



NPN & Japan Contemporary Dance Network Announces First U.S. Tour

A Tokyo-based theatre known for its pop aesthetics and energetic groove will tour to three cities as the inaugural tour of NPN's US/Japan Connection, after two years of dialogue and seeing performances in the U.S. and across Japan and Korea. The Faifai theatre company will travel to Cedar Rapids, Houston and New Orleans between November 25 – December 15, 2013, to present Anton, Nero, Kuri. Renata Petroni's article includes a quick glimpse into the history of Yokohama, from fishing village to cultural capital, and an overview of contemporary performance in Japan.

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NPN to Partner with LINC with Funding from the Ford Foundation

Capitalizing on its expertise in managing multiple grant programs, NPN has been asked to administer US/LINKS, a program of travel and residency grants offered by two national organizations seeking to increase knowledge and opportunities for the free flow of artists and ideas.

Supporting Diverse Arts Spaces (SDAS), funded by the Ford Foundation, Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC)'s Space for Change organizations, and individual professional visual and performing U.S.-based artists supported or commissioned by these organizations may apply for the curatorial/research travel grants or 3-5 week Creative Exchange Residencies.

npnweb.org/partners/profiles/national-relationships/supporting-diverse-arts-spaces/uslinks/

NPN Receives NEA Art Works Support for National Dance Programs

NPN was recently renewed funding in the amount of \$60,000 from the National Endowment of the Arts to support NPN's dance programs. This funding will enable NPN to support NPN Partners, artists and communities through the Creation Fund, the Forth Fund, Performance Residencies, Freight Fund, Community Fund and Annual Meeting. Thank you NEA!

New Mentorship Leadership Initiative Awards more than \$30,000

Painted Bride in Philadelphia, PA received the Wesley V. Montgomery Award for Emerging Leaders of Color, with its project, "Extended Play," a hands-on mentorship program with staff member LaNeshe Miller and Executive Director Laurel Raczka, which includes developing new interactive programs for younger audiences. Other MLI awards include: Fusebox Festival in Austin TX; Out North, Anchorage AK; The Theater Offensive, Boston MA; the Wexner Center, Columbus OH; and Youth Speaks, San Francisco CA.



In addition to Painted Bride's award, other projects that were selected by the NPN staff include:

Fusebox Festival; Austin, TX

Title: Making Decisions & Communicating Change

Description: Artistic Director Ron Berry will work with mentor and consultant Dan Heath to define, analyze and communicate the rationale of major decisions about a proposed alternative financial model for Fusebox.

Out North; Anchorage, AK

Title: Immersion in Arts Midwest Conference & Texas Presenting Organizations

Description: Three Out North staff members will travel to Texas to attend the Arts Midwest Conference and to visit NPN Partner organizations Fusebox Festival (Austin) and DiverseWorks (Houston).

The Theater Offensive; Boston, MA

Title: Community Arts Organizing Mentorship

Description: The Theater Offensive's new Programs Administrator Kaamila Mohamed will engage in an extended skill and neighborhood relationship building process that focuses on community organizing and the skills, knowledge, and relationships specifically needed to engage Boston progressive communities of color in LGBT arts.

The Wexner Center; Columbus, OH

Title: Outreach to Local Artist Communities

Description: Sarah Swinford, performing arts program coordinator, will visit the three NPN Partners in Minneapolis to learn about their practices in program development, relationship development with local artists, and community outreach. The NPN Partners are Intermedia Arts, Pangea World Theater, and Walker Art Center.

Youth Speaks; San Francisco, CA

Title: Gaining Best Practices from the Field

Description: Brandon Santiago, Youth Speaks program associate and youngest full-time staff member, will attend the National Conference for Community Arts Education, the 2013 NPN Annual Meeting in New Orleans, and the Maui Arts and Cultural Center during an NPN Residency to develop networking skills and bring back best-practices models from the field in order to advance his work.

