

Cal Performances Presents

Friday, March 23, 2007, 8pm
Saturday, March 24, 2007, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

Shen Wei Dance Arts



Bruce Feckey

Shen Wei Dance Arts gratefully acknowledges the generous support of the Asian Cultural Council, the Greenwall Foundation, the Norman and Rosita Winston Foundation, the William and Helen Little Family Foundation, the Emma Sheaffer Charitable Trust, the Kay Family Foundation and the Altria Group.

This engagement made possible in part through funding from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, which believes that a great nation deserves great art.

Cal Performances' 2006–2007 season is sponsored by Wells Fargo.

Shen Wei Dance Arts

Shen Wei *Artistic Director*

Brett Egan *Executive Director*

John Torres *Production Manager*

William Knapp *Stage Manager*

Sara Procopio *Artistic Associate*

James Healey *Rehearsal Director*

The Company

Lindsay Clark

Andrew Cook

Dai Jian

Duan Ni

Jessica Harris

James Healey

Kathleen Jewett

Océane McCord

Philip Montana

Shen Wei

Sara Procopio

Kana Sato

Sadira Smith

Joan Wadopian

Vivian Chiu *Project Coordinator*

Jessica Harris *Wardrobe Assistant*

Lindsay Clark *Wardrobe Assistant*

Joan Wadopian *Makeup Assistant*

Shen Wei Dance Arts

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 303

New York, New York 10018

tel. (212) 962-1113

fax (212) 962-1313

ShenWeiDanceArts.org

Friday, March 23, 2007, 8pm
Saturday, March 24, 2007, 8pm
Zellerbach Hall

PROGRAM

Rite of Spring

(2003)

<i>Choreography</i>	Shen Wei
<i>Lighting</i>	David Ferri
<i>Set and Costumes</i>	Shen Wei
<i>Music</i>	Igor Stravinsky, <i>The Rite of Spring</i> (four-hand piano version performed by Fazil Say)
<i>Premiere</i>	American Dance Festival, July 7, 2003

Rite of Spring was commissioned by the American Dance Festival with support from Philip Morris Companies, Inc. and the Doris Duke Awards for New Work, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation and the Mary Duke Biddle Foundation.

When I first heard Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring* in China in 1989, I was enthralled by the score's rich, evocative texture. Over the next 12 years, I continued to develop a creative interest in the piece, finally beginning in-depth research on the music in early 2001. I was further inspired when I heard Fazil Say's performance of the two-piano version. Committed to the challenge of creating an innovative work set to this extraordinary musical work, I brought the company into the studio in the fall of 2001.

The Stravinsky score is constructed with both technical complexity and narrative passion. However, in keeping with my interest in abstraction, it is only the melodic and rhythmic qualities of the music, rather than the story it tells, which inform the choice of movement vocabulary. After listening closely to the score, I identified several body systems and movement ideas that matched the quality found in the music. These physical elements formed the basis for movement investigation and construction: suspension, center-shifting, momentum, spirals, rotations and joint, muscle and nerve initiations were explored.

These explorations generated new movement, highlighting the importance of initiating movement with clarity, specificity and integrity. I began by asking the dancers to develop and play with different choreographic strategies. Through a series of structured improvisations and movement research, these strategies were more finely tuned. For example, in one section of the work, the performers play with how the movement or spatial choice of one dancer affects the choices of all the other dancers in the space. The piece in its final form is a set structure within which there is a balance between movement exactitude and movement intuition. As in unstaged life, alongside that which is definite, there will always exist the coincidental, the uncontrollable, the chance happening.—*Shen Wei, 2003*

INTERMISSION

Near the Terrace, Part I (2000)



Christy Pesagno

Choreography	Shen Wei
Lighting	David Ferri
Set and Costumes	Shen Wei
Music	Arvo Pärt

Inspired by the work of surrealist Belgian painter Paul Delvaux.

Commissioned by the American Dance Festival with support from the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation.

Arvo Pärt's Für Alina and Spiegel im Spiegel are used by arrangement with European American Music Distributors LLC, U.S. and Canadian agent for Universal Edition Vienna, publisher and copyright owner.

