International Dance Day 2019

Event Report

28 - 29 April 2019
Seoul, South Korea

Under the patronage of UNESCO
This year’s International Dance Day main worldwide celebration took place in Seoul, South Korea. Organized by the South Korean Centre of ITI, the General Secretariat of ITI, and the World Dance Alliance Korea, it marked the 38th time the event had been celebrated since its inception in 1982.

International Dance Day is the major global dance event of the International Theatre Institute (ITI). It is celebrated by ITI Centres, dance organizations, dance educational institutions and dance aficionados all around the world.

The event seeks to celebrate the beauty of dance arts in all its different guises and raise awareness of the importance of dance, offer educational or social activities, and inspire the audiences all over the world.

With this in mind the International Dance Day event in Seoul must be considered a remarkable success. South Korea itself is a country with a rich tradition in the dance arts, representing a country who is separated and with people in the North and South who live under the threat of a war. It is a region that needs the power of dance and its healing power.

The message author for 2019, Karima Mansour of Egypt, choreographer, dancer and dance educator, contributed to this with her wonderful message of understanding and passion for the arts. The event organizers likewise helped promote the spirit of the event, putting together a two-day programme of events which were tailor-made to achieve the sort of cross-cultural exchange based on openness and inclusivity that the event was designed for. With Conferences taking place in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), the involvement of participants from both North and South Korea, and sublime performances of both traditional, modern, and popular dance forms the event was a sublime display of the power of dance.

It is my hope that this International Dance Day event in South Korea can galvanize and inspire dance enthusiasts not only in South and North Korea, but countries across the world. It was a joyous occasion, and an ideal platform from which to show everybody the wonder of dance.

Tobias Biancone
Director General of ITI
I sincerely congratulate you on hosting the 2019 International Dance Day celebration. I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to Kim Jung-soo, President of the Korean Dance Federation, the Honorary Chairman of the Korean Dance Federation, and Chairman Choi Chimb Lim of the International Theatre Institute, Korea.

The UNESCO World Dance Alliance in association with ITI has designated April 29th, the birthday of contemporary ballet reformer Jean Georges Noverre, as a “International Dance Day”, to encourage all the world’s dancers and to spread the value of dance. Especially, this year, we will hold a “International Dance Day” event in Korea after previous events in China 2017, and Cuba 2018, showing the international importance of attaining harmony through dance.

I would also like to express my deepest respect and gratitude to all the dancers who have agree to perform and have made our lives more enriched through dance arts. I hope that this event will enable domestic and foreign dancers to communicate and advance our dance industry.

The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism also supports cultural artists to create their own creative arts. Based on the Culture of People - Culture Vision 2030, we will create Korea with a culture, cooperation and diversity. I’ll do my best to achieve this.

Once again, I would like to congratulate you on hosting the “International Dance Day” ceremony and thank you all for participating in the event.

I wish you every success.

Park Yang Woo
Minister of Culture, Sports and Tourism

I would like to firstly welcome and thank each one of you for joining us here in celebration of the International Dance Day. My name is Geung Soo Kim, President of World Dance Alliance – Korea.

Spring is just around the corner, and as we all know, spring calls for new beginnings and new life. There is a saying in Korean, "moments in spring are worth a ton of gold". And today - April 29th - was named “International Dance Day” to celebrate the birthdate of Jean Georges Noverre who is also known as the Father of Modern Ballet.

Our International Dance Day event showcases the unique characteristics of each participating country with vibrant new themes every year. In 2019, our objective is to deliver the message of peace and hope through "The Dance of Unified Peace in the Life of Humans and Nature". With the participation of dancers from all around the world, this will be an expression of hope for a future filled with peace and unity.

We, the WDAK, promise to reciprocate your love and interest with our continued effort to point the world in the direction of peace. And with the International Dance Day event today, we will do our best to demonstrate peace and unity through dance.

Thank you.

Kim Geung Soo
President, World Dance Alliance Korea
International Dance Day

International Dance Day is a global celebration of dance, created by the Dance Committee of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) in 1982 and is celebrated every year on 29 April, the birthday of Jean-Georges Noverre, the creator of modern ballet.

The day strives to encourage participation and education in dance through events, conferences, award ceremonies and festivals held on and around this date all over the world. UNESCO, the founder of ITI and the main partner for the performing arts for UNESCO formally recognize ITI to be the founder of International Dance Day.

Every year, since its creation in 1982, an outstanding dance personality is selected to write a message for International Dance Day. Since 2008 the General Secretariat of ITI create a flagship event either at UNESCO in Paris or in a selected host city, with dance performances, educational workshops, humanitarian projects and speeches made by ambassadors, dignitaries, dance personalities and the selected message author for that year.

The day is a celebration day for those who can see the value and importance of the art form dance, and acts as a wake-up-call for governments, politicians and institutions which have not yet recognized its value to the people.
International Dance Day 2019 Message

At the beginning there was movement… and since the dawn of time, dance has been a strong means of expression and celebration. Found on the murals of Egyptian Pharaohs and inspiring dance makers to date. Dance was used to evoke the many gods and goddesses of dance with all what they represent in meaning and concepts like balance from which justice is connected, musicality, tone, individual and cosmic consciousness and more.

