

Sunday, February 1, 2026

Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company Lunar New Year: Celebrating the Year of the Horse at Kupferberg Center for the Arts

Company: Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company
Venue: Kupferberg Center for the Arts
Location: Flushing, NY

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The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, the renowned international touring dance company founded by Chinese American choreographer Nai-Ni Chen and now led by Artistic Director Greta Campo and Executive Director Andy Chiang, announced today that they will perform at the Golden Auditorium at Kupferberg Center for the Arts, 153-49 Reeves Ave, Flushing, NY, 11367. Tickets are \$22, with discounts for students, seniors, Queens College students, and more, and can be purchased at The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, the renowned international touring dance company founded by Chinese American choreographer Nai-Ni Chen and now led by Artistic Director Greta Campo and Executive Director Andy Chiang, announced today that they will perform at the Golden Auditorium at Kupferberg Center for the Arts, 153-49 Reeves Ave, Flushing, NY, 11367. Tickets are \$22, with discounts for students, seniors, Queens College students, and more, and can be purchased at <https://kupferbergcenter.org/event/lunar-new-year/>.

Join for a spellbinding family dance performance and embrace the spirit of the Year of the Horse through the power and beauty of dance. Immerse yourself in a world of wonder as the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company takes the stage, blending ancient Chinese traditions with contemporary movement.

Kupferberg Center Program

Lion in the City

Choreography: Peiju Chien-Pott, Hip Hop Legends Kwikstep and Rokafella

Music: DJ KS360/Kwikstep, Henry Lee (Lion Dance Drum)

Dancers: Kathryn Taylor Esteban Santamaria, Caleb Baker

This exhilarating work brings a modern edge to the traditional Chinese New Year celebration. Commissioned by the New Jersey Performing Arts Center (NJPAC), this unique version develops a dialogue between contemporary/Chinese movement and Hip-Hop, celebrating the pioneering spirit of the collaboration. The Lion Dance itself is a prayer for peace and harmony on earth, symbolized by a child playing freely with a ferocious beast.

Reverberation of Joy

Choreography: Zhongmei Li

Music: An excerpt of a new work by Angel Lam commissioned by the League of American Orchestras with the generous support of the Virginia B. Toulmin Foundation to be premiered by the Quad City Symphony Orchestra on February 7, 2026, at the Adler Theatre in Davenport, IA

Mongolian Harvest

Choreography: Lawrence Jin

Music: Chinese Traditional

Dancers: Lorenzo Guerrini, Caleb Baker, Sarah Botero, Yuchin "Kiki" Tseng, Kathryn Taylor, Madeleine Lee, Madelyn Sarver, Esteban Santamaria

Commissioned by NJPAC, this dynamic work captures the essence of the nomadic Mongolian way of life. Known for its powerful footwork and expressive upper-body movements, the dance celebrates the generous spirit of the Mongolian people and their respect for the great prairie. Inspired by the joyful Naadam Festival, the piece portrays aspects of herders' daily activities including cooking, hunting, and traditions.

Carousel

Choreography: Nai-Ni Chen

Dancers: Lorenzo Guerrini, Caleb Baker, Sarah Botero, Yuchin "Kiki" Tseng, Kathryn Taylor, Madeleine Lee, Madelyn Sarver

Inspired by the dual imagery of playful, dreamlike carousels and the majestic elegance of real horses, this buoyant piece is one of Nai-Ni Chen's most celebrated abstract works. It explores the flow of energy and the dynamics reminiscent of the brush strokes used in Chinese ink painting, melding childlike wonder with the nobility and pride of equestrian movement.

Festival (Dragon Dance)

Choreography: Nai-Ni Chen

Music: Chinese Traditional

Dancers: Yuchin "Kiki" Tseng, Madeleine Lee, Madelyn Sarver, Lorenzo Guerrini, Sarah Botero, Caleb Baker, Kathryn Taylor, Esteban Santamaria, Yao Zhong Zhang

The most spectacular folk dance performed in the Chinese New Year Celebration, the Dragon carries auspicious powers and nature's grace. The Chinese Dragon is a spiritual and cultural symbol that represents prosperity and good luck, as well as a water deity that nurtures harmony. In this dance, the Dragon descends from heaven and blesses the earth, while colorful ribbons symbolize a prayer for the prosperity of the community.

About the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company

The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company is a rare Asian American woman led professional touring company with programs for educational settings, community organizations and mainstage venues. The Company's mission is to be a premier provider of innovative cultural experiences that reflect the inspiring hope and energy of the immigrant's journey. It was founded with the vision that the journey of crossing cultures and adapting to a new home provides endless inspirations and opportunities for creative expressions that can enrich the human experience. Each one of the company's work is aimed to increase the visibility of the struggle, triumph, despair and joy of this experience. The Company's productions provide authentic experiences and bring forth issues of identity, authenticity, and equality. The Company's worldwide touring is represented by Red Shell Management led by Edward Schoelwer.

