

- Fringe Highlight -

Cane

Loo Zihan (Singapore)

19 February 2012, 8pm

The Substation Theatre

\$19

www.loozihan.com

(Festival Highlight / Fringe Commission / World Premiere / Co-presented with The Substation)

In 1993, Singaporean artist Josef Ng's performance *Brother Cane* resulted in a public debate over obscenity in performance art and a subsequent ten-year restriction of the licensing and funding of performance art in Singapore.

Cane by Loo Zihan consists of a re-enactment of *Brother Cane* based on an eyewitness account by artist Ray Langenbach, a performative lecture

reconstructing incidents surrounding the event based on various oral accounts, and pre-filmed segments with individuals involved in *Brother Cane* and performance art in Singapore. The work seeks not only to commemorate and honour the memory of this performance, but also to explore the possibility of representing performance art, a form often perceived as ephemeral or transient.



Photo Credit: Miao Jiaxin

Relationship to Art & Faith

“In re-enacting Brother Cane, I am attempting to inhabit Josef’s experience in 1993. I am performing his actions, filtered through time, memory, eyewitness accounts, and the media. In a way, I am renewing my faith in this work, in the audience and in my nation.

“I am placing my faith in performance art’s ability to exist illogically and impractically. This lack of logic and reason allows performance art to retain its power to challenge, remain pertinent and relational.

“The audience will be complicit in the act of re-creation, with the knowledge of what is to come; their very act of viewing this performance gives me permission to proceed with this ritual. They will allow me to trim my pubic hair in a public space, they will allow me to singe my skin with a cigarette and they will allow me to say that sometimes, silent protest is not enough.

“I question what the relationship of the Singaporean audience will be to Brother Cane 18 years on. Re-enacting this piece is the only way we can find the answer. I have faith that things have changed, and the artist who chooses to stand for his beliefs will no longer be silenced or exiled. I have faith in the power of art and the persistence of time to bring about this change.”

- Loo Zihan

Biography of Loo Zihan

Loo Zihan is a Singaporean moving-image, performance and installation artist. He received a MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and his BFA from Nanyang Technological University. His films have been screened in various film festivals including AFI Fest (L.A.), Pusan International Film Festival, Newfest (New York City) and Frameline (San Francisco). He has had recent exhibitions and showings at NEXT / Art Chicago, Zhou B Art Center (Chicago) and Defibrillator (Chicago). He is the recipient of a James Nelson Raymond Fellowship from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

- Fringe Highlight -

[Black Square]

Van Huynh Company | The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (United Kingdom
| Hong Kong)

25 - 26 February 2012, 8pm
Esplanade Theatre Studio
\$30 / \$19

www.damvanhuynh.com | www.hkapa.edu

(Festival Highlight)

Van Huynh Company was founded by Dam Van Huynh to further the exploration of the human body and its relationship through time and space. Inspired by everyday life and people, Dam's choreographies are grounded in reality and dig further to access a deeper layer of conscience.

In his latest creation, Dam studies the body in its most infinite parts, and through details from everyday observation of people, depicts society. At times, the dancers move like loosened marionettes with disobedient limbs wanting to be liberated. As they invade the stage to break and shatter the space gradually, their encounters reveal themselves as ferocious fights between human beings in an individualistic society.

[Black Square] is a stunning piece of choreography that stirs up space to reveal new dimensions, taking the audience to the core of the experience.

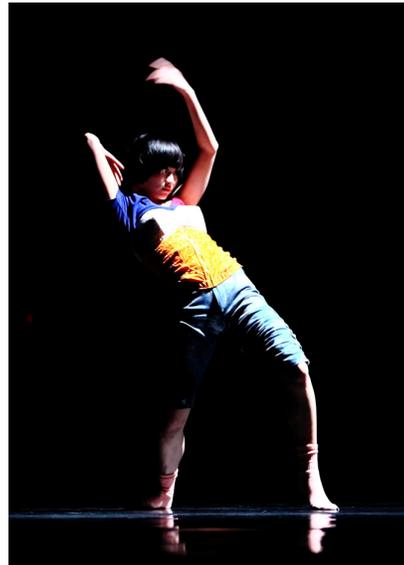


Photo Credit: Bacchus Lee

"Van Huynh has found his own very stylised world, and has perfected the art of drawing an audience into it."

- Anna Crofts, Critical Dance Magazine.com, July 2009

Relationship to Art & Faith

"Back of every creation, supporting it like an arch, is faith. Enthusiasm is nothing: it comes and goes. But if one believes, then miracles occur."

- Henry Miller

Each individual is unique and bears within himself his own faith.

Human beings are creators, they choose their own worlds, they create their environments and mould their lives the way they want it.

Throughout [*Black Square*], the audience will intimately meet the performers and get to know them.

The audience/performers relationship is at the core of the piece: they rely on each other, trust each other, and challenge and tease each other. The performers need the faith of the audience to exist, faith in the human abilities to transcend the everyday life to make it meaningful.

