

The Report #2 on the Workshop “Care for the Mind and Body ”

by Junko Hanamitsu, NPO Kaibunsha, June 20th, 2011

We had the second workshop with dancers in Miyako city, Iwate pref. again from June 8th to 10th. This workshop project is carries out in close cooperation with NPO Japan Contemporary Dance Network (JCDN) and with a generous sponsorship by Bloomberg for covering the accomodation and transportation fees.

Workshop schedule:

June 9th, 11:00 @ Tsudoi no Hiroba “Sukusuku” Land (childen’s daycare, for infants and mothers)

14:00 @ Kanehama Senior Resident Centre (for senior’s daycare and handicapped, evacuees)

15:30 @ Fujiwara Afterschool- Children’s House (for children between the first to forth grade)

19:00 @ Tsugaruishi Junior high school (evacuation center, for the elderies)

June 10th,10:00 @ Miyako Civil Gymnasium-Sea’ Arena (largest evacuation center in Miyako, for all ages)

We had around 90 participants in total. Our member includes two dancers, Maho Sumiji, Shuichi Abiru from a dance company Selenographica, Hiroyoshi Takishima as a photo and video recordnig, Chizuru Matsumoto as an assistant coordinator and driver, and I as a coordinator. And later, on June 10th, a dancer, Miki Sato, and Saori Kousaki from JCDN joined us as workshop assistants, who were visiting another town Noda-mura, north of Miyako, Iwate prefecture, before Miyako city for the same purpose.



【 Photo : Tsudoi no Hiroba “Sukusuku” Land 】



【 Photo : Kanehama Senior Resident Centre 】



Although we kept in touch with general managers of each evacuation center several times, we were still not sure how the workshop setting could be until we got there since the situation at evacuation center always changed. What was needed was to act flexibly, which was the most difficult for us at the site. Only our

experiences from the past would make us accomplish the project. Meanwhile, the workshop program set up for each group by Selenographica grasped the participants’ hearts. For example, they prepared a monkey and bear costume for infants, and they did an easy exercise that almost activated body cells so that at the end all worked out to sweat, including the center president and the staff joined together. At Fujiwara Afterschool-Children’s House, they played “dance” with a group of very energetic and spontaneous children. And at last workshop of the day, they did a relaxation exercise for good-night sleep at Tsugaruishi junior high school for we visited there after dinner and bath time. I sincerely appreciate that Maho and Shuichi of Selenographica excellently corresponded in any occasion. They even made a man, who was “out-of-touch” and laid on the floor, join the exercise at the end, and reluctantly he said “goodbye” to Maho when finished!



【 Photo : Fujiwara Afterschool- Children’s House 】



【 Photo : Fujiwara Afterschool- Children’s House 】



【 Photo : Fujiwara Afterschool- Children’s House 】



I also found an impressive moment when Shuichi held an old lady to assist her stretching, saying “oh, it’s good for you that you will be able to move in the temporary housing soon! You just need a bit more patient...” He smiled at her as if she is her son. In reality, even she can move in soon, she will have to move

out the housing in two years, as it is a current political decision. But surely I see there is a shining ray of hope, which I still feel glad.

I visited Miyako city for three times in the last four weeks. I see more rubble getting cleared up every time I go there. Stores and restaurants at the shopping streets are reopening with backups little by little. Most of the evacuation centers are planned to be closed at the end of June since people will be able to move in the temporary housings that are rapidly being built. The evacuation center is currently hectic because of the consolidation and unrestfulness for moving-in/out of evacuation centers.

All the parks and empty lots are designated sites for the temporary housings. Local government decided to build a community meeting house per temporary housing site that has more than 50 households. For now around a half out of 60 designated temporary housing sites will be built. But a new problem is risen who and how to run each of newly created communities under such circumstance where most residents are elderies, maybe with new faces. So far, the local officers took charge of managing evacuation centers, but a new community will be handled by those new groups of residents.

The annual local Shinto shrine festival of Kuromori Kagura in July was cancelled unfortunately this year, although the performers were full of motivation and we would like to come to help. But most of festive events have been cancelled this year, so the Kuromori Kagura may have so little opportunity to perform their ritualistic circumambulation. It is also hard for the city council to oversee the whole picture of current situation such as temporary housnig that changes day by day, so that we could not exploit another way to assist them. I tried to contact the local support organization that we maybe able to cooperate with, but I couldn't find a partner. Everybody there is trying very hard to recover from the disaster. But what struck me badly was when I saw a lot of young people who can't find a job. They sat on floor at evacuation center most of a day, and seemed with no hope for the future. What support they need now? In what way we could support them? I will continue my exploration another way of support for the beautiful town and people.

