

Observing, Mapping, and Networking Between Platform for Young Choreographers (Case Study: Japan)

By Nia Agustina, Paradance Platform, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Website : <https://paradance.id/>

E-Mail : niaparadance@gmail.com

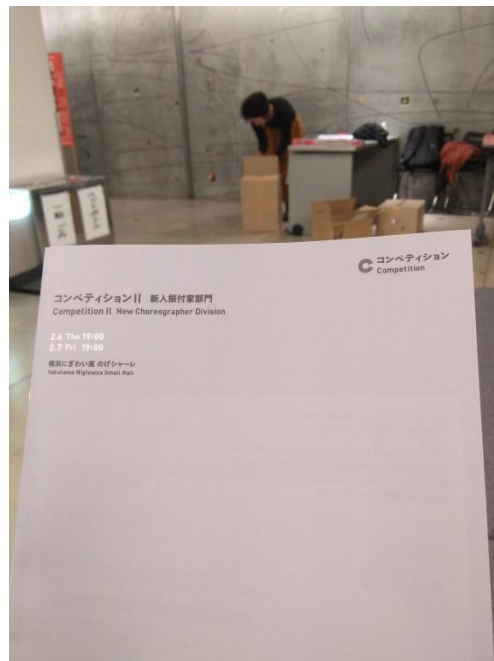
Landed in Haneda Airport 4 February 2020 such a nostalgic moment for me. 2017, I've been participated on Next Generation Producing Performing Arts Program by Asia Center. At that time I really had no idea what's going on at first, everything was new and little bit overwhelmed for me. It was just 2 years after I'm professionally working on dance scene, and my first time going abroad by myself, I'd been on the survival mode while trying to "fit in". Luckily there was Haruna Tsutsumi and Makiko Yamaguchi who really patience on digging more about us as participant. They tried to provide what we need to explore on TPAM 2017. With my limited ability on english language, finally, in the 2nd day I could communicate with Haruna about what I really want to see and explore more during TPAM. I clearly said that I want to observing more about dance, especially related to young choreographer. By that needs, Haruna and Makiko bring me to saw Yokohama Dance Collection's performances. I remember vividly during the performances, I promised myself to going back to Japan for observing more about how the young and emerging choreographer's working here, and how the existing platforms provide their needs.

YOKOHAMA DANCE COLLECTION

06 February 2020 I was really nervous yet exciting to meet Mr. Shinji Ono, the director of Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No.1 who produce Yokohama Dance Collection. We were agree to meet in Yokohama Nigiwaiza Small Hall, because the Competition II will held on this space that night. He is such a kind heart and really open on responding my curiosity related to Yokohama Dance Collection (YDC), its history, profile, programs, future plan, and sometimes random questions which just popped up during the interview.

YDC started at 1991, when the director of Red Brick Warehouse at that time, Mr. Seiji Takaya and his partner Mr. Makoto Ishikawa starting Japan pre-selection of the Bagnolet International Coreographic Competition (now: Rencontres Choreographiques Internationales de Seine-Saint-Denis, <http://www.rencontreschoreographiques.com/>) in Yokohama named Art Councilor of Bagnolet Choreography Competition. In 2002, after The Bagnolet International Coreographic shifting from the competition to the festival which focusing on meeting point of dance practitioner, YDC finally decided to started their own competition.

During the conversation, I also could observed the preparation of Competition II, Mr. Shinji Ono as a director was friendly greetings all the competition's choreographers who just coming to the space. For me, seeing that kind of things was really precious. During my stay in Yokohama, I tried to following all the YDC programs. The Competition II, Competition I, Exhibition, Performance by Former Prizewinner, and HOTPOT. Like Mr. Shinji Ono said the framing and plot of the YDC programs could structured like this, the non-experienced emerging choreographers will started from Competition 2, and if they continuing their works, there is an opportunity for competition 1, and if they have potential, the opportunity for entering HOTPOT program will be open.



