

Danny Yung receiving the Fukuoka Prize - Arts and Culture Prize at its award ceremony (Photo courtesy: The Organiser of the Fukuoka Prize)



Experimental Art Transregional Big Bang

Kan Tai-keung Chairperson of Board of Directors

The year 2014/15 was one of bountiful returns for Zuni Icosahedron in international cultural exchange. Danny Yung won the distinguished Fukuoka Prize - Arts and Culture Prize 2014 (Japan) in recognition of his contributions to the international arts and cultural domains and cross-regional and cross-disciplinary creative achievements.

The Prize's past awardees include renowned artists and scholars such as Ba Jin, Mo Yan, Akira Kurosawa and Ju Ming who made outstanding contributions to the preservation and development of the unique and diverse arts and culture of Asia.

Zuni received invitations from a number of international arts festivals during the year including the presentation of *Eighteen Springs* at Macao Arts Festival and later at Shanghai Culture Square; *Contempt 2014* in Yokohama; *1587, A Year of No Significance* at Wuzhen Theatre Festival; the third Toki International Arts Festival in Nanjing. Danny Yung was commissioned by the Smithsonian Folklife Festival (US) to create a broad-scale installation *Tian Tian Xiang Shang Gateway - Flower Plaque Installation* on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., showing to the world the traditional Chinese stage art installation. Mathias Woo was invited to participate in IETM Asian Satellite Meeting at Arts Centre Melbourne. Altogether Zuni visited 17 cities: Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, Wuzhen, Macau, Guiyang, Kunming, Jinan and Shenzhen in China, Taipei and Taichung in Taiwan, Fukuoka and Yokohama in Japan, Melbourne in Australia, and San Francisco, New York and Washington D.C. in the US. During the visits, performances, lectures, workshops, exhibitions, training and exchange were organised promoting of experimental theatre and arts with unique Hong Kong characteristics.

Locally Zuni completed its sixth year as the Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre. A total of seven theatre productions were created for the theatre season Theatre Big Bang: Danny Yung's two new works *Contempt 2014* and *Memorandum*; Mathias Woo's newly

created *East Wing West Wing - Find Ghost Do The CE*, and *Red Rose, White Rose*, a piece co-written with Pia Ho, and the premiere of multimedia dance theatre *Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow*; a commissioned work of Dick Wong and King Liang entitled *0/2*; and Gayamyan Sings *Hong Kong Song Book - Little Rascals* Night Club. More than 400 sessions related to activities of arts education and promotion were held at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre covering professional theatre practicum, guided viewing, performance demonstration, exhibition, workshop, and so on. The innovative Suspended Ticket scheme was launched to capture new audiences and expand the mode of donation. Zuni also worked with Arts with the Disabled Association Hong Kong and made many new attempts to set up performances accessible to the visually impaired.

At the same time we keep a tenacious grip on the concern for local arts and cultural ecology. As a local professional arts group, we are highly concerned about the construction of the West Kowloon Cultural District which will have a deep impact on our long-term development as well as those of the related local industries. Since December 2014, we have repeatedly written to the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority to express our concerns and make suggestions regarding the West Kowloon Cultural District development in terms of project management, cost control, arts positioning and business model, local talent development, and so on. We hope that, by doing so, the Government would review the policies, and adopt advice from professionals among the public so as to enhance the long-term development of Hong Kong as a regional cultural hub, an international art and cultural metropolis.

Zuni Galloping Across Regions in Year of the Horse

Special Report

Zuni is dedicated to promoting cross-cultural, cross-regional cooperation and international cultural exchange so that creative people of different cities can further establish city-to-city cultural networks, and in order to gradually strengthen Hong Kong's international role as a cultural exchange hub for neighbouring cities in the region.

In 2014, Danny Yung won the distinguished Fukuoka Prize - Arts and Culture Prize 2014 (Japan) in recognition of his contributions to the international arts and cultural domains with his cross-regional and cross-disciplinary creative achievements.

