

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan

Friday and Saturday, October 31 – November 1, 8 pm, 2003
Zellerbach Hall

Moon Water

Choreography Lin Hwai-min
Music Selections from Six Suites for Solo Cello
by Johann Sebastian Bach
Lighting Design Chang Tsan-tao
Set Design Austin Wang
Costume Design Lin Jing-ru

First performed November 18, 1998, at National Theatre, Taipei.

Dancers

Lee Ching-chun Chou Chang-ning
Chiu I-wen Chou Wei-ping Lin Ya-wen Sheu Fang-yi
Sung Chao-chiun Tsao Kuei-hsing Wang Chih-hao Wen Ching-ching Yang I-chun
Huang Pei-hua Tang Kuo-feng Tsai Ming-yuan
Cheng Tsung-lung Chiang Pao-su Lin Chia-liang Liu Hui-ling Su I-ping Yu Chien-hung
Lin Hsin-fang (apprentice)

Tonight's performance will last approximately 70 minutes,
and will be performed without intermission.

This tour is made possible by a grant from the Council for Cultural Affairs, Taiwan.
Additional sponsorship provided by SinoPac Holdings and Far East National Bank.

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United Commercial Bank and the UC Berkeley Consortium for the Arts.

Cal Performances is a participant in "Awake: Art, Buddhism, and the Dimensions of Consciousness,"
a consortium of artists and arts organizations. During 2002–2004, thanks to generous funding from
the Nathan Cummings Foundation, the James Irvine Foundation, the National Endowment for the Arts,
and others, a number of organizations are sponsoring programs, exhibitions, performances,
and artist residencies to reveal the threads of Buddhist intellectual, psychological,
and aesthetic influence that run through the fabric of American culture.

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and the California Arts Council, a state agency.

Moon Water

Sarabande, Suite No. 5
Tsai Ming-yuan

Sarabande, Suite No. 2

Huang Pei-hua Tsai Ming-yuan

Prelude, Suite No. 5

Chiu I-wen Tang Kuo-feng

and

Cheng Tsung-lung Chou Chang-ning Chou Wei-ping Liu Hui-ling
Su I-ping Tsao Kuei-hsing Yang I-chun Yu Chien-hung

Sarabande, Suite No. 1

Chou Chang-ning

Allemande, Suite No. 5

Lin Ya-wen Yu Chien-hung

and

Chiang Pao-su Chiu I-wen Chou Wei-ping Huang Pei-hua
Tang Kuo-feng Tsao Kuei-hsing Wang Chih-hao Wen Ching-ching

Sarabande, Suite No. 3

Yang I-chun Sung Chao-chiun

and

Wen Ching-ching Wang Chih-hao

Prelude, Suite No. 4

Sheu Fang-yi

Allemande, Suite No. 6

and Sarabande, Suite No. 5

Chou Chang-ning Huang Pei-hua Wen Ching-ching Yang I-chun

and

Cheng Tsung-lung Chiu I-wen Chou Wei-ping Lin Ya-wen
Sheu Fang-yi Su I-ping Sung Chao-chiun Tang Kuo-feng
Tsai Ming-yuan Tsao Kuei-hsing Wang Chih-hao

Music from Six Suites for Solo Cello, performed by Mischa Maisky,
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Moon Water is a work by choreographer Lin Hwai-min, premiered by Cloud Gate Dance Theatre on November 18, 1998, at the National Theatre, Taipei, Taiwan.

To the Chinese, "Moon Water," or "Suei Yuei," is reminiscent of two things. One is a Buddhist proverb: "Flowers in a mirror and moon on the water are both illusory." The other describes the ideal state of Tai-Chi practitioners: "Energy flows as water, while the spirit shines as the moon."

The choreographer takes inspiration from these famous quotes, creating a work that is a poetic rendering of the Taoist philosophy. Moon Water is a study of real vs. unreal, effort vs. effortlessness, yin and yang, and, in the end, a study of time.

As the curtain opens, a man stands alone on stage, looking at a simplified pattern of water, drawn on the black marley floor with white brush strokes. As the dance proceeds, several mirrors begin to appear in midair and upstage, reflecting the images of moving dancers and of the patterns on the floor. Towards the end of the piece, water flows onto the floor until the floor itself becomes a huge mirror reflecting dancing bodies. After this, a full-length mirror appears upstage, reflecting dancers and reflections of their images on the water. Dancers exit. The stage is empty, except for the ripples on the water. Curtain.

This is a black-and-white production. While the stage floor is covered by black marley, the dancers' costumes are of billowy white silk, which eventually will be soaked by the water, revealing the bodies underneath.

Such are the theatrical settings for Moon Water. The theme of the work, however, is further conveyed by the Tai Chi-based dance movements.