Pict 1: Day 1 of Competition II (background: the staff of YDC preparing the front desk), Yokohama Nigiwaiza Small Hall

One of the most precious support for YDC is French Embassy Award which manifested as a residency program in France for the year after. Mr. Shinji Ono said that this is one of the strategy for cultural exchange for France after The Bagnolet International Choreographic Competition has been shifted. They also bring the France choreographer to YDC for Dance Cross program.

This kind of exchange have two side, in one side there is an opportunity by young choreographer to broader their mind, skill, and also challenge them mentally on surviving while doing residency program. But in the same time, the question about how this kind of cultural exchange could be more equal for both? I mean, in the dance scene we knew that the modern dance history is coming from the Europe and America, but every culture have their own history and journey, that's why exchange should not be a legitimacy for a particular culture otherwise as an equal sharing moment. But beyond that question, I saw

the hardworks of YDC on promoting and giving the great opportunity for Japanese young choreographer not just for prize winner, but also for all the choreographers who involved in with their network. They also evaluating their program year by year for the matter of choreographers need. Like Mr. Shinji Ono said at the end of interview, one festival is never enough, but it's better than nothing.

YDC Competition's Choreographers

After saw all of the Competition's performances, based on their works, I interested in Roma Hashimoto (Competition II), Shikici Osamu (Competition I), and last but not least, really great to saw Ayano Yokoyama (Competition I) solo performance which she was being a dancer and choreographer on that piece. I did make a list of their name before the competition's winner announcement, and surprisingly they got the winner prize. Roma Hashimoto as outstanding new artist prize from Competition II, Shikici Osamu got the French Embassy Prize which he will doing the residency in France on 2021, and Ayano Yokoyama got the jury prize which manifested as porosus endowment fund.



Pict 2: Announcement of YDC Competition 2020, Yokohama Red Brick Warehouse No.1

On the closing party I asked them to casually talk about their dance journey, but after our talk was going deeper, we can't help the language barrier, so we decided to continuing the talk by e-mail. This is also being a note for me, on every research we have to doing all things as comfortable as we can for the both side. Because of budget's matter, really hard to hiring translator everytime, but after this experience, I tried to find the more comfortable way for me and person who I meeting with.

On one of my question, I questioning how YDC facilitating the choreographers before and during the competition. Roma Hashimoto said, " They were very kind and supportive. One of the most greatest thing was they always had their respects for us as an artist. I think it

was a very important thing to communicate with each other.” Meanwhile, Ayano Yokoyama said, “I could show my work and I have a chance to argue and discuss with YDC director and staff.” Back to Indonesia, as a artistic director of small platform called Paradance, I always thinking one of the precious things for the young choreographers is meeting and talking the festival directors and important people there, it could be a great encouragement for them, and in the same time during that talk as a director/producer who (expected) have a broader perspective about the scene, we also could sharing that persepctive for them related to their work, of course in this communication we should uphold the equality based, balance as a listener and speaker.

I also asked them to write about themselves in Japanesse writing related to their dance journey so far, they could choosed to write spesific moment or kind of picturing themselves on this dance scene, and also, they could write that on any format that they comfortable with. I also asked this for all young choreographers that I met in Kansai Prefecture. I’ll compile all this writing on my final essays compilation that still processing, but I’ll choosed one of them to attacht in this report as an example. All the complete interview of platforms and artist will written there too.

**See attachment for the preview of original write of young choreographers.*

KANSAI PREFECTURE

19 of March I flight from Haneda Airport to Kobe Airport, this is first time I went to Kobe. In the station, Yumiko Nakashima, manager of Kotobuki, the db Residency house, stand bring a DANCE BOX (db) paper bag. We didn’t talk for some minutes, because I can’t speak a word japanesse language, and she was not confident to speak in english. On that point, I really glad of all the experiences related to language barrier, because, I also can’t speak in english well, but dance itself always giving us a chance to communicate with people beyond the language, and in this research, I mostly will meeting the dancers. So, by that consideration, I took that barrier as an opportunity to explore as a part of this research journey.