Cross-regional and cross-disciplinary creative contributions

According to the Fukuoka Prize Committee: "(Danny Yung's) contribution has been crucial to the development of Asian arts and culture... For his outstanding contribution not only to the fields of art and performing art but also across a diverse range of cultural activities..."

In September 2014, at the

Fukuoka Prize Award Ceremony, Danny Yung stressed that Hong Kong is the soft power of China. Unleashing the creative power of Hong Kong is the foremost important task in strengthening Hong Kong as China's soft power. Yung attended a number of talks and lectures with various sectors during his stay in Japan.



Memorandum staged at Studio Theatre, Hong Kong Cultural Centre on 21-22 November 2014. (Photo by Yvonne Chan)

Memorandum Reflecting on Present and History

Memorandum was a conglomeration of literature, history, intangible cultural heritage and contemporary theatre. The presentation was divided into four parts of experimental short-pieces about "memory", with each part recalling an individual character - Kuo Pao Kun, the deceased playwright; Li Kai-xian, author of *Kunqu* opera *Flee By Night*; Cheng Yanqiu, the *Dan* (female roles) actor of Peking opera; and Mao Xidong, the deceased Chairman of China. Danny Yung gathered together artists from different disciplines and regions including Liu Xiaoyi (theatre), Steve Hui (aka Nerve) (music), Yang Yang (*Kunqu*), Zhu Hong (*Kunqu*), Tian Mansha (Sichuan opera), Cleo Song and Ellen Pau (Video). With the simple staging of One Table Two Chairs, the performance reflected upon our times through the histories of the characters.

Veteran theatre art critic Cheung Ping-kuen pointed out that the performance "is the embodiment of Danny Yung's style of crossover between the domains of the Individual and the Era: Contemporary and Traditional. Each of the four memorandum segments has its unique cultural significance, and each its own elegant style of expression."

The Toki Project Passing the Traditions Along

Initiated by Danny Yung, the Toki Project has been organised in the form of an arts festival held in Nanjing annually since 2012. The project

is co-organised by Zuni Icosahedron, Jiangsu Performing Arts Group Kun Opera House, Japan Foundation, Za-Koenji Public Theatre (Tokyo), Southeast University, Nanjing Normal University and Nanjing University of the Arts. The project helps promote the creative works of *Kunqu* opera and expand the horizon for its younger elites by bringing contemporary and traditional performing arts together with the goal of passing on traditions. Held in Nanjing on November 3-9, 2014, the Toki International Arts Festival 2014 drew the participation of young artists from various regions of Asia. According to a review in *Xinhua Daily*: "The greatest significance of experimental theatre is the development of the traditional through the experiments... Understanding of the features of many more different art forms has been made possible through the exchange in the past few years. Now we can think about what can be drawn as references for *Kunqu* opera. The stage has much more possibilities."



Contempt 2014, an experimenting traditional theatre work by Danny Yung, a collaboration with the young artists from Jiangsu Performing Arts Group Kun Opera House (Photo by Cheung Chi-wai)

Contempt 2014 - the First Ever Bold Crossover

In the same year, Danny Yung created and curated two experimental theatre projects. *Contempt 2014* challenged the timeless propositions between performers and audience, theatre and space, art and society. Nine young award-winning *Kunqu* opera artists from Jiangsu Province boldly infused issues of their concern into the time and space of theatre, which were developed into a theatre piece collectively created by both Chinese traditional and contemporary artists. The performance was staged at Grand Theatre of the

Hong Kong Cultural Centre on September 26-27, 2014 with music created by Pun Tak Shu and Steve Hui (aka Nerve). Following the premiere in Hong Kong, the team, led by Danny Yung, went to Japan to participate in the Yokohama Triennale 2014 by performing at BankART Studio NYK. A review by *Art Plus* gave this reflection: "In *Contempt 2014*, the audience gets to see how the young *Kunqu* opera artists contemplate on the world, and their formatted structure of life is stretched to an extremity."