Choreography is developed with dancers from diverse backgrounds, and each rehearsal is an immersive, boundary-crossing journey that contributes to the creative process under the direction of the choreographers. Our repertory of Nai-Ni Chen's original works bridge the grace and power of Asian arts and American dynamism which incorporated her broad influences. The company also preserves a variety of festive dances from different regions of China choreographed by guest immigrant artists bearing their tradition.

The Company began to tour in the early 1990s, originally on the East Coast, and later internationally. The dance company is multi-racial and multi-national and has collaborated with a wide range of artists from different disciplines and cultures. Musical collaborators range from New Music, jazz to classical, they include Joan La Barbara, The Chinese Music Ensemble of NY, Jason Kao Hwang, Huang Ruo, Kenji Bunch, Tan Dun, Glen Velez and most recently, the Ahn Trio. Award-winning designers and visual artists such as Myung Hee Cho, Jay Moorthy, AC Hickox and costume designer Karen Young. These collaborations provided us the opportunity to develop innovative productions that carry the timeless essence of the tradition.

In addition to domestic touring, the company has also performed at international festivals in Mexico, Canada, British Virgin Islands, Guatemala, Germany, Poland, Russia, Lithuania, South Korea and China with support from Fund for Mutual Understanding, The President's Committee for the Arts, Arts International and the State Department of the United States. Ms. Chen has received multiple Choreographer's Fellowship from the National Endowment for the Arts and from New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Her work has also been commissioned by the Joyce Theater Foundation, the Lincoln Center Institute, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Dancing in the Streets, the Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation and New Jersey Performing Art Center.

Prominent Institutions, including the Lincoln Center Institute, the Joyce Theater, Dancing in the Streets, NJ Ballet, Ballet Met, Dancing Wheels, and Baraka Sele at NJPAC all have commissioned notable works. The most recent tour, "A Quest for Freedom", developed with the Ahn Trio, premiered at the Philadelphia NextMove Festival. The Company is currently in residence at New Jersey City University's A. Harry Moore for students with disabilities and in Elizabeth School #26, a school of mostly immigrant children.

For more information on Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, please visit www.nainichen.org.

Acknowledgement

Programs of the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company have been made possible by the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/ Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey Cultural Trust, The New Jersey Division of Tourism, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, DanceNYC Dance Advancement Fund, the Hyde and Watson Foundation, E.J. Grassman Trust, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, New Music USA, the Blanche and Irving Laurie Foundation, American Dance Abroad, the Association of Performing Arts Presenters' Cultural Exchange Fund, supported by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, PSEG, Proskauer, WAC Lighting and the Glow Foundation. WQXR is a media partner of the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company.

About Nai-Ni Chen

Nai-Ni Chen (1959-2021) was a legendary choreographer who worked in NJ/NY area professionally for over thirty years since coming to the US in 1982. She has built a diverse repertoire of over 80 original works and toured to major venues in the US and international festivals in 12 countries around the world. A cross-cultural choreographer who aims to bring audience across the cultural boundaries, she has developed unique movement and choreographic styles that reflect the grace and splendor of the Chinese cultural traditions she studied in Taiwan since youth and the dynamic spirit of modern dance that she acquired in New York from luminaries such as Mary Anthony, Bertram Ross, Doris Rudko and Patricia Rowe.

Nai-Ni Chen has received multiple Choreographer Fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts and the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. She has been a principal affiliate of the New Jersey Performing Arts Center and was a resident artist of the Harlem School of the Arts. Her contribution to the immigrant cultural experience has been honored by OCA and the International Institute. Commissions have come from the Joyce Theater Foundation, the Lincoln Center Institute, the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Towson University, Dancing in the Streets, New Jersey Ballet, Ballet Met, and the Cleveland Dancing Wheels. Nai-Ni is currently in residence in New Jersey City University creating a new dance program for the university in collaboration with the Joffrey Ballet School as well as pioneering a program with the University's Laboratory School for children with multiple disabilities.

About Kupferberg Center for the Arts (KCA): The mission of KCA is to provide high quality accessible and affordable cultural attractions to the Queens College community and the borough's 2.4 million residents. The largest indoor year-round multi-disciplinary arts entity in the borough, KCA features world class artists and performances at its main stage campus venues and showcases the talents of emerging and

regional artists in off-site, neighborhood settings. A leader in the cultural landscape of Queens, KCA connects residents of the most ethnically diverse region of the nation to their unique cultural heritages, showcasing these arts to a broader audience and highlighting the contributions each makes to the distinct nature of our campus and community.

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Flushing, NY, 11367
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Schedule
February 1, 2026: 3:00pm

[< back](#)

[previous listing](#) • [next listing](#)