Artists give an impression on the world, a testimony of what they perceive: each member of the audience must do the rest of the work and find his own interpretation.

Biography of Creative Team

Van Huynh Company

Van Huynh Company was founded by Dam Van Huynh to further the exploration of the human body and its relationship through time and space.

Inspired by everyday life and people, Dam's choreographies are grounded in reality and dig further to access a deeper layer of conscience. The company selects movements and attitudes to process this information by expanding and exaggerating the observed gestures. The result is a physical dance creating a sense of surrealism, where the capacities of the human body are explored to its extremes and infinite details become prominent.

The company brings emphasis to the torso as one of the main key elements of exploration. Using its own system of torso division, the company creates a unique movement vocabulary.

The productions are a breath of energy combining a strong sense of visual imagery and rhythm, technicality and sensuality.

Van Huynh Company toured internationally to venues and festivals in the UK, Mexico, Sweden, Spain, Hong Kong and Korea. Some of the main productions are *Collision*, *Sudden Change of Event*, *Mural Studies*, *Unexpectedly Here* and [*Black Square*].

The Company also received commissions by institutions and organisations such as Laban Theatre, the British Museum, Dance United and The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

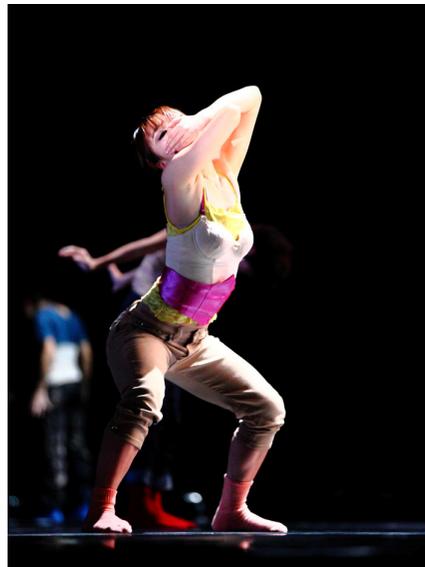


Photo Credit: Bacchus Lee

Dam Van Huynh

Artistic Director

Originally from Southern Vietnam, Dam Van Huynh was raised and educated in the United States. As a dancer, Dam has worked with various companies and choreographers including The Nevada Ballet, Merce Cunningham Dance Company, Companhia de Dança Contemporânea, Richard Alston Dance Company and Phoenix Dance Theatre. *Collision*, Dam's entry for The Place Prize 2008, received the audience choice every night for ten nights. After founding his own company, Dam created and toured *Sudden Change of Event* and *Mural Studies* internationally. Dam was appointed Artist-in-Residence at The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts (HKAPA) in 2010. In 2011 Dam's residency was extended, allowing him to further develop the research undertaken with his company.

Jamie Hamilton

Composer

Jamie Hamilton is a composer and sound artist. His music and installations have been performed and exhibited throughout London and the UK. He has created site-specific installations and collaborations with dance have been performed in Sweden, Hong Kong and Denmark. His work has been produced or commissioned by Hive Projects, The City of London, Touch Wood - The Place, The National Lottery and Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. He lives and works in London

- Fringe Highlight -

The Triple Gem

Htein Lin (Burma)

15 – 26 February 2012

Mon – Fri: 11am – 8.30pm

Sat & Sun: 10am – 8.30pm

Esplanade – Jendela (Visual Arts Space)

Admission is free

www.hteinlin.com

(Festival Highlight / World Premiere)

The Triple Gem is a new installation created for the Fringe by Burmese artist Htein Lin. Buddhism is one of the two main inspirations for his artistic practice, the other being his experience as a political prisoner, depicted in the installation *The Scale of Justice* which was presented at the Fringe in 2010.

Monks' robes are used to create a triptych of three rooms, each representing the triple gem of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha in which

Buddhists take refuge. The installation incorporates religious items, such as monks' bowls and umbrellas, video and sound, as well as guided meditation.

Htein Lin has used material means to represent immaterial concepts such as impermanence. No matter what your faith, or whether you have a faith at all, you are invited to participate, contemplate and take refuge in *The Triple Gem*.

"In oppressive societies artists don't just need skill and creativity – they have to be courageous and tenacious to a degree that many of us find imaginable. An example of such an artist is Burmese painter and performance artist Htein Lin."

- The Guardian



Photo Credit: Htein Lin

Relationship to Art & Faith

Most "Buddhist art" in Burma, such as the art associated with pagoda decoration and religious objects, is traditional. This multimedia installation aims to express concepts and symbols of Buddhism through contemporary artistic means. The artwork draws on Buddhism for its philosophical underpinnings and symbolism. Each room of the installation represents

an element of the Triple Gem of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. The central “room” represents the Dhamma, or universal truth elucidated by Buddha, sometimes defined as “the art of living”. In other words, the Dhamma, in its quest for mental purity, is the most fundamental art that there is, and if understood, can bring perfect harmony and freedom from suffering.

