



APAF 2020

ASIAN PERFORMING ARTS FARM
[Anti-Body Experiment]

Lab

Final Presentations	Online
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Oct 23 (Fri), 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Oct 24 (Sat), 3:00 – 4:00 PM

Feedback Session	Online
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Oct 25 (Sun), 4:00 – 6:30 PM

On Holding APAF2020

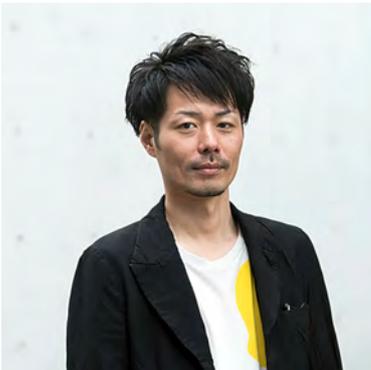
The Asian Performing Arts Farm (APAF) is a Tokyo Festival program devoted to nurturing creative minds from across Asia. In preparing for this year's installment, the first thing we considered was: "How, in the middle of this pandemic, could we foster talent in the performing arts scene?" APAF's approach to nurturing talent involves promoting *exchange* between members from all around Asia, who can then feed their newly gained insight and ideas back into their own field, thus broadening activities both locally and globally. As I was *connecting* online with artists overseas amid this isolated way of life that we are continuing to experience, I felt at once a sense of *separation* and optimism about new possibilities for *exchange* – an intuition that there were perspectives on the future which could only be gained now. Based on that intuition, we set the theme "Anti-Body Experiment" and decided that this year's APAF will largely take place online.

As things turned out, we received more than three times as many applications as in previous years despite (or perhaps because of) the pandemic, and the online "Farm" has connected people from all across Asia over its two-month run, producing all sorts of artistic experiments. The Lab component might be said to have been an experiment in *exchange*, and the Exhibition component an experiment in *distance* – both experiments that really bear fruit through further *connection* and *exchange* with audiences. Experiments are always oriented toward the future, no matter what form it may take; art has the power to lead both artists and audiences toward that future. So let us go together into the future.

Over the past six months, especially with the Tokyo Olympics postponed, there have been real doubts about whether we could really hold a performing arts festival in October. Nevertheless, an enormous number of people continued tackling this question that had no clear answer, trusting in the power of the arts. We have been able to host the Tokyo Festival and APAF as a result, and we could not be more delighted. We would like to thank all those who worked so hard to make this happen, those who attended our performances, and those who have viewed our programs from across the world. We hope for your continued support of the Tokyo Festival and APAF in the future.

APAF Director Junnosuke Tada

Photo: Toru Hiraiwa



Junnosuke Tada is a theater director who heads Tokyo Deathlock. Through his work, which spans classic to contemporary plays as well as dance and performance, Tada continues to question, by recreating real situations, the actual experiences of people in contemporary society. His practice, founded on the collaborative nature of theater, is one that goes beyond borders: Tada's activities engage children and non-theater professionals. He has also been involved in multiple international collaborations, including Japan-South Korea and Japan-Southeast Asia productions. In 2010, he became the Artistic Director at Cultural Center of Fujimi City, KIRARI FUJIMI, making him the youngest artistic director of a theater for a public institution in Japan (he served for three consecutive terms over nine years). In 2014 *Karumegi* won the 50th Dong-A Theater Awards for Best Direction, making Tada the first non-Korean to receive the award. Tada is also part of the directing department of Oriza Hirata's theater company Seinendan, and a part-time lecturer at Shikoku Gakuin University and Joshibi University of Art and Design.

APAF Lab

APAF Lab is an art camp where the next generation of talent in the performing arts gather to transcend the boundaries of culture and nationality. Rather than working towards a final product, such as realizing an artwork, the Lab participants are encouraged to spread their “roots” by cultivating new values through discussions and lectures. This year, we received 105 applications from 17 countries across Asia, of which eight participants from eight countries were selected to take part in the program. Across a two-month period, the Lab participants pursued their individual research projects while gathering regularly to interact at the program’s “virtual living room.”

Each participant selected one out of four triggers provided for the research process as prompts for new perspectives and actions.

The four triggers:

“Isolation(s)” “R/Evolution” “Prayer: Unseen” “Nature/Object”

For the final presentations, each of the Lab participants will be presenting a video on their research, which reflects their current world view. In the feedback session, moderated by the three Lab facilitators, the participants will look back on the two-month Lab as well as receive feedback from guests.