Near the Terrace, Part I was created in 2000 during a period when I was questioning everyday movements and exploring their connection to different sensibilities of dance technique and performance. I began detailed work on simple center-controlled movements in relationship to spatial, temporal and visual elements. My research of this concept first led to the creation of *Folding* (2000). Several months later, I continued to examine the movement concepts I began in *Folding*, while also studying the work of surrealist Belgian painter Paul Delvaux. His paintings became the inspiration for *Near the Terrace, Part I*. On many levels, I feel his paintings connect to the sensibilities I was in search of in my art during this period.—*Shen Wei, 2000*

About the Artists

Hailed by *The New York Times* as “startlingly imaginative,” **Shen Wei Dance Arts** seeks a new approach to movement and the body for both performer and audience. Each work develops an original physical vocabulary based on movement research. The choreography, at turns representational and abstract, incorporates Eastern and Western aesthetics and strong scenic elements to create a painterly, hybridic *mise-en-scene*. The result is a “fascinating fantasy in movement.”

In the six short years since its inception, the company has assumed a position among the top tier of dance ensembles worldwide. In addition to repeated engagements at the American Dance Festival, Lincoln Center Festival and the Venice Biennale, Shen Wei Dance Arts has appeared in renowned festivals in the United States and around the world, from Spoleto to Jacob’s Pillow, from Montpellier to Hong Kong to Sydney. The company received the 2005 Helpmann Award for Best Ballet or Dance Work, presented by Sydney Festival in Association with Sydney Opera House. In September 2006, the company premiered “*Re-*” (*Part One*) at the Joyce Theater in New York, and, in 2007, it will initiate a five-year residency at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Selected engagements include American Dance Festival (2000–2006), Lincoln Center Festival (2003–2005), Jacob’s Pillow (2004 and 2006), Kennedy Center (2001 and 2005), Dorothy Chandler Pavilion in the Los Angeles Music Center (2004), Cal Performances (2004), Dance Umbrella and Sadler’s Wells in London (2004), La Biennale di Venezia (2004 and 2005), Israel Festival (2004), Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam (2003 and 2005), Sydney Festival (2005), Esplanade in Singapore (2005), Movimentos Festival in Germany (2005), Montpellier Festival in France (2005), Melbourne International Arts Festival (2005), Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montreal (2006), MODAFE in Seoul (2006) and Hong Kong New Vision Festival (2006).

This year, the company will perform at leading halls on four continents, including the Barbican Centre in London, Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam, Disney Hall in Los Angeles and Lincoln Center Festival in New York, as well as in Mexico City, Rio de Janeiro and Shanghai.

Choreographer, dancer, painter and designer, **Shen Wei** (*Artistic Director and Choreographer*) was born in Hunan, China. He studied Chinese opera from the age of nine. From 1984 to 1989, he worked with the Hunan State Xian Opera Company. From 1991 to 1994, he was an original member—dancer and choreographer—of the Guangdong Modern Dance Company, the first such modern dance company in China, with which he appeared in festivals in Korea, China, Hong Kong, Singapore and India. After receiving a scholarship from the Nikolais/Louis Dance Lab, Shen Wei moved to New York City in 1995.

Prior to forming Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2000, his work was presented at the American Dance Festival (1995), National Theater of Taiwan (1996), The Place Theater in London (1997), the Asia Society in New York (1997), Stockholm Dance House (1999), Brighten Arts Festival (2000), the Edinburgh Festival Theater (2000) and the Germany Millennium Moves Festival (2000). As a guest artist, he performed in four works by Martha Clarke.

For the past six years, Shen Wei Dance Arts has toured throughout the United States and Western Europe, and in Australia, Israel and Singapore. For each dance and opera work choreographed for his company, Shen Wei also creates the sets, costumes and makeup designs. The remarkable performance space might be described as a canvas...a landscape...a parallel universe. *The New York Times* described Shen Wei’s vision as “painterly, mathematical and idiosyncratic. ... This is imagery and conceptualism with a difference.”

