

Percussionist Prof. Udow guest Lectures at TNUA

Prof. Michael Udow, a percussionist from the University of Michigan's School of Music, Theatre and Dance, stressed that music is more about feelings than techniques in his Maestro Lecture at TNUA on January 4.

Prof. Udow, who is also a composer, conductor and percussion music producer, said he has seen many performers show off their speed and flamboyant skills while forgetting the kind of emotions and feelings that first motivated them to learn music.

A true musician would send people yearning to listen to and enjoy his or her music, Prof. Udow said, as he shared his experience with TNUA students and teachers in the guest lecture.

He demonstrated the use of body language in his interpretation of music, and in a one-on-one instruction session he showed students how they could improve their performing skills and interpretation of music. Prof. Udow stressed that performers must clearly understand the ideas that they want to convey in their music.

He suggested students try humming the tunes along as they play their percussion instruments, which he said will give them a better grasp of the tempo. Practice of using drumsticks can be done by drumming on a wall, he said.

Prof. Udow was principal percussionist with the Santa Fe Opera for more than 40 years before retirement after the 2009 season. ◆

'Hakka suite' / Ho Hiao-Mei
Photo by Hsu Pei-Hung



TNUA dance student to join NDT II

TNUA student Wu Meng-ke will be the first Taiwan dancer to become a member of the renowned Netherlands Dans Theater II (NDT II).

Wu, a senior of the Department of Dance, passed an audition on January 24 to win her a two-year contract

with NDT II. Sponsored by the school, she embarked on a 40-day tour in Europe early in 2009, visiting Retina in the UK, NDT II in the Netherlands, and Das TanzTheater-München am Staatstheater am ärtnerplatz in Germany, and tried her luck in their auditions.

She managed to win a contract with Das TanzTheaterMünchen am Staatstheater am ärtnerplatz and took a break from her school work to experience the life as a dancer in Munich after finishing her junior year. And she has again proved herself with another famous dance company – this time the Hague-based NDT II.

NDT, founded in 1959 and currently under the leadership of Artistic Director Jim Vincent, is among the most prominent and innovative contemporary dance companies worldwide.

Wu said she has been determined to become a professional dancer ever since she started dance training during her junior high school years. She recalled how it was tremendously fruitful and inspiring to work with other dancers in her Munich year. After this coming summer vacation, Wu will be heading for the Netherlands. Her advice to her younger schoolmates is that they need to have clear goals, and then go for them. ◆

TNUA and the Quanta Arts Foundation (QAF) will jointly launch "Transfuture," a program highlighting the marriage of arts and technology in September 2010.

The arts festival will be a showcase of the possibilities of how sounds, theatre, dance and technology could combine to transcend all existing forms of arts. QAF, the baby of Taiwan-based high-tech industry guru Mr. Barry Lam, chairman of Quanta Computer, was formally unveiled on January 20 at his company's R&D headquarters.

QAF's board of directors is formed by renowned figures in the world of arts: TNUA President Prof. Ju, Tzong-Ching; Prof. Lin Hwai-min; Prof. Chu-Wey Liu; Prof. Stan Lai; Prof. Ku-Fang Lin; and violinist Mr. Nai-Yuan Hu.

Mr. Lam remarked that 2010 is Year One for cloud computing, in which he can see the possibilities of collaboration between arts and technology. Arts can reach more people more easily through the power of technology, enriching and bettering society, he said.

TNUA has over the years produced many outstanding artists who use technology as their media of expression. QAF offers a platform to consolidate artists' creativity and enterprises' technological expertise to achieve breakthroughs in the expressions of arts.

This year's joint project, "Transfuture," by TNUA and QAF will be headed by Mr. Jun-Jieh Wang, chief director of TNUA's Center for Art and Technology.

The project will see Quanta's R&D personnel conduct lab experiments in a long-term partnership for integrating arts and technology. With Taiwan having just adopted a new law promoting cultural and creative industries, Prof. Ju said cultural and creative industries will definitely generate another economic boom for Taiwan.

Taiwan already has a huge pool of talent and resources, and all it needs is a platform and an opportunity for it to shine, Prof. Ju said, adding the TNUA-QAF "Transfuture" project is a perfect example of such a platform that incorporates Taiwan's most important industrial and cultural assets. ◆



'Transfuture': TNUA, QAF forge marriage of arts and technology



'tranSonic 2009' /Center for Art and Technology