

Guests arrive from Russia; music delegation depart for Japan

Moscow P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory Rector Prof. Alexander S. Sokolov and his wife visited TNUA in May. In the same month, a delegation from TNUA's Department of Music departed for Japan.

Prof. Sokolov, along with Mrs. Rarisa Panfilovna Sokolova, arrived at TNUA on May 17 and gave a lecture. He was at TNUA exploring further exchange possibilities between the two institutions in areas covering teaching and performances.

TNUA President Prof. Ju, Tzong-Ching gave the guests a warm welcome, lauding the Moscow P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory as a respectable school. One of its renowned alumni, Mstislav Rostropovich, also received an honorary doctorate from TNUA, Prof. Ju noted. He has visited Russia and performed there twice. He said he was deeply impressed by the warm hospitality shown him by the Moscow P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory during his visit in 2007 when the school was busy with its student recruitment but still managed to arrange a fruitful itinerary for him.

Prof. Sokolov said when he was Russia's minister of culture he was aware and happy that the Moscow P. I. Tchaikovsky Conservatory forged sister school ties with TNUA in 2006. He said he hoped his visit could further tighten the collaboration between the two schools, extending a warm invitation to TNUA teachers and students to visit Russia.

On May 20, Prof. Hwei-Jin Liu, dean of the School of Music, heading a 43-member delegation from the Department of Music, departed for Japan for a one-week



visit to the Tokyo University of the Arts (Geidai) and Ochanomizu University, both of which are sister schools of TNUA. During their stay, they rehearsed intensively for a few days with more than 30 students and teachers from Geidai for a joint concert on May 23. Other activities included meetings between teachers from both sides, while Geidai Prof. Fujimoto Takafumi also honed TNUA students' percussion skills.

Following their stay at Geidai, the TNUA delegation went on to visit Ochanomizu University, a school with a history of more than 130 years that became TNUA's sister school in 2002. The TNUA students staged a performance, with Ochanomizu President Prof. Sawako Hanyu expressing the hope that both sides will conduct more exchange activities in the future. ◆

Top: Prof. Alexander S. Sokolov gives a lecture at the School of Music.
Bottom: The TNUA Orchestra at Geidai.



TNUA's School of Dance invited three masters of Kecak Dance of Bali to introduce the traditional art form of the Indonesian island earlier this semester.

I Wayan Dibia, I Gusti Putu Sudarta and I Wayan Sira, at TNUA under the school's reconstruction program for classic dances, conducted a workshop introducing the various aspects of Kecak, including the dance, its music, costumes and backgrounds, during their two-month stay.

The workshop started on March 28 with 60 students

taking part in Kecak Dance training. They trained for 10 hours for almost two months so as to present Kecak at the School of Dance's summer production beginning from May 26.

The production of the traditional Bali dance was supported by dozens of students for making the costumes, scenes and props.

The performance's venue was eventually decided to move from the TNUA Dance Theatre to outdoors on the

Balinese Kecak Dance masters conduct workshop



Arts Boulevard, where the dance was presented amid breezes and trees with the venue decorated with bamboos, torches and drapes on an early summer night that made the audience feel they were actually on the tropical Bali island.

Kecak Dance is accompanied by male chorus without music. It was originally a form of trance performed during religious rituals in Bali.

In the 1930s, German artist Walter Spies, while living in Bali, asked I Wayan Limbak from Bedulue to combine Kecak chanting with the Hindu epic Ramayana, turning it into a form of drama performance for European tourists.

Since then, Kecak Dance has become a popular tourist

attraction, with many villages staging regular performances.

With the establishment of the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI), many other Kecak drama versions have been created. The School of Dance this time invited the creators of many of these experimental Kecak pieces to teach TNUA students the traditional Balinese art form.

During the workshop, they created a new Kecak work, "Arjuna in Meditation," based on an episode of the Sanskrit epic, "The Mahabharata." ◆

Photo by Hsu Pei-Hung / I Wayan Dibia "Kecak"