Shen Wei has received numerous awards. In China, he won first prize for both choreog-

About the Artists

raphy and performance at the 1994 Inaugural National Modern Dance Competition. In the United States, he received a fellowship from the New York Foundation for the Arts in 2000, and in that same year the American Dance Festival's Ben Sommer Fellowship. He received a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship in 2001, and he won the Nijinsky Award for Emerging Choreographer in 2004 and the Australia's 2005 Helpmann Award for Best Ballet or Dance Work. He has received commissions from the American Dance Festival (1995, 2000–2006), Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam, the Lincoln Center Festival (2005), Alvin Ailey Dance Theater II, Dances We Dance Company of Hawaii, the Margrit Mondavi Center for Performing Arts at UC Davis and the Guangdong Modern Dance Company. His dance opera, *Second Visit to the Empress*, has received commissions from the American Dance Festival, New York City Opera and the Het Muziektheater in Amsterdam.

As a visual artist independent of the dance company, Shen Wei is a painter, designer and filmmaker. His paintings have been exhibited in New York and Hong Kong, and a series of paintings created in conjunction with his ballet *Rite of Spring* were first exhibited as part of the company's New York debut at the Lincoln Center Festival in 2003.

Lindsay Clark (*dancer*) was born in San Francisco. She attended North Carolina School of the Arts and received her BFA from SUNY Purchase.

Andrew Cook (*dancer*) was born in Spokane, Washington. From an early age, Andrew began studying many disciplines of dance with his mother, his first and favorite teacher. He studied dance at Western Oregon University, performing with Rainbow Dance Theatre, under Darryl Thomas. Andrew later received his BFA in Dance from Chapman University in Orange, California. After graduation, Andrew performed with former Bella Lewinski dancer and chore-

ographer, Sean Greene, and Backhausdance. Andrew attended the school at the American Dance Festival in New York.

Dai Jian (*dancer*) was born in Hunan Province, China, and is a recent graduate of the Beijing Dance Academy, where he majored in performance and choreography and studied Graham technique, Limon repertory, release techniques and tai chi. Dai Jian joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2005. From 2004 to 2005, he performed with the Jin Xing Dance Company. He studied Modern Dance at the Guangdong ATV Professional Academy for Performing Arts, founded by Madam Yang Meiqi.

Duan Ni (*dancer*) was born in China and started dancing when she was 10. In 1990, she undertook five years of professional training at the Art College Dancing Group in Shanxi Province, China. After graduating, she participated in the Splendid Nation Choreography Group and received a first-rate dancer award in the Shenzhen City First Dancing Competition. Between 2000 and 2004, she enhanced her dancing skills at the Beijing Dance Academy under the tutelage of one of China's foremost dance teachers: Madame Meiqi Yang. Ms. Duan danced with the Akram Khan Company in 2005.

David Ferri (*lighting*) has worked with several prominent choreographers, such as Pina Bausch, David Rousseve, Doug Varone, Jane Comfort, Eiko and Koma, and Ballet Preljocaj. Since 1996, he has served as Production Manager at the American Dance Festival, training upcoming American designers. Recipient of the 1988 Bessie Award for his design of Doug Varone's *Straits*, and the 2001 Bessie Award for Sustained Achievement in Lighting Design, Mr. Ferri was also resident lighting designer and technical director at P.S. 122 from 1985 to 1991. Mr. Ferri lives in New York between his travels and projects.

About the Artists

Jessica Harris (*dancer*) received her dance training at the Chapel Hill Ballet School and Carolina Friends School. She has danced with Carolina Dancers, Chapel Hill Dance Theater, Duke University's 15-501 Ballet and the Whirlwind Dance Company, and is the founder of the Carolina Friends School Annual Alumni Dance Project. Jessica would like to thank all her wonderful teachers and friends and the support she has received from her community in Durham and Chapel Hill. Jessica joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2000.