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Commissioned by the Smithsonian Folklife Festival (US), *Gateway - Tian Tian Xiang Shang, A Flower Plaque Bamboo Installation* by Danny Yung was installed and displayed on the National Mall in Washington D.C. The work was constructed with 1,000 bamboo poles which integrated the southern China Lingnan tradition of the scaffolding craft of bamboo-theatre building with Hong Kong contemporary arts and its experimental dialectics, making substantial breakthrough in innovating and passing along the Intangible Cultural Heritage. > CREATIVE NOTES ON PAGE IV

Theatre Big Bang

The Big Bang is the beginning of everything; space, time, matter, and energy were thus born from that tiniest point.

The theatre of Zuni first started from an idea, and then new space and new time were created. From that experimental focal point, different media – light and sound, video and installation, as well as men – exploded and various possibilities were formed through the impacts of exchanges, and a collection of rich and colourful performances were evolved.

Theatre Big Bang is not purely an artistic pursuit, it also penetrates and sheds influence on multiple dimensions. New and burning stars are born on the social, political, aesthetic, cultural exchange and policy initiatives plains. These novae illuminate new lives, and enable the power of arts to spread to all directions.

This explosive power will continue to expand and spread far and wide.

Director's Note on *Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow*

Mathias Woo Zuni's Co-Artistic Director

1. AS: Time *Time is structure.*

If there is no time, there is no vanishing. Since there is time, there is past and future, and the concept of eternity arises. Is eternity the concept of Emptiness? Why 80 minutes long? Because the most efficient length of performance arising from stage set-up and rehearsal is 80 minutes. The length of time affects the possibility for expression. Why are advertisements usually 30 seconds long? Movie trailers two minutes long? Pop songs 3 to 5 minutes? Movies 90 minutes? I set 16 minutes for each unit. There are five 16-min units in total. These 16-min units each have their own time structure. The first 16-min unit is made up of sixteen 1-min parts; the second unit consists of eight 2-min parts; the third of four 4-min parts; the fourth of two 8-min parts; and the fifth of one 16-min part.

The length of time forms the structure of content. Time is structure. Sound and music are then developed within the time structure.

2. DREAM: Music *Music is content.*

The five units of music and sound are the contents that fill up the available time. What could a one-min piece of music be like? How many different lengths could ringtones on a cell phone be? Since the advent of computer, music creation has been given more possibilities. Timing has now become more precise. One minute is exactly 60 seconds. No more, no less. Computers and electronic synthesizers enable music to be recyclable and reusable. A tone can be stretched infinitely. One minute can become 10 minutes. A tone can then be repeated continuously and arranged randomly. The sound of space. The sound of emptiness. The sound of no-sound.

The no-sound guitar becomes guqin. No-sound. Sound that cannot be heard. Sound that feels. Sound without music. Music without sound.

3. ILLUSION: Image *Image is emotion.*

Movements are amplified into images: The body interacts with images. One and zero. With and without. Yes and no. Transcribing is an interaction between movement and image. With the hand holding the pen and the eyes scanning, the texts are written out stroke by stroke to form images. These images are then restructured and recycled for projection on stage.

Image of emptiness. Is the image of empty space the same as one of emptiness? Is a room that has been filled up the same as one of no-emptiness?

4. BUBBLE: Space *Space is form.*

The proscenium of the stage measures 16m wide x 9m high x 34m deep. On the stage there are 51 hanging bars that can move up and down. Two-thirds of them are computer-controlled. There are three lighting sources: from the stage floor, from both sides and from above. Different colours radiate from the lights – yellow and white. Space is divided by eight rectangular hanging walls. As the walls shift and lighting changes, different space is formed as a result.

The space of stage.
Let there be Light.
Space can only be seen with light.
Light becomes the form of space.
The form of space is images.