PROGRAM

Final Presentations 1	Final Presentations 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alexis Kam (China)• Sunayana Premchander (India)• Ness Roque (The Philippines)• Keiko Yamaguchi (Japan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nia Agustina (Indonesia)• Shawn Chua (Singapore)• Jun Yi Mah (Malaysia)• Boreum Kang (South Korea)

Lab Facilitators' Notes

Amidst the backdrop of a global pandemic, this year's APAF Lab provided a platform for us to respond to certain triggers, as we reflected on the present and redirected possibilities as well as the course of performance making towards the future.

In the frequency of our communing digitally in what we call our "living room gatherings," the APAF Lab has become a safe and dynamic space for synergy and exchange for artists creating in remote spaces from various socio-political and cultural landscapes.

We welcome you to join us and engage in the generous "sharing" of our participating artists. Aside from our online presentations, we have an APAF Lab Gallery that serves as our map to guide us in understanding more about the artists' processes and contexts.

Given the limitations of virtual communing and communication, and as we are still under very unstable conditions in our respective places, these presentations are not meant to be experienced as "final products" but to be perceived as potent "seeds" of ongoing processes currently in development.

We invite you to engage with us through these "seeds" as we help each other raise and develop them under these testing times. This is our response to various triggers in society: we come together and plant seeds of possibilities. We wish these "seeds" can be the beginning of many nodes of connection and co-creation with you. We deeply hope that our togetherness will be the antibody that we need for healing towards a regenerative future.

Log in.

JK Anicoche, Arsita Iswardhani, Riki Takeda
Lab Facilitators

Lab Facilitators

Photo by Rita



JK Anicoche The Philippines

JK Anicoche is a Manila-based performance maker working at the intersection of art, culture, and development. His practice ranges from developing performances in a black box to devising works with/in various communities. He is the Artistic Director of contemporary cultural laboratory Sipat Lawin Inc., a founding member of anti-disciplinary collective Komunidad X, and Festival Director of Karnabal: Performance and Social Innovation. His recent engagements have taken him to New York, Taiwan, Shanghai, and Japan, where he presented the *Sand (a)isles* project at Festival/Tokyo 2019.

Photo by Rita



Arsita Iswardhani Indonesia

Arsita Iswardhani is an actor and performance maker, who explores performance-making methods through various intercultural and interdisciplinary approaches. She studies martial arts, Javanese dance, the Suzuki Method, and ethnography as a means of performance making. Iswardhani has presented solo performances at festivals, both national and international, as well as participating in the inter-Asian theater collaboration project *Multitude of Peer Gynts* (2018 –), in which she has participated since 2019. She is a member of Teater Garasi/Garasi Performance Institute, a multi-disciplinary performance collective in Yogyakarta, Indonesia, that explores and devises possibilities in the performing arts as a way to approach both personal and social issues. Iswardhani was an APAF2019 Lab participant.

© Kenji Seo



Riki Takeda Japan

Riki Takeda is a theater director and folk arts archiver. He joined theater company chelfitsch as an actor and performed extensively in Europe and the US with the company. After the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, he began his career as a director. Takeda invites the audience to consider our contemporary time in a playful manner: everyday matters form the material for his works, such as being reprimanded by a police officer, the Japanese street food *takoyaki* (octopus balls), and elementary education textbooks. He is also involved in the revival and preservation of folk art in depopulated rural villages in Japan. Recent activities include creating and presenting work in Metro Manila and Shanghai, as well as running an art space in Wuhan, China. Takeda was a Yokohama Arts Foundation Creative Childrens Fellow in 2016 and 2017, as well as a Japan Foundation Asia Center's Asia Fellow in 2019.

Lab Process

The original plan was to hold the art camp in Japan and Yogyakarta, as we did last year; but as a result of the coronavirus crisis, we began exploring ways to hold them remotely, while keeping track of the situations in different Asian countries.

Apr Lab facilitators appointed; decision made to hold the program remotely

May 20th – Four “triggers” established

We set four “triggers” to stimulate the Lab participants in their exploration of their individual research topics. Participants were asked at the application stage to pick one that interested them and use it to develop their ideas.

Isolation(s) R/evolution Prayer: Unseen Nature/Object

Jun 2nd – Applications open for Lab participants

We held an open call for entries from Asia-based creators who play central roles in the performing arts, such as directors, choreographers, playwrights, and dramaturgs.

Jul Applications close; a two-round selection process

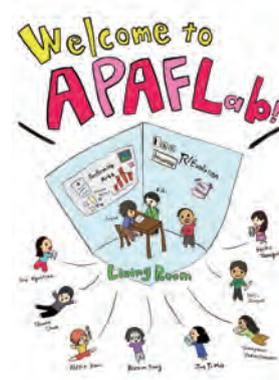
We received applications from 105 people from 17 countries, who then went through a paper screening process, followed by online interviews.

