

Dance at Dusk

9—11 June 2023, 6:30PM & 8PM



contSet
CONTEMPORARY DANCE FESTIVAL

Message from Festival Director

KUIK SWEE BOON

This year, contact Contemporary Dance Festival returns to the body as a starting point, examining facets of our relationships with our society, culture, environment and nation through the embodied lens of dance. Amidst a heady mix of power, taboos, and chaos, our Festival artists take on the bold challenge of reimagining the possibilities of dance, and the multitudinous self.

This Festival edition features a lineup that is more streamlined in comparison to previous years, but with a greater focus on the precision demanded from the body as a vehicle of expression.

In turn, there are also more classes and workshops on offer, packed with a rich breadth of movement approaches, perspectives, and ideas from all over the world. We hope that this edition offers a reminder on the importance of honing and tuning the instrument that is the body, and the irreplaceable nature of physicality and presence in dance and in performance.

We look forward to your support and participation; we'll see you at the Festival!



Gear

By Mikiko Kawamura

A creation for T.H.E Second Company, choreographer Mikiko Kawamura creates a textured interplay of sound and movement — formed entirely of each dancer. Recorded vocals form the ‘music’ score, amplifying each performer’s unique rhythm and frequency as they pulse and flow. (The commission of *Gear* was collaboratively supported by cont-act Contemporary Dance Festival and Yokohama Dance Collection in 2015.)

Choreographer’s Note:

In 2015, I choreographed *Gear* with a theme inspired by the industrial society. As a result, the dancers were designed to resemble factory workers, and their costumes were intentionally made to look dirty.

As of 2023, I want to showcase a world of cyber, AI, and virtual reality in *Gear*. I would like each dancer to embody the image of an avatar in a metaverse.



Photo by Robin Chee



Photo by Malcolm Fu

Playing Stone

By Ji Kyungmin

When I look at the picturesque sky, the deep blue sea, birds flocking in a V formation and the vibrant trees, to me, the word “natural” seems so artificial. In fact, children’s drawings of cute clouds and colourful flowers planted in a line appear to be a more accurate representation of what my perceived notion of “nature” really is. And I, as a human being, desire to be part of this nature.

Trees and rocks which form the beautiful landscapes we see can easily be destroyed by the wind and the rain. Yet, they are unable to grasp the concept of what it means to give up. I wonder: will they ever have moments of struggle, and do they strive for their own survival?

When I tried to look for the smallest, yet closest form of nature to embody — something that might resemble a blue sea and some swaying flowers, or even represent the countless hardships of life that nature has to go through — I chose a stone.

With my dancers, we create rough geometric shapes with our bodies, moving in uncomfortable directions. As stones that refuse to roll in a straight line, we bounce in various ways and reflect the larger surrounding nature. With our breaths, we imitate the wind that blows from afar. Using our limbs, we mirror the swaying branches of a tree. As we embrace one another and roll, we move like rustling leaves.

Gathering as a pile of small stones, we yearn to form a larger natural entity. We play a game, rolling from the highest point and competing with one another to see who goes farther. We observe our own “stone shapes” and calculate the angle of rake and the width of the road, before aiming to roll in our own trajectories. Will we fall into the hands of children and end up turning into muddy stones on bumpy ground?

The stage is our slide today. As we embody rolling stones, we clap and cheer ourselves on. Will we ever grow into a beautiful fruit, borne through a hard season?

As It Fades

By Kuik Swee Boon

Originally created and commissioned for Singapore Arts Festival 2011, *As It Fades* was re-created in 2014 at the SOTA Drama Theatre, featuring music by award-winning sound artist Bani Haykal in collaboration with Guzheng artist Natalie Tse.

Seeded in the Singapore Arts Festival 2011 theme, 'I Want To Remember', *As It Fades* is Kuik's homage to Asian traditions and their fading presence in our lives. Central to the performance is the use of Hainanese and various folk tunes, and the reflection of personal stories and life experiences from the performers, a powerful trigger of personal and collective memory encompassing culture, heritage and environment on the societal and individual level. These are important as they reconnect us to our roots and to gaps in our past, especially when we don't have any capacity to remember.

As It Fades further draws upon dialects, folk songs and memories of our dancers and their parents to create a piece of work that speaks with an emotionally charged language; one that is lost, forgotten and buried deep within our bodies. Its dance vocabulary reflects Kuik's view of the relationship between modern man and traditional culture; that is, a fragmented and incomplete understanding towards the latter, giving rise to the work's Mandarin subtitle 《破碎与扭曲》 – literally translating to 'broken and twisted'.

