



PRESS RELEASE

PEGGY CHOY DANCE COMPANY BRIGHTENS THE WINTER SKIES WITH “FLIGHT”, KUMBLE THEATER, JANUARY 27-28, 2017!

The 2017 Lunar New Year begins on January 28th, celebrated by Asian communities the world over. Enjoy an exciting diversion from the dreary winter. See “FLIGHT”, a new kind of performance to mark this celebratory time. “FLIGHT” is an Afro-Asian fusion dance performance by Peggy Choy Dance, the innovative New York-based dance company. Kumble Theater for the Performing Arts, known for showcasing vibrant and diverse performances, presents “FLIGHT” on January 27th and 28th, at 7:30 p.m.

Inspired by the revered 12th century Persian poet Attar’s poem “Conference of the Birds”, Peggy Choy Dance brings to life an allegorical tale of the world’s birds embarking on a dangerous journey in search of the Wondrous Rose of Love. The few birds that survive make a surprising and transformative discovery. At a time when the West is anxious about the Middle East, “FLIGHT” challenges us to ask, Can we live in a state of deep love in a time of chaos and violence? The birds spring to life through a diverse company of world-class dancers--Ze Motion, Ai Ikeda, Lacour Yancey, Briana Butler, and Victoria Vikström—who are cross-trained in martial arts, urban vernacular forms, African dance and ballet.

The music, composed by Graham Haynes (the son of the renowned jazz drummer, Roy Haynes), was specially commissioned for “FLIGHT”, reflecting Haynes’ jazz roots, electronic music expertise, and his knowledge of African musics. He has traveled to Morocco where he has jammed with Moroccan sufi musicians. The libretto is by poet and playwright Ruth Margraff (School of the Art Institute of Chicago), vocals are by Iranian-American Haleh Abghari, and costumes and video art are by Andrew Jordan.

Crossing boundaries through dance has been the signature of the Peggy Choy Dance Company. Peggy Choy links cultural roots and histories through dance, often highlighting Asian American and African American intersections. Since the 1990s, she has toured internationally from New York to Jakarta--at New York’s Danspace Project at St. Mark’s Church, La MaMa Theater, Aaron Davis Hall, at DC’s Kennedy Center and Dance Place, Seoul Art Center, Prague’s Baráčnícká Rychta Theater, Danza Teatro Retazos in Havana, and Jakarta’s Utan Kayu.

Choy, grew up in Hawai’i, and has a foundation in Korean and Javanese dance, and Asian martial arts. A gifted soloist, Choy has unearthed controversial and little-known stories, such as “Comfort Woman”--her signature work about sex

slaves exploited by the Japanese military during World War II. Choy's "Sea Solos" series highlights the endangered lifestyle of the Korean diving women (*haenyeo*) of Jeju Island, Korea, touring to LA, Berlin, New York, Prague and Vancouver in 2011-2013. "Wild Rice"--performed in Madison, Chicago, Prague and Havana (2014-2015)—is inspired by the wild rice that is central to the culture of the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Chippewa Tribe. The wild rice is threatened with extinction if a mine is built nearby that will pollute the river's water. "Inside-Outside" explores the balance of *ki* (inner life-force energy or breath) and improvisation that is at the root of Korean culture.

The Peggy Choy Dance, founded in 2010, also explores provocative themes, including (the solitary confinement of the Cuban Five in "Beyond Walls", the uprising of African American guano miners in the late 1800s on the Caribbean island of Navassa in "THIRST". "THE GREATEST! Hip Dance Homage to Muhammad Ali" premiered at Brooklyn's Gleason's Gym (where Ali himself had trained) in 2013.

Choy's awards include NEA/Atlantic Center for the Arts fellowship, Wisconsin Dance Council and the Wisconsin Arts Board. She has received commissions from Princeton and Cornell universities, Danspace Project's Commissioning Initiative (New York), Kintari Foundation (Prague, Czech Republic), Seoul Selection and Café Antarsia Ensemble (Chicago, Illinois).

An Associate Professor of Dance and Asian American Studies at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Choy has innovated courses including Asian American Movement, and Afro-Asian Improv: From Hip Hop to Martial Arts Fusion.

Tickets for FLIGHT are available online at:
<http://kumbletheater.tix.com/Schedule.aspx?OrgNum=728>

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