The Mentorship and Leadership Initiative, as part of the Community Fund, is made possible by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts, MetLife Foundation, and American Express.



MetLife Foundation



Doin' It on the Road Heads West to Seattle



NPN, together with the Network of Ensemble Theaters (NET), will be presenting NET'S "ABCs of Today's Touring Landscape" in Seattle at On the Boards, Tuesday, May 7, from 5-9 p.m. This workshop includes NPN's usual *Doin' It on the Road* as part of a larger conversation with individuals representing various aspects/ expertise of the touring ecology, curated by Mark Valdez of NET. The conversation will explore the nuances of touring (networking, what presenters do, how they make their choices, and other topics of mutual interest). Artists of all disciplines are welcome.

Register online at abctouringseattle.bpt.me
The registration fee of \$20 is subsidized by NPN.
Questions?
Contact EnsembleABCs@ensembletheaters.net
or call Park Cofield at 323-638-4870.



...and Speaking of the Network of Ensemble Theaters...

NET (ensembletheaters.net) invites you to join the "part-festival and part think-tank" of MicroFest USA. The June 13-18 National Summit and Learning Exchange in Hawaii will build upon the three prior MicroFests in Detroit, Appalachia and New Orleans over the past year. Registration is open now.

The Network of Ensemble Theaters (NET) hosts MicroFest USA in Honolulu; National Summit and Learning Exchange, June 13–18.

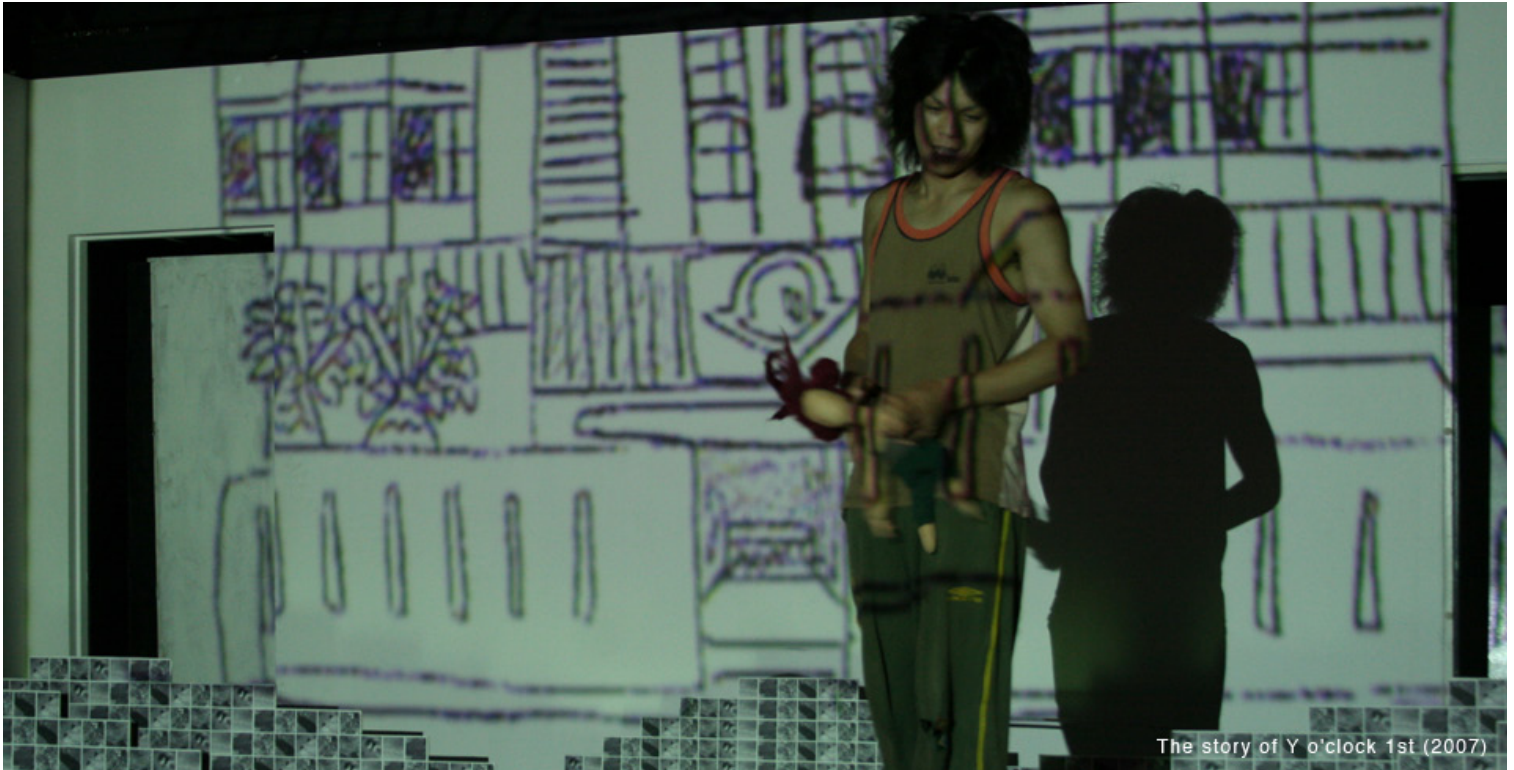
Sunrise and sunset performances, graffiti artists, stories of radical arts-based political action — the MicroFest is a journey across the island of Oahu. Beginning in Honolulu, NET will explore this urban environment, bridging the local and national through performances and conversations, ending with a group retreat to the rural North Shore for reflection and sharing.

