

Thai court dance and hip-hop combine for new interpretation in dance (with photos)

Two distinguished Asian dancers cross khon (traditional Thai court dance) and modernist forms of hip-hop to give a new interpretation in dance in "Negotiation", to be presented this November in Hong Kong.

Khon artist Pichet Klunchun, the founder of Thailand's first contemporary dance group, and Laotian dancer-choreographer Olé Khamchanla, the initiator of the dance company KHAM in France, confront and listen to each other to interweave old and new customs. Unfolding the cultural dialogue and turning macho confrontation into fraternal harmony, the two dancers reframe the art of dance to reconnect the audience members with each other, uniting diversity and diversifying unity to fully reconcile physical, mental and spiritual being.

Pichet Klunchun is one of the most audacious artists in the Thai cultural scene, bold enough to reinterpret traditional Thai choreographic culture in a new and modernised approach. He started learning khon at the age of 16 from one of the greatest masters, Chaiyot Khummanee. He is considered the only artist who has successfully developed his own art from khon.

A native of Laos, Olé Khamchanla honed his skills under different masters. As a resident artist in the company A'CORPS during 1997 and 2011, he co-created several shows which established his status as a choreographer.

"Negotiation" is one of the highlights of the New Vision Arts Festival (NVAF). It will be staged at 8pm on November 2 and 3 at the Hong Kong City Hall Theatre. Tickets priced at \$140, \$200 and \$260 are now available at URBTIX (www.urbtix.hk). For credit card telephone bookings, please call 2111 5999.

Organised by the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, the NVAF is celebrating its ninth edition this year and is being held from October 19 to November 18. For programme enquiries and concessionary schemes, please call 2370 1044 or visit www.newvisionfestival.gov.hk.

