



Photo by LIU Chen-hsiang

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan

13 TONGUES by CHENG Tsung-lung

NOVEMBER 7, 2024 | 7:30PM | JACKSON HALL

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We should take a moment to acknowledge the land on which we are gathered. For thousands of years, this land has been the home of Patwin people.

Today, there are three federally recognized Patwin tribes: Cachil DeHe Band of Wintun Indians of the Colusa Indian Community, Kletsel Dehe Wintun Nation, and Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation.

The Patwin people have remained committed to the stewardship of this land over many centuries. It has been cherished and protected, as elders have instructed the young through generations. We are honored and grateful to be here today on their traditional lands.

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A Season of Firsts

Welcome to the 24-25 Season at the Robert and Margrit Mondavi Center for the Performing Arts, UC Davis.

Whether you're a returning patron or joining us for the first time, we're grateful for your support of live performance. I'm so happy you've decided to come see a show.

This is my first full season as the Mondavi Center's new Executive Director. This year, we've chosen *Designed for Discovery* as our theme and our guiding principle. I believe it's critical that we not only bring you the familiar names you know and love, but also introduce artists that are new to you, and support the rising generation of exceptional talent.

Our classical offerings therefore begin with a Mondavi Center debut by 28-year-old violinist Randall Goosby, as part of the London Philharmonic Orchestra's first appearance. As the *L.A. Times* so aptly put it, "Goosby plays like an angel."

As well, our programming this fall features 15 Mondavi Center debuts. Like Goosby, several of these artists are early in their careers, offering you a brilliant glimpse of the future of the performing arts.

Our fall first-timers cohort is comprised of an eclectic and deeply talented bunch. Jazz artists Sean Mason and Youn Sun Nah join us for three shows each, in the intimate Vanderhoef Studio Theatre. 25-year-old vocalist Ekep Nkwelle makes her Mondavi Center debut with the Jazz at Lincoln Center Orchestra. We have new modern dance from the Asian diaspora, with work from Claudine Naganuma, SanSan Kwan, and Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan. And we offer you some hilarious and poignant evenings of spoken word with WNBA Star Brittney Griner, futurist Baratunde Thurston, comic W. Kamau Bell, and the one and only Astria Suparak.

In another Mondavi Center first, thanks to the Manetti Shrem Opera Program at Festival Napa Valley, our fall programming includes a fully staged opera with orchestra. Whether or not you think you're an opera fan, I encourage you to join us for Donizetti's wonderful comedy, *Don Pasquale*. This fresh take on a classic is proof that opera remains relevant, and powerful, and can be a lot of fun.

As always, we're glad you're here!

Thank you,

Jeremy Ganter

Executive Director

ROBERT AND MARGRIT MONDAVI CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS PRESENTS

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan



Choreography	CHENG Tsung-lung
Music	LIM Giong
Art Design	HO Chia-hsing
Lighting Design	SHEN Po-hung
Projection Design	Ethan WANG
Costume Design	LIN Bing-hao
Voice Coach	TSAI Pao-chang

Premiere

March 11, 2016

Taiwan International Festival of Arts
at National Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

Commission

National Theater & Concert Hall (Taipei)

Cast

CHAN Pui-pui CHANG Hung-mao CHEN Lien-wei CHEN Tsung-chiao
CHOU Chen-yeh FAN Chia-hsuan HOU Tang-li HSU Chih-hen HUANG Mei-ya
HUANG Yen-cheng LEE Tzu-chun SHAO Hsing-wen YEN Hsueh-hsin

This tour is made possible in part by the grants from the Ministry of Culture, R.O.C. (Taiwan)

PROGRAM SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Program Notes

About *13 TONGUES*

As a child in the 1980s Cloud Gate Artistic Director, CHENG Tsung-lung would contribute to the family business by helping his father sell slippers on the streets of Bangka/Wanhua, the oldest district of Taipei. Bangka/Wanhua was known for its vibrantly diverse and bustling street scene that embraced religious and secular life, rich and poor, work and play, legal and illegal activities. The young CHENG was transfixed by his mother's accounts of the legendary 1960s street artist and storyteller known as "Thirteen Tongues" who had adopted Bangka/Wanhua for his informal stage. It was said that "Thirteen Tongues" could conjure up all the Bangka/Wanhua characters - high and low born, sacred and profane, men and women - in the most vivid, dramatic, and fluently imaginative narratives. Thirty years on CHENG's fascination for "Thirteen Tongues" became his inspiration as he transformed his childhood memories into dance.