Akin to triggering something so deep within us that was once there, *As It Fades* holds on to memory fragments whether real or imagined, in an urgent call to record, to document and to reconnect with ourselves long forgotten.



Photo by Bernie Ng

Mikiko Kawamura (Japan)

Gear Choreographer

First exposed to street dance at age sixteen, Mikiko Kawamura majored in dance at the Japan Women's College of Physical Education, and began her professional choreographic journey in 2011. Once described as a dance enfant terrible who had fallen to Earth from a faraway planet, Mikiko works widely, not only in theatres but also for outdoor live events, music sessions, musical storytelling, video, music composition, and handmade crafts. She is a 2013–2016 Junior Fellow at the Saison Foundation. Her solo work, *Alphard*, premiered at Yokohama Dance Collection EX 2012, and has been presented at numerous festivals in Japan, Poland, Croatia, Vietnam, the United States, France, and Canada. Her awards include the Outstanding New Artist Prize at Yokohama Dance Collection EX 2011; the Next Generation Choreographer Award and Audience Award at the Toyota Choreography Award in 2014, and the Jury prize and The French Embassy Prize for Young Choreographer at Yokohama Dance Collection EX 2015, all for her work *Inner Mommy*. Her works begin with a vision, which she then consistently transforms into a staged reality. Comprehensively authoring music, lights and visuals, Mikiko combines these with accurate planning of her own choreography. She describes her dance as an attempt to express parallel worlds – the constellations of never used alternatives, which often go unnoticed.



Jack Ng (Singapore)

Gear Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Jack has been dancing since 2008, training mainly in contemporary dance and Chinese dance. He has performed with semi-professional companies such as Dance Horizon Troupe, Singapore and joined T.H.E Second Company in 2017, participating in multiple productions over the years. Jack actively seeks out new ways to expand his dance vocabulary and has recently branched out into cross-disciplinary work such as dance films and performances involving live music, spoken word, dance, and live media.



Marina Edana Idris (Indonesia/Singapore)
Gear Performer; T.H.E Second Company
Dance Artist

Born in Jakarta, Indonesia, Marina started dancing ballet at the age of 4. In 2011, she decided to pursue a full-time dance education at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), where she worked with choreographers Osman Abdul Hamid, Wallie Wolfgruber, Filomar Tariao, and Lee Ren Xin for NAFA's *The Third Space* and *Crossings* performances productions. Marina joined T.H.E Second Company in 2013 and has danced in liTHE, cont:act Contemporary Dance Festival's Asian Festivals Exchange platform, and the Singapore Chinese Cultural Centre's inaugural *Extravaganza*, performing in Associate Artistic Director Silvia Yong's creation. In 2018, she was invited to SIDance in Seoul, South Korea, to perform *The Seasons*, choreographed by Kim Bora, which premiered at the Asian Festival Exchange in the same year.



Natasha Neo (Singapore)
Gear Performer; T.H.E Second Company
Dance Artist

Natasha started dancing at the age of 13 with Dance Horizon Troupe, Singapore during her years at River Valley High School. Upon graduation from the Integrated Program, she pursued her passion at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), where she had the opportunity to work with local and international choreographers. During her studies at NAFA, she worked closely with John Mead Dance Company, Paragraph and Re:Dance Theatre II.

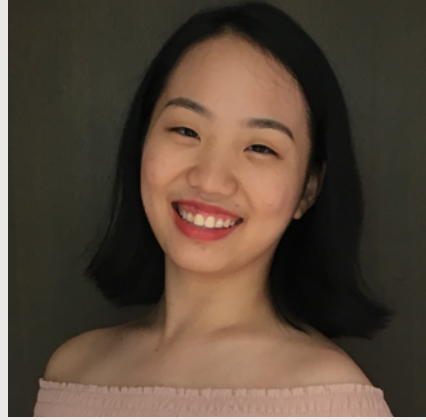


In March 2016, she travelled to New York City under the International Visa Program by Peridance Center, where she completed a three-month course. Through performance and teaching, she hopes to share her love for dance and impact lives with her art. She is currently an artiste with the Music and Drama Company as well as a Dance Artist with T.H.E Second Company.