5. SHADOW: Movement *Movement is message.*

Standing still. A one-second movement. A one-minute movement. What can be expressed by them? Having transcribed the scripture and picked the cards, dancers then develop six 1-min movements, which are then transformed into a 1-min movement. Having selected some words and fragments from the *Diamond Sutra*, dancers then transform texts into movements; movements into images; images into emotions.

The Dream Team of "No"

(From our news desk) Invited and commissioned by the Taiwan International Festival of Arts 2014, Zuni Icosahedron and Dance Forum Taipei joined hands for the first time in the creation of multimedia dance theatre *Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow*, which staged at Grand Theatre of Hong Kong Cultural Centre on September 19-21, 2014. The performance concept originated from a line in the *Diamond Sutra* ("All conditioned phenomena are like dreams, illusions, bubbles, shadows"). With Ping Heng (founder of Dance Forum Taipei) as Artistic Director, Mathias Woo as choreographer and director who adopted the Means of No to create the aesthetics of Emptiness, Design for Asia Awards winner Ray Chen as stage designer, *Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow* is a musical dance journey fusing elements of electronics, images and sounds featuring "No-Music" by Hong Kong's composer Yu Yat-yiu@PMPS as music director, and singer-songwriter Ellen Joyce Loo, and "No-Dance" by the four great "warriors"

David Yeung, Dick Wong, Yuri Ng, Makoto Matsushima and dancers of Dance Forum Taipei. The show was highly commended by *Performing Arts Review* (Taiwan) as an engaging piece with an ingenious ending: "The group dance at the end is the most beautiful part of the entire performance. The dancers and their shadows, immersed in layers of lights, move quietly to explore the unknown source of lights hidden in the haze."



The performance was premiered in March 2014 at National Theatre in Taipei. (Photo by Wai Lok)



(Photo by Johnny Au)

History Theatre

OPENING 1st November at Wuzhen Festival 2014

1587, A Year of No Significance

Directed, Designed, the Script & Story by Mathias Woo

- ★ Adapted from the Book by Ray Huang
- ★ Cantonese Grand Theatre Version with Newly Arranged Kunqu Opera Excerpt
- ★ Rerun for 7 times Across the Strait Gaining Widespread Critical Acclaim
- ★ Six Characters in the Reign of Wanli of the Ming Dynasty
- ★ Six Dramatic Forms and Styles

Scriptwriter: Zhang Jianwei (Beijing)
Costume Design by William Chang
Music Director: Yu Yat-yiu@PMPS
Kunqu opera excerpt (Emperor Wanli): Zhang Hong (Nanjing)

With agreement and permission by Jefferson Huang



"A wonderful performance."
— Stan Lai

"A rich cautionary experimental theatre"
— Tsui Hark

"Accomplishment in all acting, script and directing."
— Tsim Tak Lung, Hong Kong Economic Journal

"This is a dramatic work with a simple structure and sophisticated content."
— Performing Arts Review (Taiwan)

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DANCE NEWS

ONE BLACK BOX TWO BODIES: 0/2

(From our news desk) thinking. The performance Xing Liang and Dick Wong was staged at Studio Theatre of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre on November 14-16, 2015. According to a commentary in *Ta Kung Pao*: "The show has no plot. Instead it uses the body and limbs to express concepts that are almost indescribable via language. When the narration gets emotional, there will always be movements. Movements of Xing Liang are naturally beautiful, whereas Dick Wong's intoxicated moves are like wind-swept bamboos, showing a well-mannered man at ease with himself."



(Photo by Pazu@kaleidoscope)

East Wing West Wing 11 Find Ghost Do the CE



3-19/10/2014 STUDIO THEATRE, Hong Kong Cultural Centre
Student Matinees collaborated with LCSD's Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students 2014/15

"Disentangled and pointed out the way forward for Hong Kong."
— Yazhou Zhoukan

Director, Scriptwriter & Designer: Mathias Woo
Music Director: Edgar Hung
Starring: Cedric Chan, Carson Chung, Carmen Wu, David Yeung

