

CDC THEATER

NEWSTEPS

emerging choreographers series

CDC's 2007 Season featured over a dozen artists and premieres. The Spring *newsteps* series presented **Melissa Guerrero + Margaret Paek, Sahar Javedani, Adele Myers, Emily Power, and Amber Sloan** in an evening filled with subtlety, elegance, humor, and intrigue.



On the flip side, the Fall series, with works by **Emily Pope-Blackman, Summer Brown, ShaLeigh Dance Works, the Launch Movement Experiment (Rachel Mckinstry and Liz Riga), Laurel Snyder, and Anthony Whitehurst**, displayed more emotionally and politically charged pieces that pushed conventional boundaries.

Our esteemed panelists over the 2007-2008 Season included: H.T. Chen, Jacqueline Davis, Douglas Dunn, Carla Peterson, Sarah Skaggs, Muna Tseng and Ellis Wood.

The next *newsteps* will be held April 24-26, 2008, featuring artists: **Mana Kawamura, Jennifer Lott, Heidi Latsky, Dorian Nuskind-Oder and Beth Simons.**



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New York, NY
Permit No. 9153

CDC ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING CONTRIBUTORS:

Public funds

National Endowment for the Arts, New York State Council on the Arts, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, Councilman Alan J. Gerson.

Private funds

Altria Performing Arts Initiative, FADA, Inc., Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, MetLife Foundation, New York Community Trust, Morgan Stanley Foundation, Pfizer Foundation.

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30TH ANNIVERSARY

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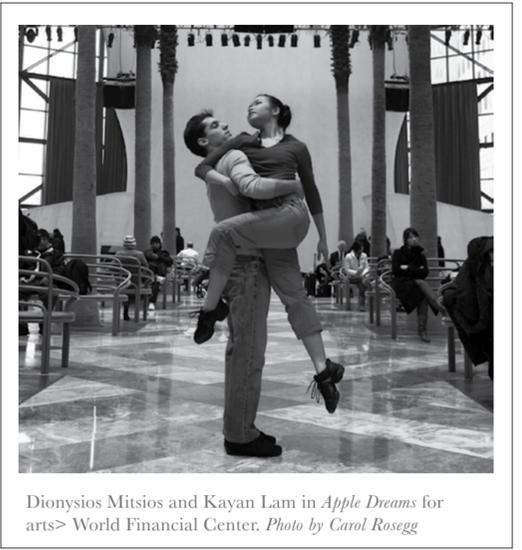
A CHEN DANCE CENTER NEWSLETTER | 02/2008

DEAR FRIENDS

In the fast-paced life of New York City, it is rare to be able to enjoy things for very long. Immigrant families come and go, neighborhoods change, tenements are torn down, and high-rises compete for daylight. They say that dance is the most ephemeral of all the art forms and yet we are constantly reminded of the cyclical nature of our 30 years work. Our students return to perform and work with H.T. Chen & Dancers, to audition their choreography for *newsteps*, enroll their own children in the CDC School, or even participate as Board members.

The creation of *Apple Dreams* at the Winter Garden last March expressed our love for a community that rebounded after 9-11. We could not have imagined the work without the diverse set of performers, ages six months to 84 years old. It was a new challenge and a great joy to rehearse parents pushing their babies proudly in strollers, to see my own modern dance teacher and Board member, Shirley Ubell, joined by Milton Kerr to play the dreaming elders, and to witness the magical space of the Palm Court at the Winter Garden come to life. And then there was *Big Brother* – a darker work inspired by the hardships of Chinese Americans and influenced by our current sociopolitical atmosphere.

As we celebrate 30 years, we would be remiss not to cite those who believed in us from the beginning, such as Ellen Stewart, founder of La MaMa E.T.C. - reminding us not to lose our souls as we navigate



Dionysios Mitsios and Kayan Lam in *Apple Dreams* for arts> World Financial Center. Photo by Carol Rosegg

our art through the streets of New York and politics of life.

Our 30th year brings about many exciting changes and possibilities for the future (a new Company name and website, and two new studio spaces, for example). We hope to see you at an upcoming event, in our studios, or in class, and we look forward to having you as part of the Chen Dance Center family as we roll into the next 30 years with enthusiasm, passion, and a deep love for dance, community, creativity, and learning.

Best wishes for the Year of the Rat!

Sincerely,

H.T. Chen and Dian Dong
Artistic and Associate Directors
Chen Dance Center



The popular *Teahouse Performances* were repeated twice in 2007 for enthusiastic audiences. This family-friendly, culturally rich series will continue in the coming Fall.