Vera Chiew (Singapore)

Gear Performer; T.H.E Second Company
Dance Artist

Vera first ventured into the arts through ballet under Ms Lovell Chia and Cheng Ballet Academy, competing in various ballet competitions. Her time in the School of the Arts (SOTA) allowed her to experiment with other dance forms including contemporary, jazz and tap. Vera has worked with many choreographers and dancers, including Silvia Yong, Ryan Tan, Jeffrey Tan, Jacinta Walsh and Heather Myers. She has since continued her training and exploration in NUS Dance Synergy under Yarra Iletto and Albert Tiong. In 2017, Vera joined T.H.E Second Company, performing in various editions of liTHE and Co.Lab.Asians (2019).



Stefanie Teo (Malaysia/Singapore)

Gear Performer; T.H.E Second Company
Apprentice

Stefanie Teo began her dance journey at the age of 4 with the Royal Academy of Dance ballet syllabus. She has since been involved in various youth dance groups, receiving the tutelage of Melissa Ng, Fiona Thng, and Zaini Mohd Tahir.

Stefanie holds a Diploma in Dance from LASALLE College of the Arts, and has had the opportunity to work with renowned choreographers such as Eisa Jocson, Ery Mefri, Rachel Lopez de la Nieta, Kuik Swee Boon, Dapheny Chen, Susan Yeung, Susan Sentler, Bernice Lee and Jenny Neo. She was the recipient of the Wu Peihui Dance Award for the 2019/2020 academic year, and joined T.H.E Dance Company's Training Initiative in 2021.



She is currently experimenting with various dance methodologies to further develop her movement articulation and embodiment.

Ji Kyungmin (South Korea)

Playing Stone Choreographer

Ji Kyungmin graduated from Chung-Ang University, majoring in Contemporary Dance and Dance Education in the Graduate School of Education. In 2007, Kyungmin founded Goblin Party, a choreographer's collective in Korea, and has been actively performing pieces all around the world since then. In 2011, and 2012, he was selected as the Rising Star by the Korea Performing Arts Centre. He won the best prize for the AK21 at Busan International Dance Festival with his piece *Human's Empire*. He also worked with choreographer Idit Herman from Israel's Clipa Theater, Danish choreographer Martin Forsberg in *Fors Works*, and many other renowned artists. With his latest solo piece, *SHYNESS*, Kyungmin won his first Jury Prize in the Solo Contest at MASDANZA in 2017. *Once Upon A Time*, another well-received work by Kyungmin, received the Excellent Artwork for Dance Creation award by the Korea Arts Council in 2016, and was selected as one of the Best Five Artworks of the Year by the Korea Dance Critics Association the same year. After his appearance at Aerowaves with his co-choreographed piece *Silver Knife*, Goblin Party has been invited to more than 10 overseas festivals in 2019 and 2020 alone.



Joanna Oh (Singapore)

Playing Stone Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Joanna began her dance training in classical ballet with the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus. She went on to pursue a Diploma in Dance at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts. She has danced in works choreographed by Larry Clark, Wallie Wolfruber, Natalie Maria Clark and Ji Kyungmin. As a member of T.H.E Second Company, she has performed at various platforms, including the Asian Festivals Exchange (2018) and Co.Lab.Asians (2019).



Kimberly Long (Singapore)

Playing Stone Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Kimberly started off with ballet at the age of 6. In 2016, she graduated from School of the Arts with an International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma. Kimberly completed her BA(Hons) Dance Degree at LASALLE College of the Arts in 2019.

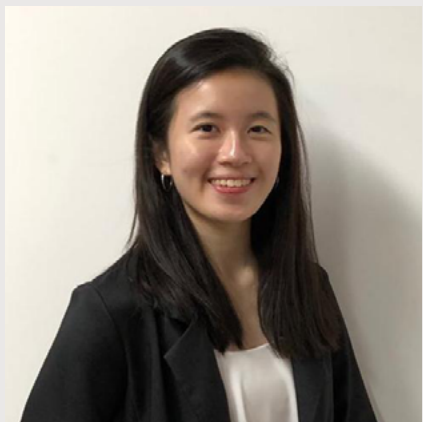
Her passion to nurture the youth led her to start her journey as an instructor with Jete Dance Studio. She also became a Dance Artist with T.H.E Second Company to continuously develop herself as an artist. Kimberly has a strong desire to develop her dance pedagogy and style that focuses on fluidity in movements. She hopes to continue carving her path as a dance artist through working with various artists in a deeper, multi-layered artistic voice.