Pict 3: Nia Agustina asking with bahasa Indonesia, translated by google translate



Pict 4: Mona Yonezawa answer the question in Japanesse, translated by google translate

I really glad to saw Kotobuki at the first time. The old house with Japanesse taste interior in the middle of housing, and just 5 minutes walk to db office. There was Yumiko and 3 artists who already stay in Kotobuki, Alan Farrieri and Ema Yuasa (Xhiasma Project) who will stay there just for some days ahead and J'sun Howard (choreographer, Chicago) who planned to stay as a residence artists on db for 4 months (but the plan was changed because of the Covid-19 Pandemic). What I really grateful for is our feeling as family with each other growth day by day in Kotobuki. Shopping, cooking, and eating together, and continue with playing uno, and sharing about English and Japanesse language and each culture almost every night. And the most important is strengthen each others to facing residency program during the covid-19 pandemic.



Pict 5: I cooked yellow rice (one of Indonesian traditional food to celebrating birthday) on Yumiko Nakanishi's Birthday

Dance Box NPO

Before the research begin, Fumi Yokobori, Dance Box (db) program director, asked me to joint the AiR meeting as one of presenter on 22 February 2020. I was presenting about my research plan in this Asia Center fellowship program, another presenter who talk about the fellowship program supported by Asia Center was Keiko Yamaguchi (BRDG).



Pict 6: AiR presentation on db

Talk about db and its history with Fumi on 25 February 2020, remind me about Paradance itself. How and why db started and going for some years was have similarities with how and why Paradance started and going until today. Started in Torii Hall, Osaka in 1996, at that time Mr. Iku Otani was a director on that space. The aims to built db was to create a dance center, not a company, but dance artists community based in Kansai and thinking dance as movement, an body expression for making communal movement. This also infulenced by contemporary dance situation in Japan, on that time just a small numbers of choreographers who works as independent artist, they mostly working as a dancer on dance company or ballet company. 1992 Kansai Prefecture contemporary dance scene started when Susan Buirge (<https://www.cirm-manca.org/fiche-artiste.php?ar=94>) was coming. Yoko Mori (Monochrome Circus and Kyoto International Dance Workshop Festival) and Fuyuki (first db director with Aya).

One of the most important program of db was db Dance Academy (2012-2016) , some of the young choreographers who has been participated on that program was Ayaka Nakama, Ai Kawase, and Mona Yonezawa. Another choreographer who felt impacted with another db prorgam like moved by the invited performances on db or been a volunteer or residence artists on db was Kitamari, Chisato Nakanishi, Yamamoto Kazuma, and Alain Sinandja (African dancer/choreographers who stays in Japan since 2017). Fortunately, I could had the opportunity to meeting and interviewing all of them during my stay in Kobe.

Kyoto Scene

My purpose for meeting the young choreographers who recommended by Fumi Yokobori, brought me to Kyoto, and luckily by last meeting with Keiko Yamaguchi on AiR meeting at db brought me to stay in her house during my stay in Kyoto. She and Ryotaro Sudo, helped me to navigate more about the dance scene in Kyoto. At first I tried to mingle with the community in UrBANGUILD which Ryotaro Sudo was a booking manager as well as program manager. UrBANGUILD on my sense is a space for artists not just to perform but also as a meeting point to create intimate network. That's way, FOUr Dancers, one of regular programs focusing on dance performance tried to mix the experienced with the emerging one, on the list of four performances, even though not every FOUr Dancers could create that kind of composition, but they tried to.

From UrBANGUILD, I also could see live performance of young choreographers who I will interview later, like Chisato Nakanishi and Ai Kawase as Umishitagi Collective and Alain Sinandja, also some of experienced choreographers who I was not planned about to meet at first, like Yoko Mori & Kosei Sakamoto (Kyoto International Dance Workshop Festival & Monochrome Circus) and Ima Tenko (Butoh Kan & Ima Tenko Workshop Studio).



Pict 7: FOUr Dancers at UrBANGUILD

Finally, in Kyoto, I just followed my intuition with the help of Keiko Yamaguchi, Ryotaro Sudo, and Fumi Yokobori to navigate who is important to meet on that time, because the scene is quite overwhelming for me, is huge and including the complex history and context. Beside the choreographers, UrBANGUILD, and Kyoto International Dance Workshop Festival, I also had an opportunity to meet Yoko Kawasaki, program director of Kyoto Experiment, that was a meaningful meeting to broaden my idea related to festival and talk about the exchange opportunity in the future.