This National Summit & Learning Exchange is the culmination of the MicroFest USA

series, asking: "How does art impact your community?" and bringing together local and national participants to share success stories, challenges, inspirations, and questions about art-based community development. We invite you to be a part of this national conversation about art-based community development. Read some of the case studies and reflections of the three MicroFests here: www.ensembletheaters.net/content/microfest-documentation-2012-2013

Registration is currently open and includes five days of housing, most meals, local ground transportation, and programming. Travel subsidies are available for NET members — Yes, you can join NET now and apply for the subsidy!

For questions contact: Ashley Sparks, MicroFest USA Event Coordinator at ashleyparkles@gmail.com.



Japan News

BY: Renata Petroni

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Two years into the *US/Japan Connection*, a project of NPN in partnership with the Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN), NPN and JCDN are looking forward to the first artistic exchange planned for FY14. This project is designed to develop opportunities through knowledge building and the creation of a strong network of connections. Japan's Faifai theatre company will come to the U.S. in the fall of 2013, touring to three NPN Partners. Anyone interested in receiving information on the company or in joining the tour, please contact Renata Petroni at renata@npnweb.org or (504) 717-5257

The tour will present *Anton, Nero, Kuri* originally created by Faifai's director Chiharu Shinoda in April 2009. Faifai (www.faifai.tv) is a Tokyo-based theater company established in 2004 known for their pop aesthetics, energetic groove, and experimental style that transcends the narrative boundaries of dramatic theater. They depict human relationships in today's complex society with humor and sensitivity. Though young, the company has come to the attention

of critics and presenters in Japan, Asia and Europe. Their multilingual piece *My Name is I LOVE YOU* was awarded the ZKB Patronage Prize at Zürcher Theater Spektakel, Switzerland. In the words of our colleague Jordan Peimer of Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles, "Language is of course an issue in performance, but the best work always transcends that. Especially exciting was Faifai's (Japanese for "Fun-Fun") work *Anton, Nero Kuri*. There were three simultaneous texts: a spoken one in Japanese, a movement score, and projected English translation which worked together in very different and exciting ways to portray a community in a housing block which comes together around a sick cat — improbable, but the most thoroughly charming work of the week."

