

Beijing MS festival artist biographies

Artist biographies



Daniel Pearton – Rep

I am an Australian who lived in Beijing for five years until recently embarking on a new adventure to Bangkok, Thailand. I have been playing music and acting from an early age and am a musical theatre addict. However, my time in China has given me a real appreciation and understanding of the Chinese traditional arts.

I have an absolute passion for watching and experiencing theatre, contemporary dance and contemporary art. My travels throughout the world have opened doors to new and exciting forms of art. I am passionate about devising theatre for young people.

Until recently and before deciding to move to Bangkok, Patana School, I was head of the Arts for Early Childhood through to IB DP at an international school in Beijing. I fell in love with ISTA when I attended my first festival and have now attended many throughout Asia.

Student ensemble leaders (SEL)



Simon Bell

I was born in the United Kingdom and trained as an actor in Bristol. I worked professionally as an actor and for the past 15 years have taught theatre at schools in the United Kingdom and internationally. I am now excited to once again be a freelance artist.

My main interests as a theatre artist are in devised collaborative theatre and movement. I particularly enjoy devising social and political theatre using physicality. I am inspired by the work of Complicité, Frantic Assembly, DV8 and practitioners such as Pina Bausch, Peter Brook, Artaud and Lecoq.



Hannah Northcott

I live in leggings and drive a three-wheeled tuk tuk in Beijing where I teach drama and direct theatre productions at the International School of Beijing, facilitate yoga retreats and inspire women through fitness. Combining elements of yoga and theatre, I create transformative experiences to awaken the magic within us.

Having received a BA in Broadcast Communication, a masters degree in Imaginative Education at Simon Fraser University, a master yoga instructor certification and drama training at the Lee Strasberg Theater Institute in New York and in Meyerhold's biomechanics at Kuala Lumpur, I continue to be inspired by artists, students and teachers worldwide.



Adam Walker

I trained in dance, drama and Music at Birmingham and Warwick universities. I'm currently Head of Arts at the ISF Academy Hong Kong where I've lived for 10 years. I've directed countless productions of both student and community theatre from the streets of inner city Birmingham to an inflatable upside down purple cow in Hong Kong.

I love working with new and exciting texts and combining these with movement based experiences to create postmodern theatre with powerful messages. On the other side of the coin, I love clowning with the broad characters from British Pantomime and tell as many double entendre jokes as possible.



Francois Zanini

Unattached, on top of the Cirque de Paris big top, I carefully raise the garland of lights for the evening show. La Seine flows on the side and behind it, the tower of my university, waiting to hear from my research about theatre and sport. The lights slowly go up. The salary is symbolic. I'm on top of the world.

As an artist I'm chasing the 'magic moments' – those ephemeral instants that lift the audience out of its skin and connect it with larger-than-life emotions. Since these can happen in the middle of a chaotic street carnival, the silence of a Shakespearean stage or under a circus big-top, I'm passionately exploring all forms of live performance with a preference for the ones involving the active body.

External workshop leader biographies

Master Xie Qingtuan

I am Master Xie. I am a 32nd generation disciple of the Shaolin Temple. I studied martial arts at the Temple for 10 years. During these years, I performed in the Shaolin International Troupe. Later, I attended Beijing Sports University Martial Arts Institute, graduating with a Bachelor's, Master's of Education and Ph.D in Chinese Martial Arts.

My father is a kung fu Master too. He taught me kung fu when I was 5 years old and I loved this traditional Chinese martial arts since then. I enjoy kung fu training very much and I love to share kung fu with different people.

Master Wen Xiaochun

I am Wen Xiaochun and my art name is White Snow Wolf. I grew up in a mountain village in Guizhong, Guangxi Province in China. I learned to draw from childhood

but did not follow any teacher to learn. Nature became my lifelong teacher. I chose to travel through mountains and rivers, go deep into the embrace of nature, to feel and describe nature instead of attending art schools. *“I think the greatest thing is nature, my teacher is nature.”*

I have taught Chinese painting and calligraphy in local and international schools in China and overseas for many years. One of my paintings has been collected and displayed at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

Master Wang Yan

I am Wang Yan, as an artist of Chinese folk arts, I have been engaged in the research of paper cutting for nearly 40 years and have inherited and developed this ancient art. Paper cutting is a folk handicraft with a long history in China. It can be traced back to 1500 years ago. As a family decoration it has vivid image and bright colour and is deeply loved by people.

I studied paper cutting from senior Chinese artists. After more than ten years of research, I have been to France, Italy, Thailand, Japan, Germany, Austria and other countries to present Chinese folk arts. In 1995, UNESCO and the Chinese Association of Folk Literary Artists awarded me the title of ‘Folk Arts and Crafts Artists’.