This central placing of the Dhamma in this triptych, rather than Buddha, reinforces the argument that Buddhism is not a religion involving the worship of an individual, but a philosophy whose truths are reached through meditation, and which can be pursued by people of any faith and religion.

Biography of Htein Lin

Htein Lin took part in the 1988 political protests in Myanmar (Burma) and spent four years in exile before completing a law degree, and then working as an artist and comic actor. He pioneered performance art in Burma in 1996, but in 1998, he was arrested on fabricated political charges. While in jail, he managed to both paint and perform. After his release in November 2004, he had three solo shows in Yangon: *00235* which showed his prison paintings, which have subsequently been shown in London, Turin and Belgium; *Recycled*, an exhibition accompanied by *Standstill*, a daily performance comprising four hours of standing meditation, and *Come Rain or Shine* which featured a number of very large canvases painted with his whole body.

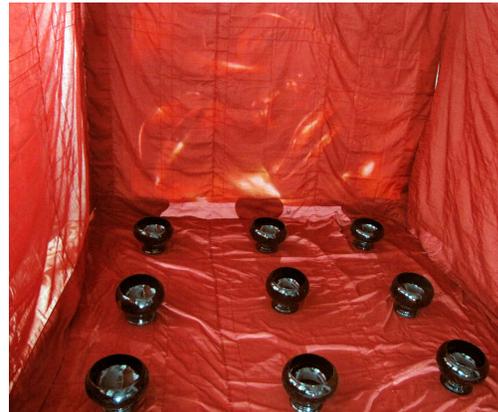


Photo Credit: Htein Lin

Htein Lin has since exhibited and performed in the US, Europe, including the 2007 Venice Biennale as well as in Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines. The M1 Singapore Fringe 2010: Art and the Law featured his installation *The Scale of Justice*. He currently lives in the UK where he is active in promoting Burmese arts and freedom of expression in Burma, and continues to paint and experiment with installation and multimedia work.

- Fringe Highlight -

Iraq is Flying

Jamal Penjweny (Iraq)

15 – 26 February 2012

5.45am – 12.15am

Esplanade Tunnel

Admission is free

www.jamalpenjweny.com

(Festival Highlight / Asian Premiere)

“The memories from our childhood still exist, or in another expression, we still carry a bit of the child inside us. When I was a child, I used to jump with my friends for joy and happiness, and I only dreamed of watching my home from a height for no reason. But for me, jumping was also like a dream. I wanted to fly through a highest jump to watch my house and the road from the sky and to see the entire city where I



Photo Credit: Jamal Penjweny

was born. Now, I can see my city and even all of Iraq from the tiny window of an

airplane, but everything looks different. We are flying in a big competition but we all have forgotten the beauty of the games we had in childhood.

“With *Iraq is Flying*, I wish to give Iraq’s energetic people a chance to regain their dignity, to let them jump beyond the setting of their lives and show how we all carry a bit of the child still within us. I want all Iraq’s people to fly.”

- Jamal Penjweny

“Iraq is Flying’ literally shows people soaring above their situations.”

- Uplift Magazine, 2009

Relationship to Art & Faith

“The media tend to present Iraq as a tragic country. Yet a powerful picture is not necessarily the most tragic. War is always in the focus, but the lives and hopes of Iraqis are often left behind. A powerful picture should be able to inspire the viewer in a series of thoughts, raise questions and shed light on the contradiction of reality, rather than provide a flat answer to what reality is.

“In 2006, I found in my archives a picture where three kids were jumping for a farewell party, and I decided to snap similar jumps of people I met in the streets of Sulaymaniyah, Baghdad, Babil, Fallujah, Kirkuk and ‘Amara.

“Those jumping in *Iraq is Flying* are normal people: children and adults women and men, American and Iraqi soldiers. They return briefly to their childhoods as they jump as high as they can in front of the camera. Iraq is Flying wish to make Iraqis the heroes of the history of their country, and make fly their hopes from Iraq around the world.”

- Jamal Penjweny

Biography of Jamal Penjweny

Jamal Penjweny is a photographer and a filmmaker based in Sulaymanya, Iraq. Penjweny started as a self-taught sculptor and painter in Iraqi Kurdistan at the border between Iraq and Iraq where he was born. Since 2004, while based in Baghdad, his photographs have reported the Iraqi conflict all over the world and appeared in more than dozen international news publications including The New York Times, The Washington Post, The National Geographic and The World Press Photo Magazine.

Penjweny’s photography series *Iraq is Flying* has been selected and exhibited in United Kingdom, United States, Brasil and China. His latest works as filmmaker include *The Gun Market* and *Another Life* which reports the life of smugglers and the weapons’ illegal trade.

Penjweny graduated from the London Institute of Photography in 2008. He is currently working on his new photography series *God's Animals*.