Faifai will be presented by Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids, IA (November 25 – December 1, 2013); DiverseWorks, Houston, TX (December 2-8, 2013); and Contemporary Art Center (CAC), New Orleans, LA (December 9-15, 2013) in conjunction with the NPN Annual Meeting. The group was first seen by the group of U.S. curators (see below) in 2012.

This will be Faifai's first tour in the U.S. The ensemble will spend one week in each city where, in addition to public performances, they will conduct residency activities in local communities, ranging from workshops with children to lecture demonstrations and workshops for artists.

To develop connections, NPN's International Program supports trips to and from partner countries. Following the JCDN partners' trip to the NPN Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in December 2012, the U.S. curators traveled to Yokohama in February to attend T-PAM (Tokyo Performing Arts Meeting). The curators, from NPN Partner organizations, are Yolanda Cursach of MCA, Chicago; F. John Herbert of Legion Arts, Cedar Rapids; Sixto Wagan of DiverseWorks, Houston; and Dawnell Smith of Out North, Anchorage, accompanied by Renata Petroni, NPN International Program Director and Kyoko Yoshida, Executive Director of US/ Japan Cultural Trade Network and consultant to the Japan Connection project. They had multiple objectives: a working meeting with JCDN partners to discuss the selection of a U.S. artist who will conduct a month-long



anton neko kuri 2nd (2010)

residency at the Kyoto Art Center in FY14; participation in T-PAM sessions; seeing a wide range of performances; and a meeting with Faifai, to plan for their U.S. tour.

Presenters and artists from Asia, Europe and the U.S. gather in Yokohama each year to attend T-PAM (www.tpam.or.jp), an important international platform for information exchange, networking, mutual learning and discussion. High energy and a whirlwind of activities is the mark of this encounter which never disappoints. Launched in 1995, T-PAM moved from Tokyo to Yokohama in 2011 because the city offered economic incentives, and its smaller scale made the organization of the meeting more manageable, while its proximity to Tokyo allowed a continued partnership with venues.

Yokohama was a quiet fishing village until 1853 when the arrival of the U.S. fleet, led by Commodore Matthew Perry, demanding that Japan open its ports to Western trade, ended the policy of national seclusion of the Edo period and transformed this sleepy hamlet into a bustling center of international commerce. Since the inauguration of the

harbor in 1859, Yokohama has been destroyed and rebuilt twice: the first time in September 1923 when the Great Kanto Earthquake caused more than 30,000 deaths and the second time in 1945 when, in less than one hour, U.S. bombing destroyed half the city.

Located one hour south of Tokyo and with more than three million inhabitants, Yokohama was once considered the largest suburb in the world. In an effort to give the city its own identity, while decentralizing cultural activities away from Tokyo, major investments were poured into Yokohama on the occasion of the 2002 World Cup. A total face lift raised its status to cultural capital. Today, Yokohama boasts a large number of cultural facilities including the new Kanagawa Art Theater (KAAT), a major venue with a 1,200-seat theater, a 220-seat theater, and two flexible studios, as well as several new and renovated visual and performing arts spaces.

Each year, the city and its cultural institutions partner with T-PAM to make it an exciting event. This year, in addition to more than 30 performances and visual art events that took over the city's various

neighborhoods, the meeting's sessions and discussions revolved around the creation of the Open Network for Performing Arts Management (ONPAM), a network of art professionals loosely structured on the Informal European Theater Network (IETM) model. According to its 13 co-founders, ONPAM's mission is *to raise awareness of the social role of the contemporary performing arts and advocate for cultural policies that would benefit the performing arts and society*. ONPAM reflects the need of a new generation of artists and arts professionals to "address the profound social, economic and psychological effects that the March 11, 2011 earthquake, tsunami and accident at the Fukushima nuclear power plant have had on the Japanese population." Since 3/11, through a series of workshops and discussions that provided a platform for reflection, T-PAM has been a catalyst for artists and cultural workers trying to cope with the senseless devastation and questioning their roles, philosophies and beliefs.