Lee Say Hua (Singapore)

Playing Stone Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Say Hua started ballet when she was young, and trained in the Royal Academy of Dance syllabus. She was introduced to modern dance in Meridian Junior College where she took up dance as her Co-Curricular Activity. With an intention to explore contemporary dance more, she joined the Nanyang Technological University's Contemp{minated} at university. It was there that she learned more about contemporary dance and was exposed to various techniques and styles; mainly through the guidance of nurturing instructors and guest choreographers. She joined T.H.E Second Company in 2017.



Maybelle Lek (Singapore)

Playing Stone Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Maybelle Lek is a multifaceted movement artist. She pursued her training at School of the Arts and Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance. Maybelle is a recipient of the Linbury Trust Bursary Award in 2016. She graduated in November 2017 with a Distinction in her Master's Degree, and has performed with Moving Visions, VERVE and Rambert Dance Company, to name a few. In total, she has performed in over 30 venues and worked with 13 choreographers from the UK, EU and Singapore. The work Maybelle does includes teaching, choreography and inter-disciplinary collaborations. She joined T.H.E Second Company in August 2018. Since then, she has danced in liTHE 2018 and 2022, and in the 2019 and 2021 editions of cont-act Contemporary Dance Festival.



Zeng Yu (Singapore)

Playing Stone Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Zeng Yu first trained in rhythmic gymnastics during her secondary school days and was introduced to contemporary dance when she joined the NUS Dance Ensemble back in 2011. She joined T.H.E Second Company in 2015, and has since worked with choreographers including Sebastien Ledig, Anna Borrás, Albert Tiong, Bora Kim, Ji Kyungmin, Anthea Seah, Marcus Foo, Nah Jieying, Maybelle Lek and Goh Jiayin.



Kuik Swee Boon (Singapore/Malaysia)
As It Fades Choreographer

Founding Artistic Director and Main Choreographer of T.H.E Dance Company (est. 2008) and its annual contact Contemporary Dance Festival (est. 2010), Kuik Swee Boon danced in Compañía Nacional de Danza (CND) from 2002–2007, performing in works by renowned choreographers such as Nacho Duato, Jiri Kylian, and Ohad Naharin. Prior to CND, he danced in Singapore People's Association Dance Company and Singapore Dance Theatre. A 2007 Young Artist Award recipient, he was nominated for the Benois De La Danse Award in 2003, and selected for the 2021–2023 Fellowship Programme with the International Society for the Performing Arts (ISPA).



Under Swee Boon's direction, T.H.E has become a seminal dance company that trains in his HollowBody methodology, with a repertoire of works that has toured many international festivals. Even when the pandemic hit, his 360° virtual reality adaptation of *PheNoumenon* (2019), amongst other digital projects, made its rounds to Italy and Israel in 2021. Most recently, he was commissioned by Esplanade's da:ns festival 2022 to create *Infinitely Closer* (2022), which also marked the opening of the new Singtel Waterfront Theatre.

Amanda Koh (Singapore)
As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second Company Dance Artist

Amanda began her dance journey at the age of 15, coming from a gymnastics background. Under the tutelage of Wong Liang Pei and Dan Kwoh, she established her foundation in contemporary dance, clinching several solo and group placings at Commonwealth Society of Teachers of Dancing competitions. She was also the Modern Division Head at the Hwa Chong Music and Dance Society, choreographing for and performing in various school-wide events.



Fuelled by a passion for contemporary dance, Amanda joined M1-Frontier Danceland's Pulse Programme from 2018 to 2019 and worked with choreographers Faye Tan, Samantha Yue and Chew Shaw En. As a member of NUS Dance Synergy, and ex-President of NUS Dance Blast!, Amanda is keen to develop versatility in her movement and explore the confluence of street and contemporary dance. In 2022, she joined T.H.E Second Company to continue this journey of discovery.