Aug 19th – Lab participants announced

Our eight Lab participants were selected!

20th – Kickoff day

The first day of the Zoom sessions, named the “Living Room Gatherings,” involved self-introductions by the participants. After the session, a welcome party was held online, using a service that allowed the participants to move freely through the virtual space like being at an actual party.



The first half of the Lab

The Living Room Gatherings took place once a week and involved presentations by the facilitators, ice-breaking sessions, and research presentations by each participant, along with feedback sessions. The facilitators and participants asked questions about each presentation and shared information that they thought could serve as hints for the research project.



Lab Process

Sep

17th – Mid-term presentations

To get things started, the facilitators posed the following questions to the attendees: “Are the performing arts effective in the time of pandemic? If so, why? Please consider this question while you listen to each presentation.”

For their ten-minute presentations, each participant explored a range of formats, using documents and videos as well as creating original content using apps and conducting performances. In the feedback session, the Lab participants received questions from the Young Farmers Camp participants. In the exchange session which took place after the event, the participants of each program at APAF were able to directly interact with each other for the first time.



19th – Sessions outside of the Living Room Gatherings

After the mid-term presentations, the Lab participants started to initiate activities outside of the regular Lab sessions, and proposed holding voluntary Zoom sessions.

24th – The second half of the Lab

The Living Room Gatherings increased in frequency to twice a week. The sessions involved discussions on a given topic, as well as sharing experiences of being under lockdown through activities such as meditation and writing out memories linked to the pandemic.

Oct

Lectures Series

1st – Lecture 1 with Takaaki Kumakura (Contemporary art and dance scholar, critic, and practitioner)

Through an eating meditation workshop that involved the consumption of rice, Kumakura asked the participants to reconsider shared perspectives and common presumptions surrounding this food item. This act of reflection was considered as a kind of exercise in the philosophical concept of “form.”



8th – Lecture 2 with Ica Fernandez (Development and cultural worker)

Ica shared her perspectives, as a researcher involved in urban planning and peace building (among many other activities), on how to bridge the fields of development and culture and how to establish interpersonal relationships. This was followed by a discussion with the Lab participants.

12th – Lecture 3 with Tadashi Uchino (Theater studies scholar)

A lecture by a performance studies expert on the situations surrounding the performing arts during the coronavirus crisis and beyond.

Oct 23, 24 – Final Presentations

Oct 25 – Feedback Session

Lab Participants

Final Presentations 1

Photo by Wang Yuanqing



Alexis Kam
(China)

Alexis Kam (b. 1992) is a contemporary dancer and performer. She was born in Hong Kong and raised in Macau. Kam joined dance company BeijingDance/LDTX in 2014, before leaving in 2020 to pursue her career as an independent artist. She has been invited to the 13th Macau City Fringe Festival for the “Solos/Duets Showcase” in 2013, Macau CDE Springboard 2017, and the 31st Macao Arts Festival (due to be held in 2021) to create and present new work. With an interest in working with different art genres, Kam is looking to take part in multidisciplinary collaborations and artistic endeavors.



Sunayana Premchander
(India)

Premchander (b. 1993) is a director, creator, and curator. Her work often focuses on community engagements, and falls at the intersections of gender and socio-political debates, taking on a feminist voice. Following a degree in economics, Sunayana studied playwriting and direction. She worked as the Programme Coordinator of theater institution Ranga Shankara, is a Gender Bender 2019 grantee, and Curator of *Exploring Exciting Texts*, an online discussion and performance series. She is a founding member and Co-Artistic Director of KathaSiyah Trust in Bangalore.

Photo by Geloy Conception



Ness Roque
(The Philippines)

Ness Roque (b. 1991), is a theater and film actor, dramaturg, and educator. She was a member of the Manila-based contemporary performance company Sipat Lawin Ensemble (2009 – 2018). Roque is currently a graduate student at the Tokyo University of the Arts. She is currently exploring performative gestures as site-specific interventions in urban spaces. Recent performances include Alfian Sa’at’s *The Optic Trilogy: A Play Reading* (BIPAM 2019) and visual artist Ralph Lumbres’ video project *Sa Pagitan 1: Mekong River* (2020).



Keiko Yamaguchi
(Japan)

Keiko Yamaguchi (b. 1986) is an actor based in Kyoto, who is drawn to the innately human aspects of migration. She has performed in stage productions by Yukichi Matsumoto, Marebito Theater Company, Shitatame, and others. As an actor and assistant director, she was involved in numerous international joint productions organized by *ricca ricca* festa* (Okinawa). After founding theater group BRDG in 2011, she began creating performances developed from interviews and fieldwork. In 2020, she was part of a joint production with the Philippine Educational Theater Association (PETA) that involved youth from both countries.