Community Based Dance Creation

One of Interesting things that I met on this research is, most of dancers who I interviewed has a strong background in worked with community.



Pict 8: Maya Ichikawa's company rehearsal (Kyoto Exchange)

Watching the Kurata's Midori performance "Family Portrait" first time in YDC 2020 as one of HOTPOT performance, bring up my curiosity. Ryotaro Sudo was help me to contact her in the beginning, really glad that she was open to talk about her works and her process with the help of Kyoto Art Center staff to translate our talk. One of the Kurata Midori's statement that really impressed me was, " To work with Yakuza, or ex-drug user, I have to entering their "world", I need long time to approach and communicate with them until they have a trust to me, and one key is being friend with them, not just for performance matters." Maya Ichikawa, is another artist who found Kyoto Exchange which a dance group with the mostly old age members, of course as an artistic works, this group can't approach dance skill or tidy performance, but Maya said, " In the process and production, the most important thing is enjoy the moment, not really important to create a particular dance, if we're not enjoy anymore, better to stop." After met with both of them, I remember that there is one of Japanesse choreographer who ever been studied in ISI (institute of the Arts) Yogyakarta and working a lot with difable dancers (Tanpopo No Ye), Shin Sakuma. One of memorable sentence from Shin Sakuma was, "When I was in Yogyakarta and studied Yogyakarta's court dance, I couldn't even speak javanesse, and my bahasa Indonesia is not clear enough at that time, and again the culture is different with Japan. At that time, my teacher said to me that if you want to learned the Yogyakarta or Javanesse dance in general, the dance itself is not enough, you have to learned about its philosophy, culture in general, attitude, so you could mastering the dance. So does the process with the difable, we should to deepen our knowledge about them, about their "language", their "culture" that might be have a huge different with us."

Butoh-Kan

For me, is not complete, if I research about the contemporary dance scene without looking Butoh as one of trajectory, that's why, after saw the Ima Tenko's performance in UrBANGUILD, I proposed to meet with her and her student.

I invited by Ima Tenko to saw her performance in Butoh Kan and interviewing her and one of her student, Riko Murakami, some days after. This is a pleasure for me, as an Indonesian art practitioner who often heard about butoh but never saw the real one, I really need time to process all the information related to that. Ima Tenko's started Butoh with Byakkosha which had been tour in Indonesia in 1982 hosted by Indonesian Arts Council with Amna Kusumo, Sardono W. Kusumo, and Sal Murgiyanto as a core team to organized that. After Byakkosha broke up in 1994, Ima learned traditional Japanese dance which the core of the exercise was body center and connection of body and spirit, inspired by that, she has encouragement to shared that knowledge to people, so she open the workshop for 21 years and still going. The participant is not much, but sometimes foreign people also coming to join the workshop.



Pict 9: With Ima Tenko and Riko Murakami at Ima Tenko's Workshop Studio

Riko Murakami is one of her active student, she was interested in Butoh when the first time watching the Kazuo Ohno video, *The Written Face* in her class, which is design and film major. There was a strange feelings, and she decided to find out more about that, until she found out Ima Tenko's workshop, create a production with Kiraza company (Ima's company), and continue until today.

There is some of young dancers also who started their career by learned and performed butoh like Ai Kawase and Kitamari at Sennichimae Aozora Dance Club with Iku Otani as choreographer.

Kinosaki International Arts Center: Artus in Residence

During my stay, I also took time to visit Kinosaki International Arts Center (KIAC) to catch up on Aoki Naoya's work that already processed on the KIAC residency program. I met Aoki and Maki Hashimoto from KIAC in an AiR presentation, 22 February 2020. In the middle of a touristy ambience, KIAC presents as another face of Kinosaki-Onsen. I couldn't dig a lot about KIAC, because I just had limited time to catch up. But how the KIAC tried to always connect with the environment around is really an important consideration, because as an artist, residency in a different place should give them a richer perspective and experience related to the context of the environment around the residency place, if this does not happen, why do we need residency then?



