

PSi#20 Shanghai, China

5 July 2014

In the evening of 5 July, the 20th Performance Studies International Conference (PSi 20) was formally opened at the Shanghai Theatre Academy (STA). Maaïke Bleeker, President of PSi, Tobias Biancone, Director-General of UNESCO ITI, Li Ruiyang, Deputy Director-General of Shanghai Municipal Education Commission and Deng Xiaodong, Vice Mayor of Jing'an District attended the opening ceremony and made speeches. The key attendants from STA included Lou Wei, Chairman of STA, Han Sheng, President of STA, Gong Baorong, Vice President of STA, Guo Yu, Vice President of STA and William Sun, Professor of Performance Studies. Chairman Lou Wei delivered the welcoming speech on behalf of STA. The opening ceremony was chaired by President Han Sheng.

Having been hosted by the University of Leeds in UK and Stanford University in the US, this was the first PSi conference hosted by a university in Asia and as such the opening and successful holding of this conference in Shanghai would afford the performance studies as a discipline with new connotation and new significance. This conference brought together several hundred domestic and international experts and practitioners in the areas of art, sociology, anthropology, education and management. Focusing on the theme of "Pioneer, Tradition and Community", there would be over 100 presentations of thesis, workshops, academic dialogues and theme performances.

During the opening ceremony, the participants watched the modern dance "My Land" conducted by Dong Jie, a young choreographer. The dancers' excellent performance gave rise to rounds of warm applause from the audience.

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9 July 2014

In the evening of 8 July, the 20th Performance Studies International Conference (PSi 20) was concluded with great success at the Shanghai Theatre Academy (STA) after four days of discussions and demonstrations for exchange with the active and enthusiastic involvement of the conference participants from home and abroad. Prof Gong Baorong and Prof Guo Yu, vice presidents of STA, and Prof Sun Huizhu attended the closing ceremony together with all participants to the conference. The closing ceremony was chaired by Ms Maaïke Bleeker, President of PSi and presented the certificates to the award winners in such activities as the thesis presentation.

Prof Gong Baorong gave a speech on behalf of STA. He thanked all participants for their dedicated involvement in the activities of the conference. He said that it was the first times in STA's history to have so many English-speaking scholars get together on its campus for academic and artistic studies over four consecutive days. This reflected that STA is an open and dynamic university. He thanked all international friends for their participating in the conference and thanked all those who had made this conference a great success for their contribution including scholars, experts, supporting staff and volunteers. Prof Guo Yu also spoke noting the fact that STA is making a great impact from its small campus and attributing this to the support and involvement of all friends present at the closing ceremony. He quoted the old Chinese saying "what a joy it is to have friends come from afar" and expressed the keen desire for more activities of academic exchange and demonstration of this kind in the future.

Prior to the conclusion of the closing ceremony, Ms Maaïke Bleeker, President of PSi invited Prof Sun Huizhu onto the stage to receive the tribute from the conference. Prof Sun made only one remark in which he thanked all colleagues and counterparts for their enthusiastic support and active participation, as well as the valuable contribution by all student volunteers. Then, several dozens of student volunteers from STA and other universities in Shanghai streamed in along the two corridors of the theatre to receive the applause of thanks from the conference participants.

The closing ceremony was followed by a wonderful cultural and artistic performance with a rich program of dance, Yueju opera, Peking opera and modern drama presented by the Beijing Chinese Girls College, Zhejiang Art Vocational School and STA Chinese Traditional Opera College, as well as the Bulgarian Theatre and Film Academy which presented the modern drama "Confucian Disciples".

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12 June 2014

In the afternoon of 11 June, the press conference for the 20th International Conference on Performance Studies (PSi 20) was held at the Shanghai Theatre Academy (STA), Mr Lou Wei, Chairman of STA, Mr Sun Huizhu, Professor of Performance Studies, Mr Zhang Shengquan, Director of Publicity Office, Mr Shen Liang, Party Secretary of Theatrical Literature Department and Mr Peng Yongwen, Associate Dean of Theatrical Literature Department were present at the press conference and joined by journalists from over a dozen media organizations.

From 4 to 8n July 2014, STA will host Psi 20 with whose theme is "Pioneer, Tradition and Community". Several hundred scholars, experts and artists in the areas of art, sociology, anthropology, education and management from home and abroad including the Director-General of the International Theatre Institute (ITI) under UNESCO will come to the conference during which 400 theses will be presented. Famous universities from outside the Mainland China to be represented at the conference include: Yale University, Stanford University, Brown University and Duke University from the US; University of London and Roehampton University from UK; Free University of Berlin from Germany; Trinity College Dublin of Ireland; University of Zurich from Switzerland; Melbourne University from Australia; National Taiwan University and The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Apart from the presentation of theses, there will be over 50 workshops and seminars and over 10 performances of performing arts. These activities and arrangements will provide an in-depth observation of the current trends and cutting-edge developments of the practice and studies in international theatre and performance studies.

