

Chinese techniques to blend with spirited modern dance when Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company performs Jan. 23 at UCSD

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CHINESE TECHNIQUES TO BLEND WITH SPIRITED MODERN DANCE WHEN LILY CAI CHINESE DANCE COMPANY PERFORMS JAN. 23 AT UCSD

Performing a variety of classical, folk and modern dances in dazzling costumes to original music, the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company created, according to the Anchorage Daily News, "a meld that could only happen in America ancient Chinese techniques blended with modern dance in a marriage that (is) artistic and inventive."

The Lily Cai Dance Company will perform locally at 8 p.m. Jan. 23 in Mandeville Auditorium at the University of California, San Diego.

Of a recent performance, the San Francisco Chronicle wrote: "There were moments of great beauty and some truly beautiful dancing ... when Lily Cai Chinese Dance took the stage with Cai's uniquely American melting pot of traditional Chinese stage pictures, international pop and the cutting edge of post-modern dance."

Lily Cai is the founder and artistic director of Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company. A native of Shanghai and former principal dancer with the Shanghai Opera House, Cai has performed extensively in the United States and Europe and is considered an authority and resource on Chinese dance in the San Francisco Bay area.

The company includes dancers Ruth Yfonne Chen, Mandy Huang, Tammy Li, Rita Liang, Ada Liu, Phong Voong and Lucy Yu.

The Redlands Daily Facts describes Cai and her dancers as "charming, smashingly visual amid their swirling color of silk scarves ... sweetly enticing, pettily slim, supple in movement requiring amazing muscle strength ... wonderful interpreters of a mysterious 5,000-year culture."

The Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company is the resident dance company of Chinese Cultural Productions, co-founded in 1989 by Cai and composer Gang Situ to promote greater public awareness of Chinese dance and music. The dance company evolved from an ensemble of high school girls assembled by choreographer Cai when she was teaching China's cultural heritage to American youths during a residency at Galileo High School in San Francisco to today's professional troupe.

Highlights of the group's performing career include a featured role in the Grateful Dead's concert celebrating the Year of the Dog at the Oakland Coliseum in 1994, participating in the United Nations' 50th anniversary celebration in San Francisco in 1995, and receiving awards for Outstanding Achievement in Choreography and Company Performance from the Isadora Duncan Dance Awards Committee for their collaborative performance, Common Ground, with Oakland's Dimensions Dance Theater in 1996. That same year, the company premiered

the Chinese Myths Cantata, a collaboration with the Women's Philharmonic and Chantileer choristers in San Francisco.

The Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company has toured throughout the United States and Europe and has appeared at festivals, universities and community events including the San Francisco Ethnic Dance Festival, the Asian Pacific Performing Arts Festival and the International Dance Festival in Germany.

The Center for the Arts Magazine says Lily Cai Chinese Dance "features timeless elements which often surprise audiences by their fresh, contemporary look at everything from romance to the exuberant spectacle of the Chinese ribbon dance."

Tickets for the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company performance are \$18 general admission, \$15 for faculty, staff and senior citizens, and \$13 for students. Tickets are available at the UCSD Box Office, 534-8497, and at Ticketmaster outlets at 220-8497. The performance is sponsored by the University Events Office. For information on the entire season of events sponsored by the University Events Office, visit the website, <http://ueo.ucsd.edu>, or call the UCSD University Events Office at 534-4090.

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