (Bangkok)

26 September 2018 | 6:30–10:30 pm at DPAC Black Box

Masterclass by Padmini Chettur (Chennai)

28-29 September 2018 | 8:00 pm at DPAC Theatre

DOUBLE BILL:
Pichet Klunchun's "I Am Demon"
& Padmini Chettur's "Varnam-edit"

30 September 2018 | 11:00 am-12:00 pm at DPAC Black Box

In Conversation with Pichet Klunchun

30 September 2018 | 1:30-3:00 pm at DPAC Black Box

In Conversation with Padmini Chettur

EACH CITY'S PROGRAMME

2020 ROXAS CITY PHILIPPINES

22 January 2020 | 9:30–11:30 am at Roxas City Heritage Sites Tour of Roxas City Heritage Sites

22 January 2020 | 12:00–2:00 pm at Palina River Cruise

Palina River Cruise and Lunch

22 January 2020 | 6:30–7:00 pm at GRF Auditorium

[Film Screening] Mud Man by Chikako Yamashiro

22 January 2020 | 7:00–7:30 pm at GRF Auditorium

[Film Screening] Pagkatapos ng Tigkiriwi by Danielle Madri

23 January 2020 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm at AVR, Collegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

[Symposium/Theatre] Politics and Civil Movement in the Philippines: Theatre with a Cause

Speakers:

Edwin Quinsayas (Manila) Karlo Mongaya (Manila) Ariane Carandang (Manila)

Reactor:

Rudy Reveche

Moderator: **Lisa Ito** 23 January 2020 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm at AVR, Collegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

[Symposium/Theatre] Politics and Civil Movement in the Philippines: Theatre with a Cause

Speakers:

Edwin Quinsayas (Manila) Karlo Mongaya (Manila) Ariane Carandang (Manila)

Reactor:

Rudy Reveche

Moderator: Lisa Ito

23 January 2020 | 1:30 am-3:30 pm at AVR, Collegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

[Symposium / Theatre] Politics and Civil Movement in the Philippines: Unfolding Histories: Theatre and Politics

Speakers:

Alejandro Deoma (Bacolod) Ma. Cecilia Locsin-Nava (Bacolod)

Reactor:

Ma. Rosalie Zerrudo

Moderator:

Marika Constantino

23 January 2020 | 7:00 pm at Water District, Punta Tabuk

Dinner hosted by Green Papaya Projects

24 January 2020 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm at AVR, Collegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

[Symposium/Theatre] Movement in Southeast Asia and Japan: Historical Review of PETA Influence in South-East Asia

Speakers:

Muhammad Abe (Yogyakarta) Alfian Sa'at (Singapore)

Moderator: Helly Minarti

EACH CITY'S PROGRAMME

24 January 2020 | 1:30–3:30 pm at AVR, Collegio de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

[Symposium/Theatre] Movement in Southeast Asia and Japan: Performing Community and Formulating Arts Practices

Speakers:

Janet Pillai (Kuala Lumpur) Wichaya Artama (Bangkok)

Moderator: Amy Lien

24 January 2020 | 3:30-4:00 pm at AVR, Collegió de la Purisima Concepcion, Arnaldo Boulevard Campus

Introducing Okinawa

Speakers:

Yudai Kamisato (Tokyo) Sei Kamida (Naha) Nomura Masashi (Nagano)

24 January 2020 | 6:30–8:00 pm at GRF Auditorium

[Performance] Sa Digma ng Halimaw (Monster's War) by SIKAD

25 January 2020 | 10:00 am-12:00 pm at GRF Training Centre

[Workshop] Morfosis: Understanding the Theatre Basics

Facilitator:

MJ Apatan (Escalante)

25 January 2020 | 2:00–3:30 pm at GRF Conference Room

Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange 2020 Curators/Producers Meeting

25 January 2020 | 7:30–11:30 pm at Espacio Verde, Dayao

at Espacio Verde, Dayao Cocktails and Dinner

BRIDGING EDITION ROXAS CITY to NAHA + Pandemic

1 December 2020 | 7:00 pm at Drifters International YouTube Channel (Available on 1–7 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 1] Introduction of Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange

Speakers:

Helly Minarti (Yogyakarta) Akane Nakamura (Tokyo) Masashi Nomura (Nagano)