Beginning and ending with the sound of a single hand bell, the music accompanying *13 TONGUES* ranges from Taiwanese folk songs to Taoist chant to electronica. The stage is awash with projections of brilliant colours, shapes, and images and the dancers gather, interact, separate and re-gather in a thrilling representation of the clamour of street life. As the religious heritage of ancient Bangka/Wanhua fuses with the secular space it is today so time appears to dissolve. The spirit realm and the human realm also coalesce as the audience is taken on an immersive journey - via imagination and storytelling that recalls the art of "Thirteen Tongues" - through centuries of human endeavour, behaviour and belief.

Creative Team

Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan

Cloud Gate is the name of the oldest known dance in China. In 1973, choreographer LIN Hwai-min adopted this classical name and founded the first contemporary dance company in the greater Chinese-speaking community: Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, also known worldwide as Cloud Gate. In 2020, CHENG Tsung-lung succeeded LIN as the company's Artistic Director. In 2023, Cloud Gate celebrated its 50th anniversary.

Cloud Gate has set out to engage with local history, culture and subject matter and draws on classical, folk and modern dance from both Western and Asian traditions. Its dancers trained in meditation, Qi Gong, an ancient breathing exercise; internal martial arts, modern dance and ballet. Under the leadership of CHENG, their training has further expanded to include training from various styles of dance, such as street dance. Manifesting in choreographies, the company transforms ancient aesthetics into a thrilling and modern celebration of motion.

Cloud Gate has received international acclaim as "Asia's leading contemporary dance theater" (The Times), and "One of the best dance companies in the world" (FAZ). Cloud Gate is also honored as the "Outstanding Company" for the 2018 National Dance Awards, UK.

The company has toured worldwide with frequent engagements at the Next Wave Festival in New York, the Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, the Moscow Chekhov International Theatre Festival in Russia, the Movimentos International Dance Festival and the Internationales Tanzfest NRW, directed by the late Pina Bausch in Germany.

Cloud Gate has also danced into local campuses and grassroots communities. Its annual free outdoor performances staged across Taiwan in cities and villages draw a minimum of 30,000 people per performance, hailed as one of the biggest dance events on earth.

LIN Hwai-min, Founder

LIN Hwai-min founded Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan in 1973 and has led the company to international prominence through his thrilling creations that transform Asian aesthetics into a contemporary celebration of motion.

Among the honors LIN Hwai-min has received are the Samuel H. Scripps /American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement; the John D. Rockefeller Award, New York; the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters, France; and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Movimentos International Dance Festival, Germany. He has also been celebrated by *Time* magazine as one of "Asia's Heroes".

At the end of 2019, LIN Hwai-min stepped down as the Artistic Director of Cloud Gate and handed the reins of the company to CHENG Tsung-lung.

CHENG Tsung-lung, Artistic Director / Choreographer

From street hawker selling slippers to internationally recognized choreographer, CHENG Tsung-lung succeeded LIN Hwai-min as Artistic Director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan starting in 2020.

CHENG took his first dance class at the age of 8. Upon graduation from the Dance Department at Taipei National University of the Arts, he joined Cloud Gate in 2002 and became the Artistic Director of Cloud Gate 2 in 2014.