James Healey (*dancer*) is originally from Grants Pass, Oregon. James officially began expressing himself artistically as a gymnast, followed by a wonderfully warped introduction to dance through his high school drill team. James continued his inevitable path in dance as a scholarship student at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and the American Dance Festival. After graduating, James became an acrobat on the Las Vegas strip, then moved to California for three years with Malashock Dance & Company in San Diego. He proudly became a founding member of Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2000. James is honored to share this journey with the beautiful artists of Shen Wei Dance Arts.

Kathleen Jewett (*dancer*) attended North Carolina School of the Arts. She was a member of the Merce Cunningham Repertory Understudy group from 2003 to 2005. Kathleen joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2005.

William Knapp (*stage manager*) is a stage manager and light designer primarily for dance. He has mounted productions in hundreds of cities and dozens of countries. Artists he has worked with include: Batsheva, Mikhail Baryshnikov, Big Dance Theater, Eric Bogosian, Merce Cunningham, Richard Foreman, Sankai Juku, Susan Marshall, Sarah Michelson, Meredith Monk, Michael Moshcen, MOMIX, Mikel Rouse, Elizabeth Streb and Philip Glass/Robert

Wilson (*Einstein on the Beach*). Will was production manager for Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival for five years.

Océane McCord (*dancer*) is originally from Los Angeles. She began her dance training at Idyllwild Arts Academy and received a BFA in dance from Cornish College of the Arts in Seattle. She expanded her studies of world dance through workshops in Ghana and Cuba. Since moving to New York in 2004, she has worked with Peter Pucci Plus Dancers and Suarez Dance Theater. She is honored to be working with Shen Wei Dance Arts.

Philip Montana (*dancer*) is originally from New York. He received his BFA from the University of Florida in dance performance and is currently working towards his MFA in dance from NYU's Tisch School of the Arts. He has worked with The People's Touring Project, Michael Foley and Shapiro & Smith Dance. His own works have been presented at WAX, Pier 63 and Galapagos Art Space.

Sara Procopio (*dancer*) is originally from Syracuse, New York. She began her dance training at the Center for Ballet & Dance Arts and received her BA and MALS degrees from Hollins University in Roanoke, Virginia. While at Hollins, she co-founded the Hollins Dance Project under the artistic direction of Donna Faye Burchfield and also studied extensively at the American Dance Festival. Sara joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2000.

Born and raised in Sendai, Japan, **Kana Sato** (*dancer*) trained in Japanese dance. She holds a BFA in dance from California State University at Long Beach (CSULB) and has received awards and scholarships from Orange Coast College, CSULB and the American Dance Festival. She thanks Chizuko Kajika, Linda Sohl-Donnell, Judy Allen, Susan McLain, Keith Johnson, Linda Tarnay and Donna Faye Burchfield for where

About the Artists

she is in her life, and her family for whom she is. Sato joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2000.

Sadira Smith (*dancer*) trained at the Fukuoka Kanako Ballet Studio in Kyushu, Japan, and with Eiko Rikihisa. She has worked with the Paris Opera Ballet, the Metropolitan Opera Ballet, Kota Yamazaki and now dances with Buglisi Dance Theater and the Martha Graham Dance Company. Sadira holds a BA in East Asian studies and enjoys aikido and yoga.

John Torres (*production manager*) has been working with Shen Wei Dance Arts for the past year and is very excited to be working with the company again here in Seville. In addition to Stage Managing for Shen Wei, John is a New York-based lighting designer working primarily in the modern dance world. His past work has included tours with Martha Graham, Pilobolus and the Trisha Brown Company.

Joan Wadopian (*dancer*) hails from the beautiful mountains of Asheville, North Carolina. She holds a BFA from the Conservatory of Dance at SUNY Purchase. She has worked with SYREN and the Kevin Wynn Collection, and she joined Shen Wei Dance Arts in 2005. Some of Joan's favorite activities are practicing yoga, going to the movies, taking long walks and shopping at Whole Foods.

U.S. Representation

Julia Glawe
Nancy Gabriel
IMG Artists
Dance Division
Carnegie Hall Tower
152 West 57th Street, Fifth Floor
New York, New York 10019
(212) 994-3500
imgartists.com