1 December 2020 | 8:00 pm

at Drifters International YouTube Channel (Available on 1–4 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 2] Okinawan Art Culture Theatre "Nine Stray Okinawans - 50 years since the Online Streaming"

at Okazaki Art Theatre YouTube Channel

[Video Distribution 3] Yudai Kamisato 'Khao Khao Club.mp4' from Khao Khao Club Online

at Drifters International YouTube Channel (Available on 1–7 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 4] Screening of Short Films Made Under Lockdown

Curator:

Lisa Ito (Manila)

Short Film Lists:

- Quarantine Exercise (Your Human Rights), RESBAK (April 2020)
- Counter Terror, CAP
- #SONAgKaisa D.I.Y Mask Contra Veerus, RESBAK
- Sakahan (Field, October 2020), Anonymous

2 December 2020 | 8:00 pm

at Drifters International YouTube Channel (Available on 1–7 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 5] Presentation 'Criss-crossing the Terrain: From Okinawa to Chiang Mai and Back'

Speakers

Mark Teh (Kuala Lumpur) Yudai Kamisato (Tokyo)

at Drifters International YouTube Channel (Available on 1–7 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 7] Podcast 'Tagsupil (Suppression Session)'

Speaker:

Donna Miranda (Manila)

2 December 2020 | 8:00 pm at Jejak-旅 Tabi Exchange YouTube Channel (Available on 1–7 December 2020)

[Video Distribution 8] Panel Discussion 'Performing Resilience'

Speakers:

Alfian Sa'at (Singapore) Muhammad Abe (Yogyakarta) Su-Wenchi (Taoyuan) Sei Kamida (Naha)

Moderator:

Nabilah BM. Said

4 December 2020 | 8:00–9:30 pm at Drifters International YouTube Channel

[Interaction QnA-2] After the Empire? Common Ground Between Okinawa and Southeast Asia

Speakers:

Masashi Nomura (Nagano) Gakuji Awa (Naha) Shoichi Touyama (Naha) Alfian Sa'at (Singapore)

5 December 2020 | 6:00–8:00 pm at Drifters International YouTube Channel

[Interaction QnA-6] Emancipatory Movements: A Regroup of Solidarities

Speakers:

Lisa Ito (Manila) Arianne Carandang (Manila) Karlo Mongaya (Manila) Tina Ponce (Manila) Chrissy Ustariz (Manila)

6 December 2020 | 6:00-7:30 pm at Drifters International YouTube Channel

[Interaction QnA-8] Performing Resilience

Speakers:

Alfian Sa'at (Singapore) Muhammad Abe (Yogyakarta) Su-Wenchi (Taoyuan) Sei Kamida (Naha)

Moderator: Nabilah BM. Said

7 December 2020 | 7:30–9:00 pm at Drifters International YouTube Channel

[Interactive QnA-5] Criss-crossing the Terrain: From Okinawa to Chiang Mai and Back

Speakers:

Mark Teh (Kuala Lumpur) Yudai Kamisato (Tokyo)



2021 NAHA, OKINAWA JAPAN (ONLINE)

13 July 2021 12:00-1:30 pm (MST) | 1:00-2:30 pm (JST) at Online

[Lecture] Getting to Know Okinawa Through Dancing - Ryukyu Traditional Dance & Kumiodori

Speakers and Facilitators: Osamu Aka (Naha) Michihiko Kakazu (Naha) Takumi Tamaki (Naha) Itsuo Nakamura (Naha)

14 July 2021 4:00-6:00 pm (MST) | 6:00-8:00 pm (JST) at Zoom Webinar/Komunitas Sakatova

[Symposium] First Encounter: Connecting Japanese Theater Network and Yogyakarta Theatre Community

Speakers:

Ibed Surgana Yuda (Bali) Shoichi Touyama (Naha)

Moderators:

Masashi Nomura (Nagano) Muhammad Abe (Yogyakarta)

Discussants:

Makoto Sato (Yokohama) Agnes Christina (Yogyakarta)

16 July 2021 5:00–6:30 pm (MST) | 6:00–7:30 pm (JST) at Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA)

[Workshop] Getting to Know Okinawa Through Dancing - Ryukyu Traditional Dance & Kumiodori