CHENG has been awarded prestigious prizes for his choreography internationally as well as at home, such as the No Ballet International Choreography Competition (Germany), the Premio Roma Danza International Choreography Competition (Italy), the MASDANZA Choreography Competition (Spain) and the Taishin Arts Award (Taiwan). He has also worked with companies worldwide, including Sydney Dance Company, the Transitions Dance Company at the Laban Centre, London, Expressions Dance Company, Brisbane and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

CHENG's work is deeply rooted in both ancient and modern Taiwanese culture — and he is a strong supporter of Cloud Gate's extensive engagement with grassroots audiences across Taiwan — yet it also embraces global influences. He is praised by the Stage Newspaper with “an eye for a cinematic moment.” His *13 TONGUES* (2016) integrates folk dance, religious rites, and Taoist chant to conjure the streets where he worked as a child. *Lunar Halo* (2019) is performed to an ethereally haunting soundtrack by Icelandic musician Sigur Rós and explores the complex area of human connection and technology. *Sounding Light* (2020) was written in response to COVID-19 pandemic-induced isolation and reflects on the precariousness of both the human and the natural world. Visually stunning, *Send In A Cloud* (2022) displays in shifting colors a panorama of dancers' life journeys. The most recent choreography *WAVES* (2023), a collaboration with Japanese media artist Daito MANABE, explores societal and individual facets affected by the rapid progress of technological advancements.

CHENG has been a fixture of Routledge's respected annual survey of dance practitioners, *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers* (2020), alongside the likes of William Forsythe, Akram Khan, Hofesh Shechter and leaders in the form.

LIM Giong, Music

LIM Giong's music career began as a singer-songwriter and then moved behind the scenes to meet DJs. Encouraged by director HOU Hsiao-hsien, LIM worked on the film soundtrack for *Goodbye South, Goodbye*, and has contributed to the soundtrack of short films, advertisements, animations and documentaries. After he started collaborating with artists in various fields in 2004, his compositions became more

experimental and are increasingly infused with electronic music, evolving drum and bass, breakbeat, ambient and electronica. LIM composed for choreographer CHENG Tsung-lung's *13 TONGUES* (2016), *Full Moon* (2017), *Multiplication* (2019), and *Sounding Light* (2020) with his unique music style and added a variety of flavors to the pieces. LIM recently created music for *Nothing Between Body and Earth*, a film co-directed by CHENG Tsung-lung and CHUAN Ming-yuan.

HO Chia-hsing, Art Design

An AGI (Alliance Graphique Internationale) member since 2017, HO Chia-hsing is nourished in his artistic designs by the rich cultural atmosphere of Dadaocheng, an old city district in Taipei.

HO established a graphic design studio called the “Timonium Lake” in 2006. In 2019, with partners at work, he runs the “Monsoon Plasticizing Culture Work Team,” focusing on the rapid changes in the design industries of Taiwan and East Asia. His team uses the calligraphic line of traditional Chinese scripts as means to create modern designs. In collaboration with artists in different fields, his team fuses local Taiwan culture with their spiritual nourishment in their plastic arts and design works.

SHEN Po-hung, Lighting Design

Graduating from the Graduate Institute of Drama and Theatre at National Taiwan University, SHEN Po-hung has created his personal marks on lighting design through in-depth reading into interdisciplinary fields. SHEN currently works as a freelance designer and his designs encompass works in dance, drama, concert and special events. He has collaborated with CHENG Tsung-lung for many years, with designing credits including *WAVES* (2023), *Send In A Cloud* (2022), *Lunar Halo* (2019), *Dream Catcher* (2017), *13 TONGUES* (2016), *Beckoning* (2015), *Dorian Gray* (2014), *Blue Hour* (2013) and *On the Road* (2011).

Ethan WANG, Projection Design

One of the most active projection designers in Taiwan, Ethan WANG received his MA degree in Communication Design majoring in New Media Pathway from Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London and has been devoted to creation and education on video design in performing arts. WANG was the curator for 2019 Prague Quadrennial Taiwan Exhibition and currently serves as an Associate Professor for the Department of Theatre Design and Technology at the Taipei National University of the Arts. WANG was awarded the outstanding alumni of the Taipei National University of the Arts in 2017.

