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Dear Secretary of LUTSF:

Please find enclosed two hard copies of my report, photos, membership (CID) and participation certificates, as well as a programme from the event.

My trip to Tokyo, Japan was for the duration of October 18-28, 2014. The conference I attended (CID-World Dance Congress) ran from October 23-27, 2014. During this time, I taught, performed, attended workshops, lectures and viewed performances as the sole UK representative. The four days prior to the conference were filled with site-seeing ventures and rehearsal preparation time. The purpose of my trip was to participate fully in the conference. Contributions I made include leading a workshop and giving a performance.

For many reasons the trip was successful. I had put a lot of preparation into the project prior to departing, including extensive dialogue with the people in Japan who were hosting this event. Fostering these relationships before visiting really helped to make the trip more than worthwhile. I was able to really benefit from the opportunity, meeting lots of new people and in many cases because introductions were made for me. I went with an open mind and a willingness to explore new avenues. This made for a meaningful trip.

Information has directly been shared with my students and colleagues thus far. I plan to continue to seek a publishing avenue and public domain for my article.

I would like to say a huge thank you to LUTSF for awarding me this amazing opportunity! I felt the trip was very special and inspirational. I am very grateful to LUTSF for the financial support to enable such a rich and rewarding experience.

With my sincere thanks

And best wishes for 2015,

Alicia Frost

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LUTSF Report
Tokyo, Japan
October 2014



CID-UNESCO World Dance Congress

With the support of the LUTSF I was able to participate in the Unesco Conseil Internationale de Danse 38th World Dance Congress, October 23-27, held for the first time in Asia at The Sheraton Grande Hotel in Tokyo, Japan.!

The Congress was hosted by President Erika Akoh of Erika Akoh Dance Theatre and Vice-President Kan-Ichi Segawa. The congress began with a reception held on the eve of October 23. Speeches were made by Presidents of the CID past and present, local sponsors and representatives from Japan National Tourism Organisation welcoming all artists to Japan and celebrating the initiation of the event. Many of the participating artists were in attendance and the evening offered an opportunity to meet and greet each other over drinks and food. !

Unesco
International
Dance Council
Tokyo goes far
beyond any
genre of dance
and enhances
artistic
viewpoints to
influence Hope
Love and Peace
to the world.

*-Erika Akoh,
President CID
Tokyo*



Artists gathered from neighbouring Asian countries (Hong Kong, China, South Korea, The Philippines, India) as well as from further afield such as Europe (Switzerland, Greece, Spain, Germany, France) and North America (Canada and USA). Over the days that ensued, lectures, workshops and evening performances took place. Participants were free to choose which events they wanted to attend in and around their own teaching/performing schedule. A large variety of dance styles were represented. K-pop, Hip Hop, Salsa, Tango, Belly Dance, Kathak, Italian Court, Bharatanatyam, Butoh, Noh, Kabuki, Tap, Ballet, Jazz and Contemporary were some on offer. All ages were represented; both children and adults. From different countries, abilities, styles and ages emerged a beautiful event enabling all to share in the passion, expression and language of dance. !

I taught a workshop on October 24, 'Sharing Principles of Limón Technique'. I was very fortunate to have live percussion accompaniment by Japanese Wadaiko Drum Artist Masaki Otawa. Most English speakers had a Japanese interpreter as the majority of participants were Japanese. This presented an awkward rhythmical exchange of communication at times. Although purposeful, it only served to highlight to me the strength of dance as a language in its own right. Additionally, a range of mixed abilities among participants reinforced for me the importance of connecting with each individual. My focus was to enable all participants to access the sensation and essence of the movement style. I was able to reflect on the principles I teach as well as strategies I use by watching others. Returning now to work in London, I am approaching my practice with renewed vigour and clarity. The experience in Japan has brought me closer to understanding my values and approaches to movement expression. !

Attending other workshops afforded me the chance to also explore techniques new to me. I learned about Japanese "AN" technique, a method that targets strength by drawing awareness to your centre and engaging the whole body in physical contact work. It is something I am keen to try out on my dance students back in the UK as well as on actors and singers as a way of accessing a sense of ease and fluidity.!

A variety of lectures were on offer including those related to dance history, cultural anthropology and education as well as accounts of individual research related to choreographic practice. I particularly enjoyed a lecture surrounding the training of young dancers and evolving demands of the industry. In particular, versatility of training was a topic discussed in conjunction with circus skills alongside approaches to teaching technique. It was also interesting to learn where dance education is situated economically in other countries; private or public sectors. I felt very fortunate to be able to say that in the UK dance is a subject available in school (to varying degrees) and a recognised academic subject at GCSE/A-level. Equally interesting were discussions surrounding themes of dance as art and entertainment, recreation and profession; all of which were enjoyed by scholars, professionals and amateurs alike. !

In a separate lecture, I learned about the origins of contemporary dance in Japan. This opened my eyes to Kabuki, Noh and Butoh. I followed my newly piqued curiosity to participate in a Butoh workshop taught by Yoshito Ohno. The experience was amazing and life-changing for me in artistic terms. I felt sensations that I have not explored before and it opened my eyes to new artistic and creative pathways of discovery. I left deeply inspired and a small step closer to discovering my inner self.!

The evening performances showcased a broad spectrum of dance in style, age and ability. I performed a solo on the final evening. I had prepared something ahead of time but chose to develop it there as a result of all that I had been learning and experiencing. I did not achieve what I wanted with my performance that evening. On reflection, however, I take some comfort in recognising a shift that is taking place within me. I now have a clearer idea of where I want to go artistically. The opportunity has allowed me to search and question my own artistic voice and I feel as a result that I am a step closer to discovering it. It has been a major insight for me artistically and am so grateful to LUTSF for affording me this opportunity to grow. !

Over the duration of the Congress, I met some lovely people, some of whom have become friends and others with whom I engaged briefly in some interesting and in depth discussions about teaching, performing, choreographing and what it is to dance. A beautiful aspect of the event was meeting and mixing with people from different countries and styles, all sharing a common passion for dance. It was an eye opener and inspiring to see the endless possibilities of fusing dance styles! !

Being in Japan inspired reflection on similarities and comparisons between the East and West. It occurred to me while I was there that I have in fact been wrestling with making sense of a direction forward as a contemporary dance practitioner in terms of what to hang on to and what to leave behind. As a technique teacher I am continually questioning the approach and styles we currently use and to what purpose. Fortunately, in a country such as Japan that epitomises and embraces both traditional values and the ultra-modern, I began to understand perhaps how both can co-exist. It made me really appreciate the value of bringing some of the traditions of contemporary dance forward in conjunction with new approaches in an effort to evolve, develop and reflect its' namesake; contemporary.!

I felt a strong artistic connection to the representatives from the dance community in Japan. I have been invited back to teach class at Erika Akoh Dance Company, to create work for the company and to perform at the Kala Ghoda Festival in Mumbai, India in February 2015. I have also been invited to teach at Dance Area Studios in Geneva next season. Other highlights of the trip include phenomenal site-seeing opportunities to explore a rich and unique culture including temples, shrines and cuisine in a country that warmly welcomes its' visitors. !

I am entirely grateful to LUTSF for awarding me the opportunity to experience, reflect, develop, grow and be inspired from this event and the wonderful people I met in Japan. !

Arigato gozaimas.!