In the past five years, Cloud Gate dancers, whose training also includes ballet, modern dance, and Beijing theater movements, have been practicing meditation and Tai Chi. While the company's work Songs of the Wanderers, which has received great international acclaim, is a product of the meditation practice, Moon Water draws from the Introduction to Tai Chi. This discipline, or technique, was created by master Hsiung Wei, a result of his studies and research in several schools of traditional training.

The system involves Tai Chi, Chi Kung, and martial arts, with great emphasis on breathing. Movements are initiated from Dan Tien, the center of the torso, and carried out through Chi, or inner energy. After years of training with Master Hsiung, Cloud Gate dancers now move as no other dancers have ever done on any stage. They move organically and project powerful energy. Their dynamic range flows from the weighty stillness of a stone sculpture, to floating lyricism, to fierce martial art attack. Their movements draw viewers into the cycle of their breathing, often causing shivers of sympathetic excitement.

By directing the dancers towards improvisation while they are in a trance-like state, Lin Hwai-min has spent months—and continues still—exploring the possibilities of developing a language from the techniques of Introduction to Tai Chi.

For the music of this contemporary work, Lin has chosen nine movements from J.S. Bach's Suites for Solo Cello. The result is a fascinating encounter between East and West, rich with surprising beauty.

In 2003, the city government of Taipei proclaimed August 21st, the opening day of Cloud Gate's 30th anniversary season, as "Cloud Gate Day," and named Fu-Hsing North Road, Lane 231, home of Cloud Gate's office, as "Cloud Gate Lane" as a tribute to the company, honoring its contributions to the cultural life of Taipei City. This was the first time Taiwan bestowed the honor of naming a day and place after a living artist and/or artistic group.

According to legend, Cloud Gate is the name of the oldest known dance in China, a ritual dance from some 5,000 years ago. In 1973, choreographer Lin Hwai-min adopted this classical name for the first contemporary dance company in any Chinese speaking community: Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan.

Cloud Gate's rich repertoire has its roots in Asian myths, folklore, and aesthetics, but it brings to these age-old beliefs and stories a contemporary and universal perspective. The company is made up of two-dozen dancers whose training includes Tai Chi, meditation, Chinese opera movement, modern dance, and ballet.

Cloud Gate has made extensive overseas tours of Europe, Asia, Australia, and North and South America, including engagements at New York's BAM Next Wave Festival, the Sydney 2000 Olympic Arts Festival, Lyon Biannual Dance Festival, Melbourne Festival, the festival celebrating the 25th anniversary of Pina Bausch's Tanztheater Wuppertal, Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, the Deutsche Opera Berlin, and the Kennedy Center.

At home, Cloud Gate also enjoys high acclaim and popularity. It performs throughout Taiwan, in venues ranging from the lavish National Theatre in Taipei to mid-sized cultural centers in various cities to high school auditoriums in remote villages. The company also gives free outdoor performances several times a year, drawing audiences of up to 60,000 per performance.

To increase touring of campuses and smaller communities, and to foster the work of young choreographers in Taiwan, a second company—Cloud Gate 2—was founded in 1999. One year earlier, Cloud Gate Dance School was founded to bring the joy of dance to students of all ages. Most of Cloud Gate's productions have been made into dance films. Among them, Songs of the Wanderers was filmed in The Netherlands, Moon Water was filmed in France, and Bamboo Dream was filmed in Germany by RM Associates, London. These productions are available on DVD and have been broadcast on television in many countries.

Lin Hwai-min (founder and artistic director) studied Chinese opera movement in his native Taiwan, modern dance in New York, and classical court dance in Japan and Korea. He founded Cloud Gate in 1973.

An internationally renowned choreographer, Lin often draws from traditional Asian culture for inspiration and material to create works with innovative forms and contemporary relevance. For his artistic achievements, Lin was named as one of the “Ten Outstanding Young Persons” in the World by Jaycees International in 1983. He also received a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Department of Culture of New York City in 1996, an Honorary Award of Fellowship from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts in 1997, an honorary doctorate from National Chung Cheng University of Taiwan, the Ramon Magsaysay Award (“the Nobel Prize of Asia”) in 1999, the Fok Ying Tung Contribution Prize in 2001, and the National Award for Arts from the Taiwan National Culture and Arts Foundation in 2002. In 2003, Lin received an honorary doctorate from National Chiao Tung University, Hsinchu, Taiwan.

Lin was selected as “Choreographer of the 20th Century” by Dance Europe magazine, cited as the “Best Choreographer” at the Lyon Biannual Festival, and chosen to be one of the “Personalities of the Year”—along with Merce Cunningham, Jirí Kylián, Pina Bausch, and William Forsythe—by Ballet International magazine (2000).