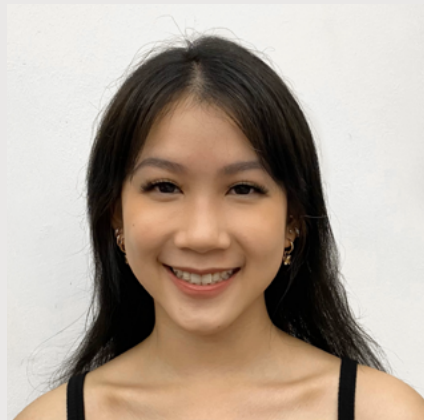
Chen Chi (Taiwan/Singapore)
As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second
Company Apprentice

Hailing from Taiwan, Chen Chi started her training in classical ballet, contemporary and Chinese dance at the age of 9 through dance classes conducted at her elementary school. Inspired by her experiences in competitions abroad, Chen Chi strove to pursue a vocational dance education abroad. Chen Chi was a handpicked recipient for the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Talent Development Programme in 2021, and has been actively involved in productions including *The Third Space*, *Crossings* and *Dancers@Work* since then. Chen Chi has also collaborated with many reputable choreographers, such as Dr. Filomar Cortezano Tariao, Shahrin Johry, Hsu Yaoyi, Shen Yi-Wen, Yu Chien-Hung, and Chien Hua-Bao.



Cherie Genevieve Wong (Singapore)
As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second
Company Apprentice

Cherie is an aspiring dancer in her 3rd year of the Diploma in Dance programme at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA). Prior to joining NAFA in January 2021, she studied at School of the Arts from 2016 to 2019 and was accepted to the New Zealand School of Dance at the end of 2019, although the pandemic forced her withdrawal in 2020. Since enrolling in NAFA, she has been under the tutelage of Adele Goh, Dr Filomar Cortezano Tariao, Qi Huan, Goh Shou Yi and many others. She has performed in works by Jenny Neo and Gillian Tan in *Crossings 2021*, Dan Kwoh's *Grief in Third Space 2021*, as well as Kuik Swee Boon's *As it Fades* (excerpt) in *Crossings 2022*. She is currently part of the teaching faculty at DANSTUDIO.



Grace Lim (Singapore)

As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second Company Apprentice

Grace began her journey with dance at the age of 5. She studied at School of The Arts (SOTA) where she completed the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme in 2016, during which she also had the opportunity to attend the Alvin Ailey Professional Division Summer Intensive in New York. In 2021, Grace completed a BFA (Hons) in Dance with First Class Honors at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA).



During her studies at HKAPA, Grace was awarded multiple scholarships including the HKAPA Student Awards - Schools' Outstanding Student Award (Dance) in her 3rd year. She has worked with international choreographers, including Anh Ngoc Nguyen, Yuri Ng, Corey Baker and Zoltán Fodor, and has also represented the school on tour to China for an exchange with Guangzhou University's School of Music and Dance. Despite being a Ballet major, Grace has had numerous opportunities to be exposed to different genres of dance and enjoys exploring movement with no boundaries.

James Wong (Singapore)

As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second Company Apprentice

James' passion for dance started when he entered Ngee Ann Polytechnic (NP). He received training in various movement genres including Hip Hop, Breaking, Contemporary, and Acro Yoga. He has a great interest in choreography as well as in inspiring the younger generations, and has choreographed for NP dance club D3's numerous performance opportunities. He has also sent teams to various street and commercial dance competitions.



He finds that being able to dance is a form of freedom, whereas being good at it is a form of commitment. To enhance his skills, he competed in various dance competitions such as Super24, The Royal Dance-Off (Duet), Paradigm Shift (All-Style-Battle), D:2 Dance Chingay Competition and Get The Beat 2022. Through these, he had the chance to interact and exchange ideas with like-minded peers, contributing to his belief that dance not only shapes you as a dancer, but also as a person.

Joseph Chua (Singapore)

As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second Company Apprentice

Joseph Chua's strong passion for contemporary dance began at Ang Mo Kio Secondary School under the mentorship of Jesper Tan. His time there motivated him to attain his Royal Ballet Academy (RAD) ballet training, and he joined T.H.E Second Company from 2015 to 2017 to refine his craft. Upon completing his national service, he went on to receive full-time pre-professional training at Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, gaining rich performing experiences such as performing for Eileih Muir from Studio Wayne McGregor. He has also been given opportunities to choreograph, including for Phenomenal III at the Esplanade Library. Having experienced working with international and local dance artists, he is now a contemporary dance instructor at various local dance studios.



Sophie Lim Yann Yu (Singapore)

As It Fades Performer; T.H.E Second Company Apprentice

Sophie started training from a young age in ballet, modern jazz and tap. She began pre-professional training in ballet and contemporary dance at School of the Arts before enrolling in Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts (NAFA), where she was consistently on the Dean's List and placed on the Talent Development Programme. She now holds a Diploma in Dance (Distinction).