Lab Participants

Final Presentations 2



Photo by Mishhaal

Nia Agustina (Indonesia)

Nia Agustina (b. 1989) was born in Central Java and is currently based in Yogyakarta. She founded the Paradance Platform in 2015, and is the co-curator of Indonesian Dance Festival (2016 – present). Her activities revolve around nurturing young Indonesian dance practitioners. Since 2017, she has been running *gelaran.id*, a website for performance art and performing arts critics with her husband Ahmad Jalidu. Agustina was selected for the Japan Foundation Asia Center’s Asia Fellowship Program (February – March 2020), in which she researched platforms for young dance practitioners in Japan.



Photo by Low Pey Sien

Shawn Chua (Singapore)

Shawn Chua (b. 1989) is a researcher and artist engaged with embodied archives, uncanny personhoods, and the participatory frameworks of play. He is a recipient of the National Arts Council Scholarship and holds an MA in Performance Studies from Tisch School of the Arts at New York University. He is also a founding member of Bras Basah Open: School of Theory and Philosophy and is part of the group that runs *soft/WALL/studs*.



©Sang Hoon Ok

Jun Yi Mah (Malaysia)

Trained as an architect, Mah Jun Yi (b. 1991) has always been fascinated by how people use space, and how space affects people. She now manages *KongsikL*, a 10,000-square-foot art space run by a small team, where she is involved in producing various events and projects, including the ongoing multidisciplinary collaborative performance series, *Seni Tiga*. She has also participated in various urban intervention projects, and occasionally conducted research projects in Kuala Lumpur.



Boreum Kang (South Korea)

Boreum Kang (b. 1991) is a Seoul-based theater director whose interest lies in developing a theatrical approach that reveals the voices easily silenced in Korean society. Her recent work focuses on African immigrants and female laborers. In light of the #MeToo movement in Korea, she is currently exploring ways to establish a safe environment for creating theater. Kang’s work attempts to incorporate various methods of documentary theater as a means to find the connections between personal and social issues. She was selected as an Arts Council Korea Creative Academy fellow for 2020.

About APAF

Asian Performing Arts Farm (APAF) is a development initiative under the Tokyo Festival that offers opportunities for artists in Asia to elevate their creative practice through mutual exchange, and expand their presence beyond national and cultural boundaries.

APAF offers three spaces: the Exhibition, for artists to spread their “branches” through creation; the Lab, where participants can deepen their practice, firmly establishing and expanding their “roots” ; and the Young Farmers Camp, helping the next generation to plant the first seeds for future growth.

Programs

<h3 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Exhibition</h3> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Program launch July 10</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Online performance October 22 – 25</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Participants: Age 35 and younger</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">A presentation of work fostered through international collaboration</p>	<h3 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Lab</h3> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Program launch August 20</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Public presentations October 23 – 24</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Feedback session October 25</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Participants: Age 35 and younger</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">An online art camp with artists from across Asia</p>	<h3 style="font-size: 2em; margin: 0;">Young Farmers Camp</h3> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Program launch September 10</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Publication of essays (Japanese only)</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; margin: 5px 0;">Participants: Age 29 and younger</p>	<p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">A study group aimed at young people based in Japan</p>
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The experience of the participants over the course of the initiative will inform a variety of outputs, including performances, presentations, and essays. The three programs will cultivate a “farm” that yields artists and programs that will contribute to the Asian performing arts scene of the future.

Schedule

Theatre Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, Theatre West **Atelier** Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre, Atelier East **ONLINE** From anywhere **R** Reservation required

	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00	19:00	20:00	
2020/10/22 Thu		Exhibition 『フレフレ Ostrich!! Hayupang Die-Bow-Ken!』+ Happy Birthual Tamago Party 計2時間(予定) Total of 2 hours (TBC)							18:00~ Exhibition ONLINE Theatre R		
23 Fri					15:00-16:00 Lab ONLINE Final Presentation ①			18:00~ Exhibition ONLINE Theatre R			
24 Sat		11:00-21:00 Lab Final Presentation Video Screening ①② Atelier			15:00-16:00 Lab ONLINE Final Presentation ②			17:00-21:00 Lab Final Presentation Video Screening ①② Atelier			
25 Sun	11:00~ Exhibition ONLINE Theatre R						16:00-18:30 Lab Feedback session ONLINE R				
	11:00-16:00 Lab Final Presentation Video Screening ①② Atelier										

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