ZUNI INTERNATIONAL CULTURAL EXCHANGE
2014/15

BEIJING, CHINA
CONFERENCE The 5th Cross-Strait Summit Forum on Opera Scriptwriting: Symposium on the Origin and Status of Small Theatre of Chinese Opera
PERFORMANCE 319 • Looking Back at the Forbidden City Danny Yung as Creative Advisor at 2014 Xiqu Black Box Festival

FUKUOKA, JAPAN
AWARD 2014 Fukuoka Prize Award Ceremony and Public Lecture - Art and Culture Prize Laureate: Danny Yung

GUYANG, CHINA
STUDY TRIP on Guiyang Cultural Development

JINAN, CHINA
CONFERENCE Performing Arts Organisation Network Meeting for Mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Macau
STUDY TRIP on Regional Operas - Luqu, Liu Zi Xi

KUNMING, CHINA
EXCHANGE U40 Cultural Industries Summer School 2014 • Danny Yung as Creative Advisor

MACAU, CHINA
PERFORMANCE Mathias Woo's 18 Springs at the 25th Macao Arts Festival
STUDY TRIP on Macao Cultural Venues

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA
EXCHANGE Mathias Woo and Yu Yat Yiu, the invited artists at The Lab: an initiative of Arts Centre Melbourne's Asian Performing Arts Program
CONFERENCE IETM Asian Satellite

MILAN, ITALY
SHOWCASE Danny Yung's Tian Tian Xiang Shang in Hong Kong: Constant Change Exhibition, Milan Design Week 2014

NANJING, CHINA
CO-OP & EXCHANGE Toki International Arts Festival 2014
PERFORMANCE One Table Two Chairs Series
TALK (1) Experimenting Traditions - Journey of Crossovers
TALK (2) Relationships of the Traditional, Literary Theatre and their Contemporary Intersection

NEW YORK, U.S.
ON VISITING TOUR Danny Yung attended a welcome luncheon hosted by Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

SAN FRANCISCO, U.S.
ON VISITING TOUR Danny Yung attended a welcome reception hosted by Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office

SHANGHAI, CHINA
CONFERENCE The Third Annual Conference of the World Cultural Forum (Taihu, China)
PERFORMANCE Mathias Woo's 18 Springs at Shanghai Culture Square
EXCHANGE Danny Yung as Creative Advisor at The 16th China Shanghai International Arts Festival - Rising Artists Works Land (RAW!) Land
TRAINING Manager, Luka Wong was sent to Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre for exchange on Marketing & Audience Building

SHENZHEN, CHINA
EXCHANGE 2014 Shenzhen / Hong Kong Lifestyle Awards • Danny Yung, a Member of the Final Jury
CONFERENCE 2014 City-to-City Cultural Exchange Conference

TAICHUNG, TAIWAN
TALK Danny Yung at Dayeh University: Sharing on Culture and Creativity Around the World

TAIPEI, TAIWAN
CONFERENCE 2014 International Drama Conference: Cultivation and Innovation in Traditional Performing Arts Education
WORKSHOP Creative Workshop at Dance Forum Taipei

WASHINGTON D.C., U.S.
INSTALLATION GATEWAY - TIAN TIAN XIANG SHANG - A FLOWER PLAQUE BAMBOO INSTALLATION BY DANNY YUNG IN 2014 SMITHSONIAN FOLKLIFE FESTIVAL

WUZHEN, CHINA
PERFORMANCE Mathias Woo's 1587, A Year of No Significance at Wuzhen Theatre Festival 2014
TALK The Wuzhen Dialogues: (1) Traditional Asian Elements in Contemporary Theatre • (2) The Avant-garde View

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN
PERFORMANCE Danny Yung's Contempt 2014 in Yokohama Triennale 2014

Financial Digest

For the year ended 31 March 2015

Distribution of Income

Income	Total (HK\$)	% Over Total Income
Government Subvention for the Year	11,495,614	58.6%
Box Office Income	1,907,230	9.7%
Revenues from Other Hired Engagements	3,554,869	18.1%
Donations and Sponsorship	2,127,092	10.9%
Other Income	528,158	2.7%
Total Income	19,612,963	100.0%