An acclaimed writer, Lin holds an MFA from the Writers' Workshop, University of Iowa. His novel *Cicada* is a huge bestseller in Taiwan, and several of his works have been translated into English and published in the United States.

Lin founded the department of dance at Taiwan's National Taipei University of the Arts in 1983 and served as its chairman for five years. In 1993 and 1994, he was the founding dean of the institute's graduate dance program. In 1999, he gave master classes in Cambodia, assisting local dancers to organize teaching materials of Khmer classical dance for children.

Lin Hwai-min made his debut as an opera director when *Rashomon* received its world premiere in 1996 to rave reviews at the Graz Opera, Austria. His production for *Tosca* in 2002, with the National Symphony Orchestra of Taiwan, was a huge success in Taipei.

Since 2000, Lin has also been serving as the artistic director of the “Novel Hall New Dance Series,” introducing internationally renowned avant-garde groups and artists to dance lovers in Taiwan.

Chang Tsan-tao (lighting design) has been acclaimed “a master painter in light” by the Chicago Sun-Times, and holds an MFA in design and technical production from City University of New York's Brooklyn College. Germany's *Süddeutsche Zeitung* has stated, “Chang Tsan-tao is, without argument, the best light designer that theater currently knows,” while France's *Figaro* has raved, “I was literally taken by Chang Tsan-tao's sumptuous lighting; he created dazzling fireworks.”

Chang has designed for numerous operas, dance works, and theater productions in Taiwan. His major lighting design achievements include Lin Hwai-min's *Smoke* (2002), *Cursive* (2001), *Bamboo Dream* (2001), *Moon Water* (1998), *White* (1998), *Songs of the Wanderers* (1994), and other major works in Cloud Gate's repertoire. He has also worked as the lighting designer for Golden Bough Theatre, Sun-Shier Dance Theatre, Taipei Crossover Dance Company, and Godot Theatre Company. In 1990, he designed the lighting for *Chi Kung the Miraculous Taoist Monk* (1990) by Ming Hua Yuan, which was performed at the Beijing Asia Games.

In 1990, he served as the lighting director for *The Kingdom of Desire*, presented by the Contemporary Legend Theatre on its overseas premiere at the National Theatre of London. In 2002, he was the lighting designer for Taiwan's National Symphony Orchestra's presentation of the opera *Tosca*, directed by Lin Hwai-min.

Chang has worked closely with Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan since 1982. At present, he is the company's technical director as well as resident lighting designer and lighting director.

Austin M.C. Wang (set design) has been praised by the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung for creating “a magical room that unfolds a poetry of its own.” He holds an MFA in scenery and lighting design from the University of Southern California, and his major scenic designs for Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan include *Smoke* (2002), *Bamboo Dream* (2001), *Moon Water* (1998), *Symphony of Sorrowful Songs* (1995), and *Songs of the Wanderers* (1994). His other major achievements include

Metamorphosis (1998) for the Creative Society; Tosca (2002), directed by Lin Hwai-min, with Taiwan's National Symphony Orchestra; and Salute to Taiwan for Lincoln Center in the United States.

During his stay in the United States, Wang served as an assistant scenic artist at the Los Angeles Theatre Center and an assistant scenic designer for the stage department of The Juilliard School in New York, where he was assistant set designer for Chekhov's Three Sisters. When he returned to Taiwan, he served as technical manager and stage manager at the National Theatre in Taipei, and also as technical director at the China Times Performing Arts Center.

Wang's lighting credits include The Back of Beyond, which was presented in Taipei, Paris, and Hamburg; The Life of Mandala for the 1990 Dance Exhibition by the Tai Gu Tales Dance Theatre; and two major productions with the Contemporary Legend Theatre.

Having served as the production manager and resident set designer for Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan between 1993 and 2001, Wang currently is Cloud Gate's technical consultant and principal set designer. He also serves as the technical design director for the Creative Society and teaches in the theater department at the Chinese Culture University.

Lin Jing-ru (costume design) is one of the most senior costume designers in Taiwan, and has worked in this field for over 20 years. She studied at Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. In 1992, she was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to study in New York and to participate in the productions of the New York City Ballet and the New York City Opera.

Lin's Cloud Gate credits encompass the company's major repertoire, including the internationally acclaimed Cursive (2001), Moon Water (1998), Nine Songs (1993), The Dream of the Red Chamber (1983), Symphony of the Sorrowful Songs (1995), Shooting the Sun (1992), Legacy (1978), and Nirvana (1982). She has designed for more than 70 other major works, including designs for Neo-Classic Dance Company; the ballets Swan Lake and Nutcracker; the modern dance Life of Mandala by Tai Gu Tales Dance Theatre in 1990; the theater work The Kingdom of Desire by the Contemporary Legend Theatre; and the operas Tosca, A Midsummer Night's Dream, and Rigoletto.

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