In addition to the T-PAM sessions, the U.S. participants enjoyed an amazing program

which included performances presented by venues in Tokyo, special selections performed in various spaces throughout Yokohama and surroundings, as well as showcases of emerging companies selected for T-PAM by three young curators, Takuo Miyabnaga, Katsuhiko Ohgira and Yukuko Ogura.

Among the rich offerings, four companies caught the interest of the U.S. team: Mum & Gypsy (www.mum-gypsy.com), whose work the U.S. team has been following since their first trip to Japan in October 2011, is a Tokyo-resident movement-based theater company directed by Takahiro Fujita that is coming to international attention; Okazaki Art Theatre (www.okazaki.nobody.jp), a Yokohama-based theater company created in 2003 and directed by Yudai Kamisato, presented *the Absence of Neighbor Jimmy*; Maud le Pladec, one of the main figures of the new generation of choreographers in France presented *Professor*, an investigation into the relationship between music and movement; and choreographer/performer Daniel Kok (www.diskodanny.com),

based in Singapore and Berlin, presented *Q&A*, a dance/performance created from on-line surveys about what the audience expects from a dance work. Kok designs his performance in accordance with the answers submitted about music, movements or choice of color.

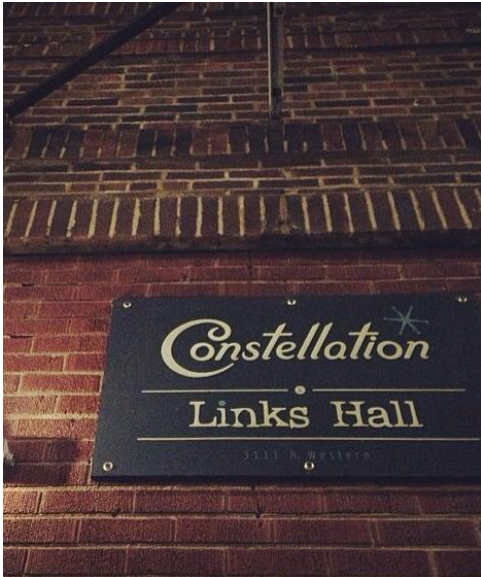
Finally, for the US/Japan Connection curators, T-PAM provided a great opportunity to deepen their partnership with the JCDN partners and work on its first artistic exchange for FY14. Part of the curatorial responsibility of the U.S. and Japanese teams is the commitment to select one Japanese company each year to tour to at least three venues in the U.S. and, reciprocally, one U.S. company each year to tour to three venues in Japan. JCDN curatorial team comprising Ritsuko Mizuno, JCDN Producer (www.jcdn.org), Reiko Hagihara, Program Director at Kyoto Art Center (www.kac.or.jp), and Kyoko Yokoyama, Program Coordinator at Fukuoka City Foundation for Arts and Cultural Promotion (www.ffac.or.jp) will travel to the U.S. for 10

days in April 2013 with the goal of selecting a U.S. artist/company. The trio will travel to the Fusebox Festival in Austin, as well as New York and Chicago, to see performances, rehearsals and meet with several artists. The selected artist/company will spend one month in residence at Kyoto Art Center in spring/summer 2014 and will be presented by Concarino in Sapporo and Fukuoka City Foundation for Arts and Cultural Promotion.





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Constellation Twinkles for Links Hall

Links Hall, the venerable Chicago performance venue and creative incubator for the past 35 years, as well as an NPN Partner, is moving into a new space, Constellation, partnering with notable jazz musician Mike Reed. “Constellation is more than a new home for Links Hall,” said Roell Schmidt, Links’ director since 2009. “It is a fusion of the right time, the right space, and the right partner with a reciprocal vision — which just happens to be the ideal conditions for experimentation and artistic incubation.” The former Viaduct Theatre will more than double Links’ programming space.

Read the Chicago Tribune article:

www.chicagotribune.com/entertainment/music/ct-ent-0311-music-venue-20130311,0,4696728.column

Southwest Airlines, Official Airline of National
Performance Network