Distribution of Expenditure

Expenditure	Total (HK\$)	% Over Total Expenditure
Production Costs	9,738,397	50.3%
Personal Emoluments	7,601,898	39.2%
General Overheads and Others	1,721,428	8.9%
Special Expenditure	312,468	1.6%
Total Expenditure	19,374,191	100.0%

Distribution of Production Cost

Production Cost	Total (HK\$)	% Over Total Production Costs
Venue Rental	1,941,213	19.9%
Commission New Works, Artists and Direct Labour	2,964,013	30.4%
Set, Props and Production Miscellaneous	3,365,639	34.6%
Marketing and Public Relations	1,467,532	15.1%
Total Production Cost	9,738,397	100.0%

Extracted from Financial Statement audited by Patrick Wong C.P.A. Limited

Annual total remuneration of the administrative staff of the top three tiers for 2014-15

Annual total salaries (HK\$)	Above \$1,000,000	\$700,001 - \$1,000,000	\$400,001 - \$700,000	\$400,000 or below
Number of position(s)	0	1	2	4

HONG KONG SONG BOOK

7-12-2014
GRAND THEATRE, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

香港歌書
民流小
GAYAMYAN

Red and White Singing Contest
Passionate and Spotless

(From our news desk) "Suppose Red Rose and White Rose sing karaoke together, what would happen?" The beginning of Zuni's performance *Red Rose, White Rose* was The Red and White Karaoke Contest, reminiscent of Japan's modern television singing-contest. Characters are put in a totally new scenario transcending the confines of the original novel's historical background. Indeed theatrical adaptations of Eileen Chang's novels are endlessly possible!



(Photo by Cheung Chi Wai)

Staged at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre's Grand Theatre from November 28 to December 6, 2014, *Red Rose, White Rose* drew on

the creative skills of Mathias Woo as director, scriptwriter and designer and Pia Ho as co-scriptwriter; music director Yu Yat-yiu composed the theme song *The Other* with

vocals by famous pop-singer Eman Lam. The spotless wife White Rose and the passionate mistress Red Rose, marvellously played by Kao Jo-shan (Taipei) and You Mei (Shanghai) respectively, competed fiercely in the politics of love for a man played by Zuni's leading actor David Yeung. Professor Leo Ou-fan Lee, an authority on modern Chinese literature and Eileen Chang, gave great acclaim to the performance: "One singing; the other acting. A spectacular and highly creative performance. It's better than the movie version."

Education Programme & Public Events

EVENTS AT HK Cultural Centre

The Appreciation of Religious Music Series
2014.05.05/ 07.12/ 08.30



HKCC's 25th Anniversary Performances - Arts Connect Party at Cultural Centre
Hong Kong Song Book
2014.11.08

Pre & Post Performance Talks and Discussions at different performances

Thematic Exhibitions on **Contempt 2014** and **Dream Illusion Bubble Shadow**
2014.08.25 - 09.07

Fukuoka Prize Committee and Zuni Co-organised **Public Announcement and Reception for the Award of the Fukuoka Prize 2014, the Arts and Culture Prize to Danny Yung**
2014.07.23

SCHOOL Programmes

Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee) and Zuni Collaborated **Internship Programme Stage Tech Workshops and Talks**

Collaborate with LCSD's Arts Experience Scheme for Senior Secondary Students 2014/15
Student Matinees

Diocesan Boys' School **Kunqu Opera Workshop and Talk**
2014.09.22

Li Po Chun United World College of Hong Kong **Meet the Artists of Contempt 2014**
2014.12.05

OTHER EVENTS

Para Site International Conference 2014
2014.04.03-05

Guest Lecture at "Common Stage 14"
2014. 07.24

Kwang Hwa Information and Culture Centre and Zuni Co-present **The Power of Taiwan Dance 25 Years - The Arts Education Program and International Vision of Dance Forum Taipei**
2014.08.16



