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*This article is brought to you by the Hong Kong Arts Centre*

With its expansive alpine views, low population density and refreshing climate, life in Switzerland might not seem to have much in common with Hong Kong. But despite these two places being quite different in many ways, the experiences of their citizens do sometimes overlap.

That's according to Ian Leung, programme manager for Hong Kong Arts Centre. He has been a driving force in a new collaboration bringing Swiss dance and theatre groups to local audiences over a weekend filled with diverse, dynamic offerings. These include multi-talented Daniel Hellmann's *FULL SERVICE*, a piece which raises important questions about life and intimacy in the digital age, and *FIGHT! PALAST* by Peng Palast, inspired by the Chuck Palahniuk novel *Fight Club*, that questions personal utopias.

"What strikes me is that Hong Kong and Swiss [creatives] both share openness, pragmatism and professionalism," says Leung. He says he is also impressed by their critical approach to contemporary issues through

art. “Whatever the project, they are motivated by a concern for humanity and an inquiring mindset,” he says.

Leung began working with Swiss dance groups earlier this year, when he came across the much touted dance group cie Zeitsprung, who have garnered international acclaim and who will be performing during the double-billed weekend series of performances. Seeing their performance inspired him to bring to Hong Kong an exciting roster of contemporary dance acts from Switzerland.

Cie Zeitsprung will perform *Komplizen RELOADED*, a provocative dance that explores the theme of social survival and the extent to which our need for security shapes who we are and what we strive for. This is a topic that Leung believes to be particularly pertinent to Hongkongers.

“Survival has been an issue in Hong Kong,” he says. “We are all used to the saying that getting a flat means getting onshore, which is another way of saying you have a higher survival index as long as you own a flat. It has a profound impact on people in Hong Kong. Everyone focuses on this as if it is the one and only goal.”

Leung implies that a temporary respite from particularly pervasive stress might be found by watching cie ZeitSprung perform their playful, self-depreciating piece, which invites audiences to rediscover the naïve charms of human interaction. “The experience they offer could shake things up a little and loosen up both the art scene and audience in Hong Kong,” says Leung.

