



## TNUA team in Kiribati

A team of seven from the TNUA Department of Theatre Arts visited Kiribati this summer on a 20-day teaching-learning exchange program sponsored by the ROC Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

In order to win the ministry's sponsorship, the team started carefully devising their plan and application in February. And once they were confirmed as one of the groups selected for the international young ambassador program, they geared up their preparations for the trip, designing and making all the props and materials they would need for their activities in the Pacific island nation.

The team, consisting of two teachers – Lin Ru-Ping and Chiang Jui-ming – three graduate students and two undergraduate juniors from the department, departed for Kiribati on July 13.

During their stay they taught various courses at two senior high schools in the capital city, Tarawa – the KGV&EBS and Moroni High School – including Chinese language and poetry, street dance, Taiwan's indigenous songs and dances, and Peking Opera.

The team received a warm welcome and blended in the local culture quickly. Huang Yu-ching, one of the graduate students in the team, said the trip to Kiribati was an unforgettable learning tour. She said she can remember

how upon their arrival the head of Taiwan's agricultural mission in Kiribati – which provided them with accommodation during the trip – reminded them that the trip was not about playing the role of teachers, but about sharing. In return, the Kiribati students also taught them the Pacific country's traditional arts, dances and songs, she said.

As the two schools were still having their regular classes at the time, the TNUA visitors could only spend two hours with the students every day during the trip. But both sides made good use of every minute of their meeting to learn from each other. Apart from their activities at the two high schools, the team, together with the ROC Ambassador Benjamin T.H. Ho, received a warm welcome at the presidential palace by Kiribati President Anote Tong.

On July 30, the ROC ambassador to Kiribati arranged a cultural night for the two high schools' students and the TNUA team to demonstrate what they had learnt from each other. The Kiribati president and his wife also graced the event with their presence, and danced together with the TNUA team.

The TNUA visitors won a loud applause for their South Pacific Kava dance and the night ended with a strong Taiwanese cultural flavor when the TNUA team released



## Jooss's 'Green Table' recreated at TNUA

The TNUA School of Dance on September 4 and 5 presented "Green Table," a ballet masterpiece created in 1932 by famous German dancer and choreographer Kurt Jooss – the first time that the Expressionistic work has ever been staged by a school in Asia.

Born out of a specific moment in European history, the work depicts the fears created by war, as well as politicians' greed.

Funded by the Ministry of Education's Excellence Program, and with arrangements by Jooss's daughter, Ms. Anna Markard, the School of Dance invited famous choreographers Ms. Jeanette Vondersaar and Mr. Didier Merle as guest professors in charge of recreating the dance and conducting a one-month intensive rehearsal.

Mr. Jan Hofstra's assistance was also sought for stagecraft and he worked with Professor Fang Kuo-Yien from the Department of Theatrical Design and Technology to create a professional setting for the performance.

In order to let the audiences better understand this dance, a talk was held after each of the performances. On September 4, German scholar Mr. Thomas Thorausch explained how Jooss created "Green Table," and screened two filmed performances of the dance, one of them fea-

ture the late German ballet dancer and choreographer, Ms. Pina Bausch. The audience was deeply touched by Ms. Bausch's delicate and earnest portrayal of a dying woman.

Another session had Mr. Thorausch and Prof. Fang talk about the recreation of "Green Table" for the TNUA performance. Video footage of the recreation process – which serves as important records of the project – was also shown at the talk.

On September 5 TNUA also hosted a forum on European dance, inviting Prof. Marion Kant from the University of Pennsylvania, Prof. Kate Elswit from Yale University, and Prof. Pong Yu-shun, director of the Providence University Art Center in Taiwan to present their research and discuss "Green Table" and the development of dance theatre. It offered a good chance for exchange of ideas concerning dance theory and performance.

The TNUA School of Dance will stage "Green Table" again from December 16 to 19 to give more people the chance to enjoy the masterpiece. All are welcome. ◆

Caption : Famous choreographer Ms. Jeanette Vondersaar guides TNUA students in a rehearsal of Kurt Jooss's "Green Table."  
Photo by Chen Chang-Chih