Guest Talks @ Zuni
Guest Speakers: Johnny Au, Wallace Chang, Joshua Kohl (San Francisco), Ermioni Dova, Vicky Kolovou and Eugenia Tzirtzilaki (Athens)

Tian Tian Xiang Shang Concept Store x CNEX **"Fish Story" Screenings**
2015.03.20

Tian Tian Xiang Shang Concept Store x Clifford Ma Floral Design **TTXS Creative Potted Plant Workshop**
2015.03.27

Eighteen Springs

"Eighteen Springs is a novel written for the stage, a stage that is built alive upon the novel."
Macao Daily News

"It is a marriage of traditional arts and modern stage production."
Hong Kong Economic Journal

"This touching performance is an achievement..."
Critic of Art

LOVE IS FLEETING AS TIME

TOUR May - June 2014 Macau ★ Shanghai

25th Macao Arts Festival
Shanghai Cultural Square & Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre Present

A Multimedia Music Theatre By Mathias Woo

Adapted from the Original Novel of the same title by Eileen Chang | Co-scriptwriter: Jimmy Ngai
Music Director / Composer: Yu Yat-yiu@PMPs | Special Appearance: Elaine Jin | Suzhou Pingtan (Tanci): Jin Lisheng, Yu Qun
Featuring: Zhang Qi, Shen Lei, Xu Manman, Xie Changying, He Yanqi, Jia Jinghui, He Bin
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Tian Tian Xiang Shang Gateway

Danny Yung Zuni's Co-Artistic Director

Everyone would agree that the four-character idiom is the essential step to understanding thousands of years of Chinese culture. Similarly, colloquialisms in Hong Kong provide a key to understanding Hong Kong culture. We often encounter two idioms in traditional tales – “look up to the sky as you conduct your life” and “carry out justice for the heavens”.

The culture of survival combining knowledge and implementation

My childish opinion was that the idiom “look up to the sky as you conduct your life” is to remind us to watch the weather forecast, as it can help us determine whether or not to carry an umbrella when we go out; perhaps I understood the sky to represent seasons, the sun, and rain, which predicts the yearly harvest.

therefore instigates the pessimistic, subjective view of fate and destiny, fostering rituals of praying and worshipping the higher power or superstitious beliefs in the spokesmen of gods and higher authorities, and such social phenomena. Yet folk wisdom is nevertheless profound and lasting. Through practice and experience, ordinary people began to analyze astronomy, geography, the seasons and climate.

Shang [make progress day after day] can also be just as objective as the Hong Kong colloquialism “things to know before entering the gateway” [getting started]; it can be just as dialectic and pragmatic. The installation I created for the Smithsonian Folklife Festival begins with the idea of “everyday progress” and “getting started.” My piece is a large-scale gate - basically constructed with bamboo poles - that is 35 metres broad, 10 metres high and 6 metres deep. With bamboo, I combine the technique of Hong Kong bamboo scaffolding and the craftsmanship of the flower plaque; I synthesize visual art and sound art that both build on the bamboo element.

and harder]. The second tier of text is filled with idioms and colloquialisms that begin with the word Tian. I selected sixteen phrases from the sixty-four idioms starting with the word Tian used in an idiom card game (“Heaven Knows” – a box of 64 cards) I created recently. These include “heaven kindly grants beautiful weather” (tian gong zuo mei), “a galloping heaven horse” (Tian Ma Xing Kong) [meaning infinitely imaginative or unrealistic], “Fair and square between heaven and earth” (Tian Gong Di Dao), “a habitat for mankind existing only in heaven” (Tian Shang Ren Jian), and so on.

Bold experimentations, open and limitless interactions

The traditional spirit of folk creative work in Hong Kong is rooted in bold experimentations, open and limitless interactions, collaborations and dialogues. Chinese traditional vernacular art similarly favors candidness and collaborative work, qualities of which is certainly a manifestation of contemporary concepts of dialogue and collaboration. To be honest, the inclusive and tolerant nature in Chinese folk art also embodies a tacit rebellion. And owing to this rebellious vitality, folk art gradually crystallizes into the unique vernacular wisdom we witness today.