I read once that: “Dance in the times of the Pharaohs was thought to elevate the spirit of the dancer and of the audience of spectators or participants. Music and dance called upon the highest impulses of the human condition while also consoling people on the disappointments and losses in a life.”

Movement is a language spoken by us all. Movement is a universal language that belongs to everybody. If only we open our senses and listen. Listening is what is required, listening without interference, listening without judgment, listening in silence and allowing the movement to pass through the body in the moment, because everything inside us and around us is in motion, constant motion. This is when the body doesn’t lie because it is listening to its truth and manifesting it.

By listening to our heartbeat, we can then dance the dance of life, which requires movement, agility and adaptability, a constant shifting choreography.

In this day and age where connection & connectivity have taken on new meanings and where we are at our lowest point in our ability to connect… Dance remains to be the most sought after action to help us re-establish that lost connection. Dance brings us back to our roots, in the cultural sense but also in the most immediate sensory, personal, individual, down to the core and heart way, whilst still enabling us to be social animals. For it is when we connect with ourselves when we listen to our inner rhythm, that we are really able to establish a connection with others and communicate.

Dance is where culture is shared and borders fall into the space of inclusion and unity, through the unspoken language of universality.

The body is an instrument of expression, a vessel for our voice, our thoughts, our feelings, our history, our being and existence, our yearning to express and connect that manifests through movement.

Dance is a space that allows oneself to connect with their truth, for that, a quiet space is required. Dance allows us to connect and feel whole and it is only in that feeling that we find peace and with peace comes silence and it is through silence that we can hear, listen, speak and through stillness that we learn to dance our truths and this is when dance becomes pertinent.

Movement and dance is where we can move from the vertical to the horizontal, from up to down and vice versa. Movement and dance is where chaos can be created and re-organized, or not. Where we are able to create our own realities and fleeting, ephemeral moments one after the other. Moments that can touch us and remain in our memories, to inspire and change us and others for life. That is the power of true expression and thus the power of dance.

Dance is a healer. Dance is where humanity can meet. I invite people to go beyond borders, beyond identity crisis, beyond nationalism and beyond frames. May we free ourselves of those limitations and find the movement and momentum in that universal language. I invite everybody to dance to their heartbeat, to their inner truth because it is from these internal movements, that lead to internal revolutions, where real change happens.
International Dance Day 2019 Schedule

General Topic: Peace & Unity, Dance for Social Change

Sunday, 28 April
11:00  Dance Brings People Together Line Dance in Gwanghwamun Square
13:00  Reception on the second floor of the Opera House
14:00  Korean National Ballet Sleeping Beauty
18:00  Performance and Supper at Museum of face

Monday, 29 April
10:00  DMZ Dora Observatory
      Peace & Unity, Dance for Social Change Forums and Flash Mob Dance
17:30  Outdoor Performance at Shilla Hotel
18:30  Main Celebration and Dinner at Shilla Hotel

Museum of face, Seoul, South Korea
Sunday, 28 April, at the Gwanghwamun Square in Seoul

Line Dance: *Dance Brings People Together*

Celebrating the International Dance Day
Line Dance Hanmadang Festival,
hosted by the Line Dance Association of Korea,
supported by Seoul Metropolitan City Government.
Gwanghwamun Plaza, Seoul, South Korea

From left to right: Luis Llerena, Chen Zhongwen, Karima Mansour, Alberto García, Liu Qingyi
Sunday, 28 April at the Opera House, Seoul
Reception

A Reception was organized on the 2nd floor of the Seoul Opera House, before the afternoon performance of *Sleeping Beauty*.

Several key government officials, Korean theatre artists and members of the Korean National Ballet, including the Artistic Director, were introduced to the members of ITI.
The audience, including the members of ITI, watched the performance of *Sleeping Beauty* performed by the Korean National Ballet in the Opera House. After the performance, ITI guests went backstage to congratulate the performers.
Sunday, 28 April, at the Museum of Face

Traditional Korean performances were arranged by the Honorary President Kim Jeong-ok in his Museum of Face.

A home-made traditional Korean dinner was prepared for the guests.
Sunday, 28 April at the Museum of Face

Korean Traditional Performance
The Conference “Peace & Unity, Dance for Social Change” was organized in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the morning of 29 April.

Speakers from North and South Korea joined international speakers from China, Egypt, Slovenia and Spain for discussions on the importance of dance. An additional delegation group from North Korea also joined in the audience.

Each speaker gave their opinion about the topic, and spoke with passion on the importance of the dance arts to opening dialogues.

After the discussion community dances were performed outside by Bogyeol Dance Life from South Korea and the Focus Dance Company from Chinese Taipei.