Pict 10: Installation on presentation of "Landscape" by Aoki San

Future Plan

This report is just an overview of all my fellowship activities, for archiving, documenting, and responsibility, I'll complete this research by writing an essay compilation based on all the interviews. Maybe I'll also continue the e-mail interviews with some people recommended by Fumi Yokobori as well as from my observations, which is important but I can't meet because I had to shorten my stay and also related to transportation restriction policies during March that makes it difficult to move. Some who are already in my mind are Tomohiko Kyogoku, Shigemi Kitamura, Sonoko Chisiro, and Zan Yamashita.

ATTACHMENT 1: Journey on the Dance Scene, written originally by Roma Hashimoto (YDC winner of Competition II)

私は幼少期に子役としてミュージカル作品に出演しており、それが舞台芸術と身体表現との最初の出会だった。その後、演じることより作ることへの興味に憑かれ、美術予備校で現代美術作品の製作を経た後に多摩美術大学の演劇舞踊デザインコースへ進学した。

大学でまだメディアも決めず製作活動を開始した私は、チキンネット(亀甲網)を使った造形作品を作ったりギターをノコギリで弾くパフォーマンスをしたりしていた。しかし、在学中に講師として出会った勅使川原三郎とスズキ拓朗の影響で、徐々にメディアを身体へ移行していくこととなる。

パフォーマンス作品を製作し始めた当初は、Pina Bausch に共感して美術家や衣裳クリエイターやその友達など、パフォーマーを生業としていない人達をキャスティングした作品を作っていた。誰にでも出来て簡単だけれど効果的なムーヴメント、訓練された身体に依拠しない振付こそが強度のある振付だと信じていたのもそのキャスティングの理由の一つである。自分で演出、振付する作品を製作するかたわらで、学校と企業の参画で行われた大型パフォーマンスプロジェクトの総合ディレクターとしてコンセプト原案、アートディレクションなど務めるなどし、大小様々な規模の作品や役割を横断する製作に携わっていた。その中で次第に興味は身体表現にも更にフォーカスされていき、ダンサーをキャスティングしたダンス作品を製作してみたいと考えるようになった。しかしそのためには自分自身もダンサーとして一定のスキルがなければ振付の幅の限界や出演ダンサー自身の持つ可能性を狭めてしまう危険性があると感じたため、2018年頃より自身もダンサーとして他者作品やワークショップ、ダンスクラスに積極的に参加し、スキルアップすることを始める。

現代美術で培ったコンセプチュアルな題材設定、モチーフ選定、アートディレクターとしての衣裳、美術デザインへのこだわり、本格的にダンスという要素を加え、2019年からダンサーを迎えた作品の製作をスタートさせた。2019年はハイペースに作品発表をし、映像作品やオーディション用のパフォーマンスも含めると製作数は8ピースに及んだ。2019年は青山スパイラルで開催された SICF20(Spiral Independent Creators Festival)の PLAY 部門でパフォーマンス作品「トーキョー・ミステリーサークル・クラブバンド」がグランプリを、2020年には横浜ダンスコレクション2020で「サイクロン・クロニクル」が新人部門であるコンペティションⅡで最優秀新人振付家賞を受賞した。

2019年に受賞した「トーキョー・ミステリーサークル・クラブバンド」は東京の都心部である青山のスパイラルビルの中にある円形の吹き抜け空間をミステリーサークルの場に見立て、宇宙人たちとの未知との遭遇をオリンピック開催にも重ねたサイトスペシフィックな作品である。屋内広場でのパブリックパフォーマンスだったため、ナンセンスなサーカスに見えるように演出を試みた。この作品では美術家の友人たちや普段は作品で音源製作を担当しているメンバーなど、ダンサー以外にもキャスティングした。衣裳やキャスティング、空間デザインなど作品全体のディレクションとバランス感、そして今後の活動への期待が高く評価されてのグランプリ受賞となった。