Speakers and Facilitators: Osamu Aka (Naha) Michihiko Kakazu (Naha) Takumi Tamaki (Naha) Itsuo Nakamura (Naha) 17 July 2021 10:00–12:00 pm (PHT) | 11:00–13:00 pm (JST) at Zoom Webinar/Ang Panublion Museum, Green Papaya Art Projects

[Curators' Talk & Discussion] Resonance Across Islands in Asia: Okinawan Action and Art

Chikako Yamashiro: Boundless Imagination

Speaker:

Keiko Okamura (Tokyo)

Moderator:

Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez (Manila)

Discussant:

Vim Nadera (Manila)

17 July 2021 13:00–15:00 pm (PHT) | 14:00–16:00 pm (JST) at Zoom Webinar/Ang Panublion Museum, Green Papaya Art Projects

[Curators' Talk & Discussion] Resonance Across Islands in Asia: Okinawan Action and Art

Mao Ishikawa: Human Empathy and Its Questions

Speaker:

Fumiaki Kamegai (Naha)

Moderator:

Eileen Legaspi-Ramirez (Manila)

Discussant:

Vim Nadera (Manila)

EACH CITY'S PROGRAMME

FOUNDING CURATORS (BY ALPHABETICAL ORDER)

Helly Minarti is Jakarta-born and works as an independent, itinerant dance scholar/curator, rethinking radical strategies to connect theory and practice. She is interested in historiographies of choreography as discursive practice vis-a-vis the eclectic knowledge that infuses the understanding of the human body/nature. She was involved in various arts projects both locally and internationally; a recipient of some international fellowships. Helly earned a Ph.D. in dance studies from the University of Roehampton (UK) and now calls Yogyakarta home where she set up LINGKARAN | koreografi, a collaborative research platform focusing to expand the critical notions of choreography.

Akane Nakamura was born in Tokyo in 1979, and now works as a performing arts producer and curator. While serving as a program director at ST Spot Yokohama from 2004 to 2008, she co-founded a production studio, Precog Co., Ltd in 2006 and became its CEO in 2008. Nakamura has produced numerous inter-disciplinary projects such as "Azumabashi Dance Crossing" (2004-2013) and "Spectacle in the Farm" (2009–2010). With Precog she has also produced for a number of artists, including Chelfitsch and Toshiki Okada, Nibroll, and Okazaki Arts Theater of Yudai Kamisato. These artists have performed in over 70 cities in 30 countries. In 2012, Nakamura directed KAFE9, a performing arts festival at Kanagawa Arts Theater. In 2012 and 2014, she produced Kunisaki Peninsula Art Festival as its program director. In 2016, she produced "Inuto Imago" as part of the Setouchi Art Triennial, featuring contemporary musician Kazuhisa Uchihashi and several artists from Indonesia. In 2016, she was a grantee of the Asian Cultural Council fellowship. In addition, she is one of the founding members of The Open Network for Performing Arts Management.

Lim How Ngean is Malaysian-born and works as an independent dance dramaturg, producer and performance-maker, and has been involved in the performing arts for 30 years. He was conferred his Ph.D. from the National University of Singapore with his thesis entitled *Choreographic Modernities: Movement and Mobility in Southeast Asian Contemporary Dance*. He has dramaturged for notable choreographers from Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Cambodia. How Ngean is founding director of the Asian Dramaturgs' Network (ADN, 2016), a platform for critical exchange on dramaturgy among dramaturgs in the Asian region. He was co-curator for Jejak-旅 Tabi's first season in 2018.

CO-CURATOR FOR NAHA (OKINAWA) EDITION

Masashi Nomura is a theater producer and dramaturge born in Nagano Prefecture in 1978. Since 2007, he has been enrolled in the production division of theater company SEINENDAN and Komaba Agora Theater. Alongside, he has worked as a dramaturg for young directors. As the program officer of Okinawa Arts Council, he was involved in the establishment of a small theater/atelier Mekaru Base in Naha City. He then started to organize the annual meeting of the Free Scene Network Japan with private theater managers. He is currently Nagano prefecture's cultural coordinator and a board member of the Open Network for Performing Arts 10/Management (ON-PAM). His latest works as dramaturge are The Bacchae-Holstein Milk Cows (Aichi Triennale 2019) by Satoko Ichihara, I Go Through You – Performance (Kyoto Experiment 2018) by Chikako Yamashiro, and The Story of Descending the Long Slopes of Valparaíso (Kyoto Experiment 2017).

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