**Forum Speakers:**

- **Karima Mansour**, Egypt, Message Author of International Dance Day 2019
- **Alberto Garcia**, Spain, President of International Dance Committee IDC, Executive Council Member ITI
- **Tatjana Azman**, Slovenia, Executive Council Member ITI
- **Liu Qingyi**, China, Head of Dance Research Centre, Shanghai Theatre Academy
- **Wang Yunyu**, Chinese Taipei, Global Board Member of World Dance Alliance
- **Baek Young Sook**, North Korea, Director
- **Chi Bogyeol**, South Korea, Artistic Director, Bogyeol Dance Life
Monday, 29 April, at the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ)
Community Dance

Outdoor community dance by Bogyeol Dance Life Company

Conference speakers, performers and the North Korean delegation
Monday, 29 April, at the Shilla Hotel, Seoul
Performances

An outdoor performance was held in the Shilla Hotel in Seoul before the main celebration in the late afternoon. Four performances were presented, beginning with a traditional Korean dance performed by the National Gugak Centre, which is the National Centre for Korean Traditional Performing Arts. This was followed by two Korean contemporary performances, culminating with a dance showing from the Focus Dance Company of Chinese Taipei.

Performance A Pair by National Gugak Centre

Performance Guernica Again by Lee Dong Ha

Performance Duality by Luda Lee and Kim Yun Ah

Performance Great Freedom by Focus Dance Company from Chinese Taipei
2019 International Dance Day
Main Ceremony

18:30, Monday, 29 April 2019, Shilla Hotel, Seoul, South Korea

Programme
Moderator: Gemma Shin

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<td>Korea National Ballet Artistic Director</td>
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<td>Kim Jeonbae</td>
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<td>Yook Wansoon &amp; Kim Mae Ja</td>
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<td>Mohamed Saif Al-Afkham</td>
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<td>Alberto García</td>
<td>President International Dance Committee IDC</td>
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<td>Kim Moon Sook</td>
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<td>Tobias Biancone</td>
<td>Director General ITI Worldwide</td>
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<td>Banquet</td>
<td>Guitarist Lee Byung Woo</td>
<td>PyeongChang Winter Olympics Opening &amp; Closing Ceremonies Artistic Director</td>
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Monday, 29 April, at the Shilla Hotel, Seoul
Main Celebration

On 29 April, the International Dance Day 2019 main celebration was held at the Shilla Hotel in Seoul, South Korea. Around a hundred local Korean guests and VIPs attended.

The event was opened by Kang Suejin, the Korean National Ballet’s Artistic Director. Following this there were welcome speeches from Tobias Biancone, Director General of ITI, Kim Geung Soo, president of World Dance Alliance Korea, and a congratulatory speech from Kim Jeong Bae, Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts Policy from Korea Republic.

An introduction to the message author of International Dance Day 2019, was made by Mohamed Saif Al-Afkham, President of ITI. Finally, Karima Mansour read her message in English.

Mohamed Saif Al-Afkham, President of ITI, and Alberto García, President International Dance Committee IDC, delivered special prizes to the two winners of a specially created Korean dance award.

Once these festivities passed a banquet commenced with a toast from Kim Moon Sook, National Academy of Arts Member Korea, and Tobias Biancone. During the banquet, a guitar solo was performed by Lee Byung Woo, Artistic Director of the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the PyeongChang Winter Olympics 2018.
Monday, 29 April, at the Shilla Hotel, Seoul
Main Celebration

From left to right:
Kang Suejin, Artistic Director Korea National Ballet
Tobias Biancone, Director General ITI
Karima Mansour, Message Author
Mohamed Saif Al-Afkham, President ITI
Kim Geung Soo, President World Dance Alliance Korea
International Dancy Day Promotion

Invitation cards, brochures, advertisements, panels and programmes for the International Dance Day 2019 celebration in Seoul, South Korea, were designed and printed.
The International Dance Day 2019 celebration received a strong response in South Korea. During the Conference “Peace & Unity, Dance for Social Change” in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), ITI presented its overview video to the audience, which included participants from North Korea, granting international visibility.
International Dance Day Press & Media

**Pastime: The daily magazine**

**Stepping Up With The Stars**

Throughout the globe April 29 is celebrated as an occasion of joy. Dance form has its own language like music, dance, theater, literature and painting. Fine arts conjoined with busy movements and rhythm gives dance a unique perception.

- Malika Sarahi
- Premi Patel
- Jasmine Shakar

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**International Dance Day Press & Media**

Il messaggio di Karima Mansour per la Giornata Internazionale della Danza

La scrittura, specie quella alfabetica e grafica, è stata scelta dall'UNESCO quale simbolo del messaggio per l'anno 2019.

**Il Teatro della Memoria**

**Pastime: The daily magazine**

**Stepping Up With The Stars**

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International Dance Day Press & Media

Il messaggio di Karima Mansour per la Giornata Internazionale della Danza

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Event Organizers

International Theatre Institute Team

Chen Zhongwen
Deputy Director General

Chen Simin
ITI Project Officer

Tom Johnson
ITI Project Officer

Tang Yiming
ITI Establishment Officer

World Dance Alliance Korea Team

Kim Geung Soo

Jun Hong Jo

Kang Kyung Mo

Lee Mihee

Jang He Jin

Kang Hey Jung

Won Hey In