Performance studies was originated in the New York University (NYU) in 1979. In 1995, NYU hosted the first conference on performance studies. In 1997, the Performance Studies international (PSi) was established. It was in 1999 the STA team led by Prof Sun Huizhu embarked on the journey of performance studies with a close integration with the actual situations of China, establishing it as a discipline to cultivate talents at the bachelor, master and doctorate levels. STA's studies base on the mission of the discipline which is to "not only interpret the world, but also transform the world", and enjoys the reputation as the "Chinese school" of performance studies. In 2013, the studies and practice of the STA team was listed by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission for support under its Postgraduate Student Cross-Discipline Creative Talent Incubation Program. The Shanghai Teaching and Research Base for Comprehensive Art Education, which is underpinned by this discipline of STA, has also been established. PSi 20 will drive the further development of performance studies. It is believed that the research and practice in performance studies in China will make an important contribution to the further enhancement of the performance studies globally.

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Symposium for Performance Studies International Conference 20 (Psi20) was held by Richard Schechner Center for Performing Studies and STA's Academic Salon for the Youth at the home of the staff at 12 o'clock on December 19, 2013. Nearly twenty young teachers from different departments attended it.

At the symposium, Professor Sun Huizhu introduced Psi20's bidding process and preparations. At the end of 2012, Shanghai Theatre Academy, having carefully prepared, won the bid for 2014 Psi20 with "Avant-garde, Tradition, Community" as its theme. Psi20 is first held at Asian university and

is the largest-scale international academic and artistic conference ever held by SAT. Till now, its preparatory group has received more than 300 papers from forty countries and regions all over the world. He hoped that all the art teachers of SAT, especially those middle-aged and young ones, should actively take part in this conference by means of attending forum, writing academic papers, giving performance or taking practices etc. Communicating with the scholars of humanities and arts from other countries via this platform would definitely develop their own research capability. After hearing Professor Sun's introduction, all the present teachers discussed warmly with great interest on the topics of papers and forms and contents of display for Psi20. (Text & Graphics: Chu Fei Editing: Rong Shu)

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Call for Papers

PSi#20 : Avant-Garde, Tradition, Community

July 4-8, 2014, at the Shanghai Theatre Academy in Shanghai

This first PSi conference in China, and the second one in Asia, explores avant-garde, tradition and community as parallel, intercultural and co-located terms that have crossed borders wherein relationships between arts and cultures are renegotiated and transformed. Avant-garde, tradition and community are positioned as umbrella terms with a broad relevance in global performance studies, while also having unique and enduring connections to Asian performance and modernity. We invite consideration of these themes in comparative and intercultural studies, studies across western and non-western sites and in relation to globalization, modernity, and contemporaneity. PSi#20 welcomes papers, panels, workshops, and performances exploring many issues related to the three key words in various cultural and intercultural contexts..

Topics may include :

- How are notions of the avant-garde, tradition and community linked within a larger global understanding of performance and performance studies ?
- How do these themes relate to perceptions and practices of performance in different places and cultures ?
- How are notions of the avant-garde and tradition understood, theorised, practiced and debated where you are ?
- How do Asian and other non-western praxis relate to discourses and experiences of performance in the broadly defined sphere of Western avant-garde praxis ?
- How is the avant-garde associated with traditional performance ? Opposed, derivative, parallel, with blurred edges ?
- How are the terms avant-garde, tradition and community defined in the 21 century ? In local, regional and global contexts ?
- How do notions and/or expressions of cultural difference influence our perceptions and experience of these terms ? What are the border crossings and blockades to an intercultural understanding of these terms, in the wake of globalization ?
- How meaningful are the terms in the context of cultural, geographical, and historical boundaries ? Do we need new terms and formations ?
- Does performance studies in your institution involve artists off campus ? Does it involve non-academic, non-artistic communities ?
- How do performing/performance artists view non-artistic communities - consumers, beneficiaries, participants, or/and collaborators ?
- What are the relations between aesthetic performance studies and social performance studies ?

More information For a more extensive description and the full Call for Proposals, please check : <http://psi20.sta.edu.cn/info1English.html> Deadline for proposals : 20 NOVEMBER 2013, midnight (Beijing Time). Please send your inquiries to : psi20@sta.edu.cn