2020年に受賞した「サイクロン・クロニクル」は2019年4月に神楽坂セッションハウスで初演したものを大幅にリクリエーションして横浜ダンスコレクションで上演したものである。スケジュールの都合でキャスト変更、著作権の問題で楽曲変更が前提の難しい製作となった。初演時と根幹のテーマは変わらず、モチーフを新たに精査してコンセプトに更にピントが合うようにしていく作業を行った。現代の絶望感、労働、オズの魔法使い、半身の物語(プラトン「饗宴」より)が主なモチーフとして選ばれ、上演会場に合わせて新たな衣裳の製作や照明プランの作成、既存の振付の取捨選択と新たな振付の追加が行われた。総合芸術として細部まで意識的に計算されていること、尚且つ身体表現への衝動的な欲望が満ちていること、既存のダンスの枠にはまらない可能性を感じさせることなどから受賞へ至った。

これらの経験を経て今自分で感じることは、私のダンスやパフォーマンスへの興味は身体へのこだわりから生まれるものではなく、大きなヴィジュアルアートの観点から生まれてくるものだということである。よく、なぜ衣裳にそこまでこだわるのか聞かれることがあるが、答えは簡単だ。ヴィジュアルアートでは身体も、照明も、衣裳も全てが等しく大きな役割を持ち、そこに優先順位は存在しないからだ。振付も、照明デザインも、衣裳の生地選びも、全て同じ重要性を持っている。もしこれが「身体のためのダンス作品」であれば身体が優先順位の何よりも先にきて、そこから衣裳や照明などの様々な要素を「身体のために」選んでいこう。圧倒的な優先順位は、どこかにしわ寄せを起こす。もしかしたら振付やリハーサルに時間とお金をかけるために最初に削られるのは衣裳に対する手間と予算で、そのために私たちは適当に色味だけをなんとなく合わせた衣裳の群舞や露出の多い体操服のような衣裳をよく目にするのではないだろうか？

私は衣裳デザイン自体も、ステージングもファッションやファッションショーから影響を受けている。それはファッションウィークに登場するようなブランドやメゾンが、もしくは服飾学校に通う生徒たちが、コンセプトを可視化する様々なユニークな手法を持っているからだ。私はその点において彼らにとっても強い魅力を感じている。また、ダンスもファッションも私にとっては同じヴィジュアルアートであるので、私はただ自分の好きなものの中を遊泳している心地で自由に作品を製作しているだけなのだ。けれども「ダンス」という一元的な認識の中で身体に絶対の優先権を与えて創作している人々にとっては、私の作品は衣裳に大きな優先順位をおいているように見えることがあるのかもしれない。実際の私は衣裳に特別重きをおいているのではなく、作品に関わる全てをヴィジュアルアートの平等な要素として意識的に大切に扱っているだけである。

私にとって身体や振付は手段であって決して目的ではない。一番重要なのは観客にテーマやコンセプトを提示し、それを材料に自ら問と仮定をたて、その答えを作品内で証明していくことである。それは儀式的な要素を含む。現在はその目的を達成する手段として身体に振付をするという選択が存在しているだけで、もしより良い新しい手法を発見したならば私はいずれ自分自身が全く違う選択をするだろうということを疑わない。

私が個人のことでなく今後のダンスシーンのことも考えた時に真っ先に思い浮かぶのは日本の多くの舞台芸術が公的な助成金に依存しているという問題である。これを問題と思わない人ももちろん多く存在する。実際に現在のシーンではいかに大きな助成金を得られるかがステータスになっている気さえするからだ。しかし私は公的な補助金や助成金に依拠する状況に近い将来直面するであろう限界を感じずにはいられない。Christo & Jeanne Claude や Tino Sehgal のようなファウンデーションに頼らない独立した方法を確立するか、もしくはショービジネスと協働して資本主義の中でアーティストとして生き残っていくか。もちろんこの道筋は今後どんどん増えていくと考えているが、現代の日本ではこれらを選択している人も、成功している人も少ない。現在の日本のダンスシーンでは、カンパニーを作り、助成金を申請して単独公演を企画し、個人では生活を支えるためにダンスクラスで講師として教え、だんだんカンパニー、助成金、公演の規模を少しずつ大きくしていく、という人がほとんどなのではないだろうか。しかし、私にはこれがアーティストとして自由を得ることの出来る最良の方法とはとても思えない。もちろん、この状況をシーン全体として良くしようとスクラムを組んでくれている人たちも存在する。しかし私は、あまりに身勝手かもしれないが、その徒党に加わる気も、彼らのようにカンパニーを作って定石を踏む気もなく、まだ誰も踏んだことのない道で世界中の様々なプロジェクトを飛び回りたいと願っている。そしてそれを実現するために、今後も人が決めたカテゴリーに収まることなく、自分の直感と好奇心の赴くままに研究と勉強をし、スリリングな冒険をし続けたいと思っている。