EAR TO THE GROUND



Lastly, our *Ear to the Ground* commissioning series for Asian-American artists featured innovative premieres by **Anita Cheng** and **Noopur Singha** in the Spring, and **Sahar Javedani** and **Lenora Lee & Elaine Wang** in the Fall.

Stay tuned for our next *Ear to the Ground*, May 29-31, 2008, featuring new work by **Abby Chan** and **Marie Alonzo.**

CDC gives special thanks to the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation for a three-yr grant towards a full time technical director and a consultant. Interviews for the technical director are being conducted this Spring.



Copy by Helena Toppo-Figman Design by Keith Leung

OUTREACH

This season, beyond performing *Eight Strokes & the Moving Word* to sold-out audiences for seven weeks at CDC, the Company extended its outreach in Lower Manhattan by providing after-school dance classes at P.S. 184, P.S. 42, and at P.S. 2 for Immigrant Social Services. Supported by the Department of Youth and Community Development, this program serves over 140 students each week, ranging in age from 8-18 years-old.



Photo by Carol Rosegg

BIG BROTHER

In November 2007, H.T. Chen premiered *Big Brother* at La MaMa E.T.C. in New York City. A dramatic work, Mr. Chen (along with Associate Director and long-time artistic partner, Dian Dong) created a sneaky, suspenseful and surreal world full of distrust, secrets, confrontation and the watching eye.

Interspersed were moments of collective meditation, poignant imagery, and a commissioned, beat-inspired poem by Peter Gregutt. The work was set to evocative jazz music by Stewart Wallace, and new music by Yukio Tsuji.

Helena Teply-Figman sat down with H.T. Chen to discuss his newest work.

HTF: Unlike your two most recent works (*Shift and Apple Dreams*), *Big Brother* is less abstract and contains moments of definite social commentary. What inspired you to create this work?

HT: There were several issues, but the most dominant was the misuse and abuse of individual rights in this country and issues of privacy and spying. With technology currently playing such a huge role in regard to these issues, I incorporated the use of recording devices and electronic communication, such as surveillance cameras.

HTF: Your work often portrays vivid imagery. What image sources did you draw from as you developed the choreography?

HT: Many of the images came from media portrayals of political killings and war. The work utilized actual war footage projected onto a white wall during one of the sections.

HTF: You often work with Asian-inspired or traditional Chinese music. In *Big Brother*, you worked within a new genre: Jazz. What was it like working with this new music form and how did it influence your choreography?

HT: My first time to using jazz music was a very special experience. In both Stewart Wallace's and Yukio Tsuji's scores, I really enjoyed the range of expressions - from humor, to darkness, poetic to peculiar. And the musicians were amazing and brought out the meaning beyond words.

HTF: Do you have any ideas yet for your next new work?

HT: I'm looking for a composer to collaborate with me on a new work incorporating electronic images, dance and universal theater.

TOURING

The March winds will carry H.T. Chen & Dancers to Western, NY, where a two-week residency will be conducted. In addition to daily classes at the University at Buffalo, an excerpt from *Apple Dreams* will be restaged and performed by college students at the culminating concert at the Center for the Arts. The Company will also tour its educational program to area schools.



CDC SCHOOL

Chen Dance Center's students and faculty presented its special blend of Nutcracker excerpts in six performances in December to packed audiences. Tiny children unfolded like flowers to the music of Tchaikovsky, older children applied their classroom skills (ballet, creative movement, wushu), and our eldest students learned to maneuver in tutus and pointe shoes.

Summer interns worked with Trutti Gasparinetti and Yeeli Chen to create 65 tutus.

NEW SPACES



In June 2007, CDC gained access to an additional room on the 2nd Floor at 70 Mulberry Street. This room is currently under construction, waiting to be fully transformed into a new dance studio where classes and rehearsals can be held.



CDC has also gained access to a 2,270 sq. foot studio on East 1st Street, due to the generosity of La MaMa E.T.C. The space will allow us to provide rehearsal space to the dozens of exciting choreographers in NYC, and is currently under construction. Fundraising efforts are in place to raise money for a new sprung-wood dance floor.



CULTURAL BUZZ

A joint marketing partnership with the Asian American Arts Alliance, the CPLDC and Chen Dance Center will herald the cultural events of Chinatown through electronic and print materials. CDC will also be the designated cultural hub featuring an art installation with flat screens by architect David Hu. These initiatives are supported by Deutsche Bank and the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council.