Sophie has worked with numerous choreographers including Kuik Swee Boon, Dan Kwoh, Son Yu Joung, Christina Chan, Adele Goh and Jeffrey Tan. She was a member of TRDO 2nd Company, and won the Grand Prix in the contemporary solo category at the Masterpiece International Ballet Competition 2022.

Presently, Sophie is a dance practitioner, teacher, choreographer; Programme Executive at DANSTUDIO and a Co-Curricular Activity (Dance) assistant teacher. She is also a certified teacher of Progressing Contemporary Technique. Sophie hopes to impart to her students proper technique in contemporary dance and inspire in them a love and appreciation for the art form.

Top: Photo by TanTanPhotography
Bottom: Photo provided by the artist

Acknowledgements

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Visit our front-of-house desk at any of our festival’s events and let us know that you’d like to make a cash donation.

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This is an online platform by the National Volunteer & Philanthropy Centre (NVPC), backed by the Ministry of Culture, Community & Youth (MCCY). Choose to make either a one-time or a monthly donation, or champion our cause by creating a new fundraising campaign for us!

By making a donation, you are helping us to develop an annual contemporary dance festival in Singapore that:

- inspires our festival-goers, and the wider community and public
- exposes both the amateur and professional dancer to a range of classes, workshops, and approaches to movement
- responds to the realities of today’s world through programming unique, diverse and pertinent artistic voices and expressions of the body

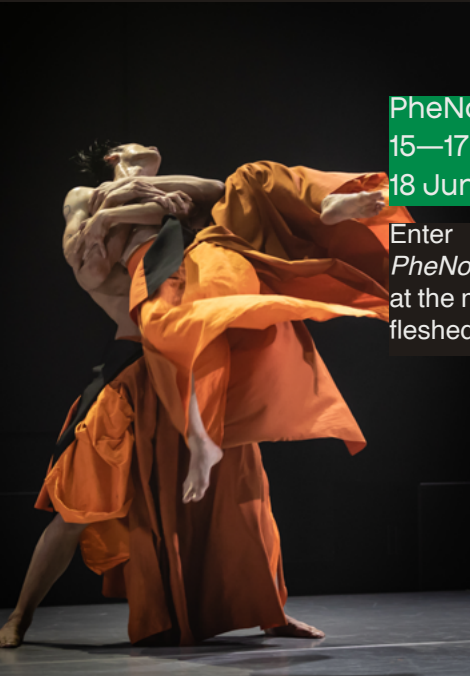
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Please write to us at festival@the-dancecompany.com if:

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Upcoming Shows



PheNoumenon
15—17 June, 8PM
18 June, 4PM

Enter an imploding world of our fractured present: *PheNoumenon* by T.H.E Dance Company is a deep look at the modern being's relationship with all that is around, fleshed out with a pulsating, primal movement score.



Open Stage

Programme A: 23 June, 8PM; 24 June, 3PM

Programme B: 24 June, 8PM; 25 June, 3PM

7 works, spread over 2 programmes, present a snapshot of the wide, wide world of contemporary dance. Join these exciting, eclectic artists from Southeast Asia and beyond in tender, playful conversations on our world at large.

Top: Original photo by Bernie Ng
Bottom: Original photo by Paul Sixta

Upcoming Classes

Groove in Articulation by Haruka Chan (Singapore)

Intermediate I 10 June, 12—1:30PM

Come groove and indulge in funky music as we dive into improvisational tasks that emphasise on the torso, arms, and hands, then focus on refining articulation in the body and exploring how groove can be found within awkward movements. Expanding on these, we will then proceed to learn a short movement phrase. Come with an open heart and mind!

Strength in Fluidity by Klievert Jon Mendoza (Philippines/Singapore)

Advanced I 11 June, 10—11:30AM

Harnessing an inner strength, find the quiet power coursing through the soft flow of the body.

Interpreting the “Human” Creature by Reisa Shimojima (Japan)

All I 18 June, 10—11:30AM

Our bodies are always thinking. Our bodies know more than our brains. And sometimes, our bodies cause “errors” that cannot be grasped by logic. Here, we dance not to dance, but to interpret our individual yet collectively human realities and psyches. With movement as method and medium, we ask: what kind of creature is a human being?



[Link to Peatix for tickets and class bookings](#)

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T.H.E Dance Company is supported by the National Arts Council under the Major Company Scheme for the period of 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2026.

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