Years ago, inspired by the saying Tian Tian Xiang Shang, I created this mouthless kid Tian Tian, which later developed into the statue that looks up and points to the sky. I see those who invented the pen, the ink, the paper, and such tools as creative individuals; those who curated gallery, museum, and festivals are certainly also creative individuals. Those who first started the work of cultural criticism and artistic innovation are surely cultural workers with vision and strategy.

Acknowledgements

Zuni Icosahedron is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

Donors and Sponsors

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- Zuni Icosahedron is a Venue Partner of the Hong Kong Cultural Centre
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Macao Arts Festival
Japan Foundation
Jiangsu Performing Arts Group Kun Opera House
National Theatre & Concert Hall (Taiwan)
New Vision Arts Festival
Shanghai Culture Square
Shanghai Dramatic Arts Centre
Shanghai Theatre Academy (Tian Mansha Xiqu Studio)
Theatre Practice
Za-Koenji Public Theatre
pentahotel Hong Kong, Kowloon
Higher Diploma in Audio-Visual Entertainment Technology (AVET), Department of Multimedia and Internet Technology, IVE (Lee Wai Lee)
Joint Publishing (H.K.)

Technique of Hong Kong bamboo scaffolding

I believe creative work could be objective. Similarly, the idiom Tian Tian Xiang

Congratulatory texts and greetings play an important part in traditional flower plaque. All the greetings I choose have to do with the character Tian - day, the sky, the heavens. The greeting shown in the largest font is Tian Tian Xiang Shang, Hao Hao Xue Xi [make progress day after day, study harder



Heaven Knows Card · Creator: Danny Yung



Advertisement for Zuni E+E Publications featuring a Santa Claus illustration and various products like Heaven Knows Card, Dream Bubble Shadow Illusion, and Diamond Sutra Card. Text: DON'T FORGET TO SEND YOUR CHRISTMAS GIFTS. Make your selections from Zuni E+E Publications.

Board of Directors (as at October 2015)

Table listing Board of Directors members including Chairperson Kan Tai Keung, Vice-chair Michael Lai, Secretary Leo Cheung and Glenis Wong*, Treasurer Jackie Tam, and various Members like Johnny Au, Jason Choi, Vivien Ku**, Ringo Lam, Lau Chin Shek, Stanley Wong, Anna Wu, Paul Yip, and Gabriel Yiu.

Artistic Advisory Committee

Table listing Artistic Advisory Committee members from various locations like Basel, Paris, New York, Taipei, Berlin, Munich, Tokyo, and Hong Kong, including Laura Berman, Tobias Biancone, Ping Chong, Rachel Cooper, Gao Xing-jian, Hsia Chu-joe, Hans-Georg Knopp, Lee Ou-fan Leo, Lin Zhao-hua, Dietmar Lufper, Johannes Odenthal, Makoto Sato, Tsai Ming-liang, Tadashi Uchino, and Yoshiko Chuma.

Staff (as at October 2015)

Table listing Staff members including Co-Artistic Director Danny Yung and Mathias Woo, Creative and Artistic Assistant Artistic Director Cedric Chan, Performer-in-Residence David Yeung, Artist-in-Residence Lai Tat Wing, Senior Researcher Theresa Leung, Creative Coordinator (Intangible Cultural Heritage) Danny Cheuk, Creative Coordinator (Performance) Peter Lee, Programme Manager Doris Kan, and Administration and Finance Company Manager Jacky Chan.

Zuni Icosahedron 2014/15 Annual Report

Graphic Design: Pollux Kwok | English Translation: Mo-yung Yuk Lin
Illustration & Graphics Contributors: Lai Tat Tai Wing, Liu Si, Dio Lau, LOL Design Ltd.

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