CALENDAR

MARCH
H.T. Chen & Dancers residency at the Center for the Arts, University at Buffalo:
March 18 – April 1

APRIL
Gala: Golden Bridge Restaurant
Wednesday, April 9
newsteps: **April 24-26 at 7:30pm**

MAY
Ear to the Ground: **May 29-31 at 7:30pm**
School Recitals: **May 17-18, 23-25**

CDC NEWS



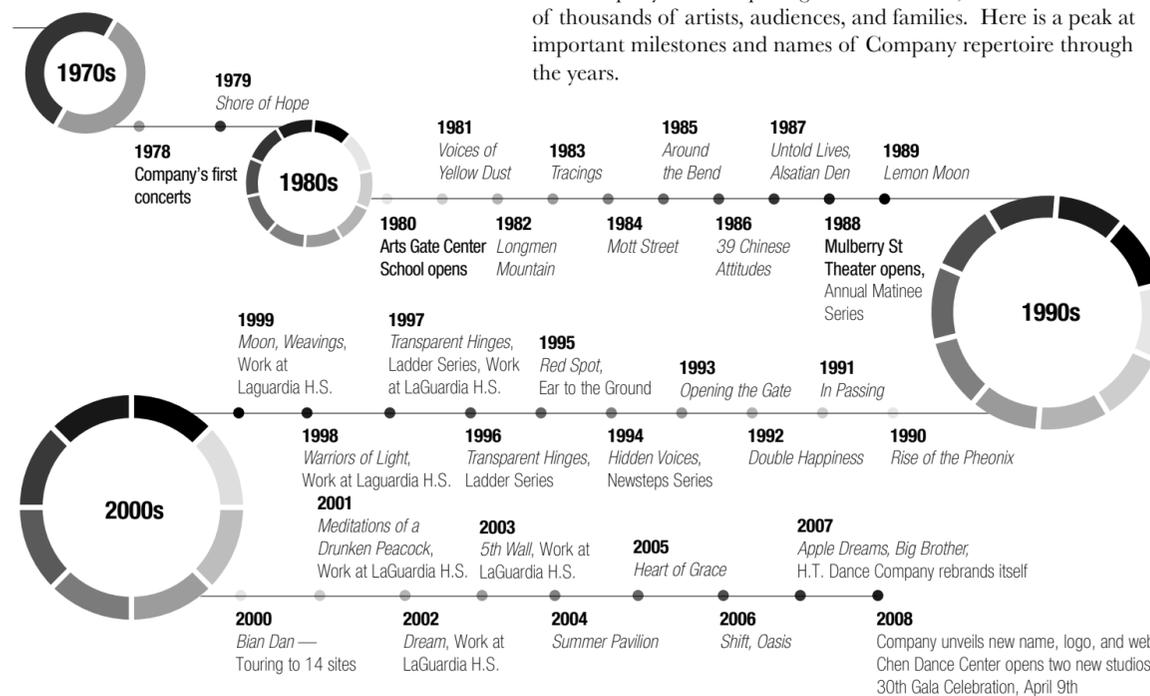
Takao Komaru joined the Company in the Fall of 2006. Originally from Japan, Takao started dancing under the direction of Kenshi Nohmi. After moving to New York City, he went to The Ailey School. He has worked with Earl Mosley's Diversity of Dance, Saeko Ichinohe Dance Company and many other companies and choreographers. He is currently studying at Peridance.

CDC would like to acknowledge Theater Coordinator/Marketing Associate, **Lucy Yen**, who joined CDC in April 2007. Ms. Yen majored in arts administration at Drexel University. CDC also welcomed three wonderful interns to our team: **Cindy Li**, **Joy Heller** (from Haverford College) and **Eunice Ahn** (from Bryn Mawr College).

A big welcome to two new fabulous board members this season: **Patsy Fang Chen** and **Thomas E. Lim**.

TIMELINE 1978-PRESENT

30 Years From the Heart



STAFF PROFILE



Keith Leung

Keith Leung began working for CDC while still in high school. He went on to obtain his BA at NYC's School of Visual Arts and currently works at Watson Earl & Partners as an Art Director. However, he continues to enjoy contributing to the vitality of CDC in his spare time on graphic design projects, such as designing CDC's new logo and this newsletter! Keith is a New York native and currently lives in the Chinatown area perfecting his aquarium designs.