最後に、私が今までに自分が影響を受けたと自覚している人物をリストアップしたい。

際限がなくなってしまうため、今回は小説、絵画、映画、音楽、漫画、ファッションに関するクリエイター達は除いている。

○演出、振付、ステージングにおいて影響を受けた人々

Bob Fosse

Philippe Decoufle

Ryan Heffington

Damien Jalet

MIKIKO

スズキ拓朗

○美術、空間デザインにおいて影響を受けた人々

Pina Bausch

Dimitris Papaioannou

Ivo Van Hove

Christo & Jeanne Claude

勅使川原三郎

ダムタイプ

維新派

ATTACHMENT 2: Journey on the Dance Scene, written originally by Mona Yonezawa (db Associate Artist)

「私と高校生のダンスライフ」

3年前、高校生と出会った時、みんなが同じ振付をなんの疑問も持たずに踊っているのが不自然でした。テクニックや見た目ばかりを意識していて、心を感じることができませんでした。まずは、ダンスでみんなが大切にしたいことは何かを追求することから始めました。

子供達が良いダンスを作るためには、想像力を沢山働かせることができる心身、環境、チームはとても大切だと考えました。私がダンスの環境をより良くするために行った事は、日々コミュニケーションをとり、お互いの考えをシェアし、それを認め受け入れるということを日々積み重ねて行きました。

ダンスを作る上で、大切にしたのはソロです。それぞれに作ってもらったソロに対して私が何を見たか、どこへ向かって行きたいのか、一人ずつアドバイスを細かくしました。

いくつかの良かったソロを元に振付をつなげて行き、“みんなでしか作れないダンス”にこだわりダンスを作っていました。

子供達はダンスを通して、仲間や家族、友達、自分の心と身体を大切にするようになりました。そして、クリエイティブを楽しみ、自分達が作ったものを、自信を持って舞台上で披露できるようになりました。

ダンスのテーマを探すため社会で起こって居ることに目を向けるようになり、それに対して自分が何を感じて、何を思うかをチームで発言していくようになり、これはダンスを通して見える世界や視野が広がったのではないかと思います。

ダンスをする上で、いつも子供達には、「自分に選択・決定することができるから、自分で考えてみて」と声をかけています。

子供達は、こうした過程を経て、動画などのコピーではない自分たちで産み出したダンスを大切に踊り、今までにないほどの力強いパフォーマンスを発揮するようになりました。

ただ、こうしたダンスの活動を熱心にしても、コンペティションで賞を取れなければ部活として継続していくことが難しくなります。

ダンスには教育的な面や、人を豊にする力があるが、日本にはそういった考えにまだ定着がなく、学校の経済的な理由から部活が廃止するところまでいきそうになったことがあります。子供達が安心してダンスを続けていき、これから新しくこのチームに入ってくれる子供達のためにも沢山のの人に知ってもらって力を貸してもらえよう伝えていく活動をして行きたいと思います。

私は、作品が舞台上に乗る時、私の手を離れて子供達がダンスで化けて、強くたくましく、時には弱くて優しい表現で見たこともない美しい世界を見せてくれる時、とても幸せになります。毎回異なるテーマで、ついに進化した良い作品を毎回作ることが私の野望です。そして、この経験を通して将来ダンスに関わる子供が増えると良いなと願います。

