

UPF International and EUME share on *What's Your Cup of Tea?* livestream

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UPF-New York - On December 13, 2021 at 8am EST, UPF International in collaboration with UPF EUME held our fourth episode of the IG livestream series, "What's Your Cup of Tea?" This month our livestream was on the topic of "Arts, Culture and Peace," focusing on how these three areas correlate and influence each other as well as how they impact the lives of the people who practice them. Like last month, the livestream lasted for about an hour and it was split into the four subcategories of musicians, artists, dancers and cultural performers. Hosted by Eli Izumi, representing UPF International, and Mélanie Komagata, representing UPF EUME, the special guests were: David Eaton, a professional composer, arranger, conductor and producer; Chanic Kim, a passionate musician; Cherylie Bruffaerts, an inspiring artist and teacher of arts; Julia Wang, a ballet and Chinese traditional dancer; and last but not least, Nana Whyte and Shinju Boro, both African cultural dance performers.

Each speaker shared great insights and an inspiring story of their own. The audience members were intrigued to hear about the experiences and knowledge that the speakers conveyed.

Mr. David Eaton shared about his experiences working with individuals from different religious backgrounds during several projects of MEPI in Israel. He also reflected on how humans are naturally drawn to beauty, whether that be beauty of nature, or beauty in art. He also mentioned that "beauty has the ability to transcend religious, ethnic, cultural and political barriers. That is the power of beauty, and art in particular." He went on to refer to the founders' statements on arts, saying, "Rev. Dr. Sun Myung Moon and Dr. Hak Ja Han Moon in their autobiographies mention that it is not politics that can change the world. It is arts and culture that will change the world." Lastly, he concluded that "art has a certain moral power. So, the question for the artist is, 'how do we use that power?'" His advice: "It's always good to challenge your own limitations to become better. If you can get to a higher level in whatever art you pursue, the quality really attracts people. So, keep focused on your intention and improve your craft. It has an internal and external aspect. But you need both." Co-host Mélanie reflected that she was so inspired by Mr. Eaton's words and she hopes that it was as equally inspiring and moving for the fellow musicians and artists in the audience.

Chanic Kim, a passionate musician who has played violin and guitar for some time, shared about the power of music, stating, "It doesn't really take a musician to appreciate the power of music." He also shared that "researchers found out that the temporal lobe function includes hearing and memory, so music can be used to recover memory in dementia patients.... And it is the only language that doesn't need words

to be understood." The audience voiced their appreciation in the comments for this point of view from Chanic as he is a self-taught musician who was able to better his skills in playing the instruments just from his passion and love for music.

Cherylie Bruffaerts has been an artist since she was very young. As arts was something she loved so much, she went on to study fine arts for her bachelor's degree and she is pursuing higher education to become an art teacher. When asked how and when does drawing or painting become a means to bring about inner peace and peace in relationships with others, she answered that she was able to use arts as a means of expression. On the topic of how arts should be more widely practiced, she shared, "I think arts is something that is as necessary for kids as sports because it is just another aspect of a persons' character. In the brain you also have a creative, emotional side. So, it doesn't make sense not to invest in that aspect of development and human nature. Painting and drawing can help kids express themselves and bring a sense of inner peace." She shared that she co-teaches with a primary school teacher where they try to find ways to use art as a means to teach traditional school topics. Co-host Mélanie shared that Cherylie's testimony really inspired her to further explore her artistic side.

Julia Wang, a ballet and traditional Chinese dancer from Austria, and a graduate of the Vienna State Opera Ballet School, shared about her experience with dance and how she was able to use it as a way to reconnect to her cultural ethnic roots. She reflected that dancers usually have to practice for years, and then finally are able to perform for a few minutes on stage. But as a dancer, within those few minutes you want to showcase all your work and effort that you have put into making that performance special for the audience. Her words of wisdom towards fellow dancers in the audience were that, "First, it's very important to be at peace within yourself. You have to be sure about your movements... and the music and the cues, everything. I think that like the saying, 'Peace Starts with Me,' in dance you need to have harmony within yourself to be able to convey [anything] to the audience. You need to be clear about what story you want to tell." She also gave a shout-out to the Little Angels Dance Group, saying that it used to be her dream to join that group.

Lastly, our guests Nana Whyte from Ghana and Shinju Boro from Burkina Faso joined us to tell their story about cultural performances. Shinju mentioned that besides the fact that every country in Africa has a very different culture and dance, they also have traditional and modern-style dances, the trending dance style being Afro dance. She stated, much to the panel's amusement and delight, that most dances are not exclusive and that, young and old, just "as long as you have the skill and can vibe," everyone comes together to dance. Nana shared, "There are traditional dances where some are just for males or females. There are also dances that express feelings during war and some dances for empowering women."

Co-host Eli reflected on her university time when she went to Sun Moon University along with Nana and Shinju. At the time, despite not knowing each other well and not being able to communicate in a common language, they were able to come together to dance. Through this, they were able to reach a new paradigm of understanding and relating with each other's culture and came to have a newfound respect and love for each other's culture. Lastly, Nana and Shinju shared how not only African dances, but learning other countries' dances are a way to bring people together across ethnicities, cultures and countries.

It was a very exciting and intriguing livestream overall. We encourage you to watch the recording to listen to all of the inspiring guests and hear their words in full.

We look forward to seeing you in our next livestream! Thank you so much for your continued support for UPF's Instagram initiative.