

Traditional Chinese dance at TU/e

Far from home, it can be good to keep up traditions, even if you have to improvise. And being in technology does not mean you have to give up all your artistic tendencies. Chinese PhD students and postdocs have no such plans: they have recently started a new dance group that is meeting once every two weeks to practice traditional dance.

Their first performance was at the big Spring Festival party in Arnhem, with a modernized version of an 1800-year-old dance from the Han dynasty. "These old dances look great but they can be difficult to perform because they have no real rhythm. You just have to try to get into the spirit of the graceful moves. It looks easy, but it can be hard to hold some of these poses," says Jing Li, who is doing a PhD at the department of Mathematics and Computer Science. / ●



Pictured in the photo are, from left to right: Jing Li, Jie Yang (researcher at the department of Chemical Engineering and Chemistry), YuZhong Lin (PhD student at the department of Architecture, Building and Planning), Lili Wang (department of Chemical Engineering and Chemistry) and ZhiJun Song (department of Physics). Photo: Bart van Overbeek

Popular acting course now in English

TU/e's theatrical company Doppio is now organizing a basic acting course in English for international TU/e and Fontys students and staff. No experience needed, just enthusiasm. And of course reasonable proficiency in English.

"We have been offering this course for the Dutch university population for years. It is very popular, some years there is even a waiting list. Now, finally, we can also do something for international students," says Doppio chairman Lennart Verheijen, who is a sixth-year electrical engineering student.

An extra subsidy from Studium Generale is making it all possible. About twelve people will be able to take part in this first international acting course. It will run for ten weeks on Friday evenings from March 28. According to Verheijen, participants get a taste of all aspects of acting and types of theatre. Among other things, participants learn how to get into a role, how to deliver lines and work with text. But also how to quickly switch between different emotions.

"There is a lot of improvisation involved. I found the course very liberating

when I finally found the courage to take part. You learn to put yourself in someone else's shoes. To be totally different than you would normally be, without any of the usual consequences. For example when you pick a fight or start yelling at someone. This is all actually quite intimate, which makes it easier than usual to get to know people."

Skimming

The course will be given by Monique Janssen, an experienced professional director. Often, drama students from Fontys teach a course as an internship. "We work with professionals, there is no skimming on quality. Even though the starting level of the course is quite low, often we see good results, with people making fast progress," says Verheijen.

Doppio puts on about eight plays a year at Plaza Futura (the film house and theatre venue at the Leenderweg) and the Gaslab on campus. Members sometimes work all year on these productions. Although no production has yet been planned for the potential international actors, it would definitely be on the cards if the course goes well. "We'll wait and see how things go," says the Doppio

chairman. "If there is enough interest and funding, it would be great to do a production in English. We'll be deciding this summer if the course was a success and whether any further courses will be held or any other activities will be started up for TU/e's international population."

Defenses

Doppio is quite an atypical student association. It is an association with members and activities about once every three weekends, but it's also all about acting. "I found I got to know people very quickly as a result of acting together. People let their defenses down more than they usually would. Even though people in this kind of group can be very diverse, I don't think anyone felt left out," he recalls.

The next Doppio activity will be a party in March, the date will be posted on the site. Three productions will play at Plaza Futura and four in the Gaslab in May and June. A sailing weekend is planned for July. / ●

Registration for the Doppio basic acting course at: doppio@dse.nl. The 30-hour course costs 50 euros.

The English Page is written by Paula van de Riet and Ingrid Maglisen. They can be reached at engcursor@tue.nl.

Some facts about cancelled doctorate

TU/e's Doctorate Board decided on January 21 to cancel ir. Marcoen Cabolet's opportunity of earning a doctorate from the department of Mathematics and Computer Science. Cabolet was scheduled to defend his new theory, which he calls the Elementary Process Theory, on January 16. This theory contradicts the laws of quantum mechanics and the general theory of relativity.

Cabolet has been working on his thesis for the past ten years, he graduated from TU/e's department of Chemical Engineering in 1991 but has been working at Tilburg University since. He cooperated closely with the Ukrainian physicist Sergey Sannikov, who died last year. Since 2005, his primary supervisor has been Harrie de Swart who is a professor of Logic at Tilburg University. On the advice of internal and external experts, the Doctorate Board has now judged Cabolet's thesis to be of insufficient quality to satisfy the demands of TU/e. Physicist and Nobel prize winner Gerard 't Hooft (Utrecht University) examined the thesis and

told university newspaper Cursor that he could not make anything of the physics in the thesis.

In 2007, Cabolet's thesis was scheduled for defense at the Tilburg Religious Studies and Theology department, where De Swart is professor. Cabolet withdrew the thesis after criticism from the Doctorate Committee. In a letter to the editor of Cursor, the University of Tilburg's president Frank van der Duyn Schouten criticized primary supervisor De Swart for not making this known to the Doctorate Committee in Eindhoven.

Because of this incident, TU/e will be more on the alert in the case of doctoral defenses where both the PhD candidate and the primary supervisor are from outside this university. This will probably not have any effect on international PhD candidates as they are usually quite intensively supervised and are part of a department at TU/e.

Cabolet is currently working on a trade edition of his dissertation which will include an extra chapter refuting the criticism he has come up against. / ●

Column

It was the Career Fair last Tuesday. Another year and another career fair comes and goes. I guess at some point in time, I'll have to accept the fact that my life as a student will come to an end. Even though I am still in denial, I did go the fair to take a look at possible future employers. Also, I was in desperate need of new pens.

There are three main types of students you see at these career fairs. The first come there in extreme seriousness and dressed to kill. Armed with their CV, a smoking three-piece suit and well rehearsed opening lines, they accost any HR person willing to listen about their extraordinary qualities. They seem pretty disappointed at the end of it though, when instead of being offered the six-figure contract, they are told to apply online via the website.

Then you have the obsessive compulsive information hunters. Easy to spot since they are lugging with them huge amounts of printed matter assiduously collected from each stall – contact information, company newsletter, company newsletter, annual reports from 1985, personal diary of the company CEO, used tea cup of the HR manager for DNA testing etc. Anything they can get their hands on that might reveal that crucial piece of information that will propel them to a sky-high career path. Often overheard shrieking: "You have only 30 pages of information to offer me? I need more. MORE!"

And then there is the third kind. This group has arrived with the sole purpose of picking up as many freebies as possible. From candy to pens to water bottles, paperclips, mugs, posters, and even those cute HR girls (if they stand still long enough). Anything they can get their hands on is fair game. If you look around carefully, you can see them gathering in the shadows, exchanging vital tips, like which company has better pens and whose mints taste sweeter.

Well, it was better than spending lunchtime in the canteen. At least now I've enough pens to last another year.



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