

Chinese students learning in the Berkshires



Photos by Caroline Bornivier / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Kayan Lam, center, a member of H.T. Chen and Dancers from New York City, dances with the group during a performance at Berkshire Country Day School yesterday afternoon.

Cultures meet and greet

By Jenn Smith
Berkshire Eagle Staff

LENOX — East met West yesterday at Berkshire Country Day School.

Members of the H.T. Chen and Dancers company performed at the school in a week's-end celebration to welcome eight Chinese exchange students to their community.

The 11th-graders have come here — along with two faculty members, Yang Junfeng and Wu Guolin — from Chengdu Experimental Foreign Languages School to experience life, culture and education in the United States.

In March, BCD will send 12 students to Chengdu.

The dance performances were part of H.T. Chen's two-week itinerary, which also includes trips to Boston, New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

"It was a nice surprise to see this here," said Junfeng of the welcoming performance. "It was very professional."

Yesterday's multi-medial program, "Heart of the Lion," incorporated dance, video, music, live stage combat and slides. A study guide of vocabulary, geography, history and mythology relating to the performance also was provided by the dancers.

According to Dian Dong, associate director of the company, the program is meant not only to give students a better understanding of Chinese dance, but also to offer insights about the country.

"Students can cross culture barriers very quickly," she said.

The Chengdu exchange students have been taking classes

'Students can cross culture barriers very quickly.'

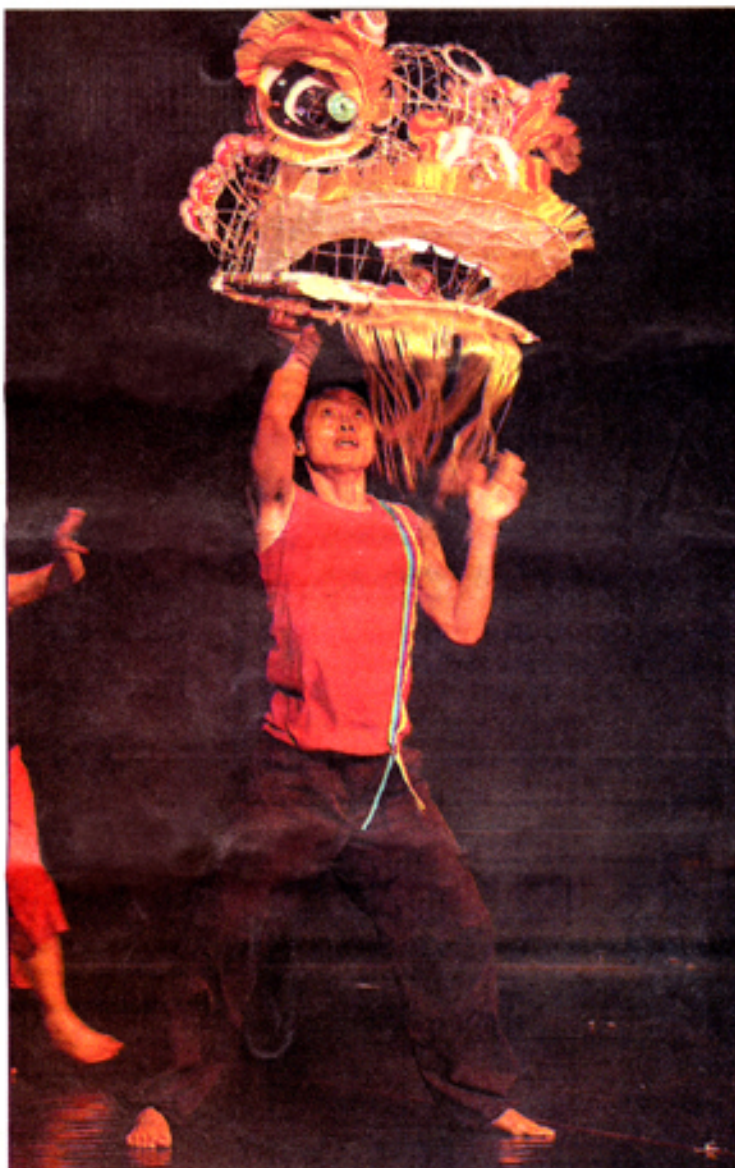
— Dian Dong,
associate director
of H.T. Chen
and Dancers

CHINESE, continued on B4



Chia-Chen 'Belle' Shen, a member of H.T. Chen and Dancers from New York City, performs with Dionysios Mitsios at Berkshire Country Day School.

A wowing welcome



B4 — The Berkshire Eagle, Saturday, October 15, 2005

Chinese students come to learn at BCD

CHINESE from B1

at BCD's Winthrop campus and will attend other local schools, including Pittsfield High School. They also will take field trips to Stockbridge, Great Barrington and Williamstown.

In addition, the students are looking forward to visiting colleges in the region and going horseback riding and shopping.

Earlier in the week, they were officially welcomed to Berkshire County by Pittsfield Mayor James M. Ruberto and the Pittsfield City Council at the council meeting Tuesday night.

Before arriving in the Berkshires, the students spent a night in New York City. Xin Can, who has adopted the American name of "Eric" during his visit, said the city was beautiful, but cold.

Li Quinran, also known as Hady, said that she had expected Lenox to also have tall buildings and skyscrapers.

"But it has a more beautiful landscape ... and fresh air," interjected Wang "Artemis" Wenyu.

Yang "Forrest" Junfeng said that students studying different cultures and languages often adopt a name inherent to that culture to "create a relationship [between the person] and languages."

Carmen Dockery Perkins, assistant head of the secondary school, said she has enjoyed the opportunity to welcome the students into the community. Although BCD has done several international exchange programs, this is the school's first time working with China.

The school's curriculum is care-

fully designed to expose students to other cultures, she said. Ninth-graders are required to take a world civilizations course and 10th-graders take an Asian studies course.

Doekery said the dance program, sponsored by the school's Parents Association, was fortunate in timing.

"It puts students in a global setting," she said.

And BCD students seem to understand the spirit of the program.

"Our generation is part of a big international uproar right now," said BCD senior Rachael Hyman. "We're not just Americans. We're part of the world community."

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Caroline Bornivier / Berkshire Eagle Staff

Dito Sudito, a member of H.T. Chen and Dancers from New York City, dances with a bamboo lion mask during a performance at Berkshire Country Day School yesterday. The show was part of a celebration that welcomed Chinese exchange students to the school. Page B1.