WANG has received numerous awards including the first prize of “World Stage Design 2022 in Projection Design” for U Theatre's *The Colours*; the silver award in Digital Arts and Graphic Design from the “Novum Design Award” (NDA, France) for his outdoor lighting sculpture of *Weiwuying*

Lights Up: The Island of Memories in 2022; the bronze medal of “World Stage Design 2013 New Media Award” for Cloud Gate’s *Water Stains on the Wall*; the winner of “7th Knight of Illumination Awards 2015” for Cloud Gate’s *RICE*. His projection design for CHENG Tsung-lung’s *13 TONGUES* won him the silver award at the World Stage Design 2017.

LIN Bing-hao, Costume Design

LIN Bing-hao started learning dance at the Taipei National University of the Arts. Later discovering his true passion for costume design, he dropped out of school to serve as an apprentice to the renowned designer LIN Ching-ju in 1998. In 2001, he opened his Costume Shop, and in the next year launched Taiwan’s first professional brand of leotards, KeithLink.

LIN has collaborated with important performing arts groups and artists in Taiwan, including Cloud Gate 2, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, Ju Percussion Group and GuoGuang Chinese Opera Company. Acclaimed by critics as a promising artist, in 2011, LIN was invited to design for the opera *La Dame aux Camélias* directed by the renowned Japanese theater director Tadashi Suzuki.

TSAI Pao-chang, Voice Coach

TSAI Pao-chang graduated from National Taiwan University with his BA in Drama & Theatre and received his MA in Music Theatre from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. In 2011, with a grant from the Asian Cultural Council, he received voice and speech training from the American Repertory Theater at Harvard University and furthered his theater adventure at Moscow Art Theatre (MXAT). He is actively involved in various international artist-in-residency programs in France, Iceland, USA, Denmark, South Korea and Germany.

Known as a playwright, director and actor, TSAI collaborates with many performing arts companies in Taiwan. He served as the co-artistic director of Tainaner Ensemble, one of the most established theater companies in Taiwan from 2009 to 2018.

LEE Ching-chun, Associate Artistic Director

LEE Ching-chun obtained her MA degree in Dance Studies from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London, in 1999. In 2004, she received the National Award for the Arts from Taiwan National Culture and Arts Foundation, the highest award for artists in Taiwan.

Joining Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan in 1983, LEE took leading roles in most of LIN Hwai-min’s choreographies, including his signature works *Cursive: A Trilogy*, *Songs of the Wanderers*, and *Nine Songs*, among others. Appointed as Associate Artistic Director in 2003, she has often represented LIN Hwai-min to re-stage his works for international dance companies, such as Zurich Ballet.

LEE’s other dance credits include Helen LAI’s *The Rite of Spring*, *Invisible Cities*, *La Vie en Rose*, and *Frida*. In addition to performances, she has also been invited to choreograph for Cloud Gate, Spotlight Dance Company and Kaohsiung City Ballet Company. In 1999, collaborating with Canadian stage designer Tania Etienne, she choreographed and performed her solo dance work *Courtyard of Pearls*.

Serving as the Chief Consultant for Cloud Gate Dance School, LEE has helped to create and develop class syllabuses for students aged from 4 to 84.

YANG Ling-kai, Rehearsal Director

Learning dance at a very young age, YANG Ling-kai toured internationally in her adolescence with Taiwan’s Lan Yang Dancers Troup. Immediately after graduating from Taipei National University of the Arts in 1999, she joined Cloud Gate 2 serving as one of its founding members and has since taken major roles with praise in works by renowned choreographers such as LIN Hwai-min, Helen LAI, LO Man-fei, WU Kuo-chu, Bulareyaung Pagarlava, HUANG Yi and CHENG Tsung-lung. YANG has been the rehearsal director for Cloud Gate since 2014.

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For more information, visit mondaviarts.org/support-us or call (530) 752-7354



Barbara K. Jackson Rising Stars of Opera
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 Sunday, February 2, 2025

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