

INSIGHTS > Performing arts and cultural dialogue

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The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) created the Asia-Europe Cultural Partnership Initiatives (AECPI) to help develop sustainable collaborations between organisations from both regions in the field of performing arts. The aim was to use the practise of disciplines like contemporary dance to explore the relationship between culture and individual expression. ASEF also sought to build more equal partnerships between Asian and European organisations and while the focus was on performing arts, took a multi-disciplinary approach.

[caption id="attachment_8307" align="alignright" width="401"
caption="Monsoon residency got participants questioning the cultural

baggage of their art"]



[/caption]

With the help of a jury of four experts, ASEF selected three projects from more than 100 proposals which were implemented in 2010: the *Creative Producers Meeting* in Jakarta (Indonesia), the *Ignite! Festival of Contemporary Dance* in New Delhi (India) and *Monsoon* in Leuven (Belgium).

These projects connected over 100 performing arts practitioners and producers and resulted in the exchange of best practices and capacity building. Each project also responded to different needs within the sector and the two regions.

The *Creative Producers Meeting* was organised in partnership with the *International Network for Contemporary Performing Arts (IETM)* and the *Indonesian Dance Festival*, and took place in Jakarta and Jogjakarta (Indonesia) alongside the 10th Indonesian Dance Festival. Over 50 creative producers and choreographers in contemporary performing arts from Asia and Europe attended. This initiative supported their desire to build stronger collaborative alliances within Asia, as well as between Asia and Europe, in order to support new activities in contemporary dance and theatre.

While *Ignite!* met the growing need for a platform dedicated to contemporary dance practice in India. The event, which attracted over 1,200 people, saw over 51 dancers from four ASEM countries participating in joint performances and discussing the role of contemporary dance. Its success led to its establishment as a key dance festival in India.

[caption id="attachment_8308" align="alignright" width="402" caption="Participants in Ignite! Festival of Contemporary Dance reflected on the of dance in society"]



[/caption]

Whereas in *Monsoon*, eight Asian and European artists were prodded in the intimate confines of the residency to examine ready-made cultural stereotypes through a collaborative exploration of artistic practices. The project was created by [German-Belgian choreographer Arco Renz](#). Facilitator [Bart van den Eynde](#) says, “Small-scale, ‘specific’ initiatives like Monsoon could be a (modest) contribution to a more diversified intercultural awareness in these times of globalisation.”

To continue fostering new partnerships, ASEF will build on these successes within the AECPI framework in 2011. ASEF has recently partnered with the [Arts Network Asia \(ANA\)](#) to assist in the selection of new initiatives and will be launching a call for proposals later in the year.

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