

July 27 - August 3, 2022

Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company announces UNITY: Nai-Ni Chen Remembered- A PBS Documentary Celebrating the Life of Nai-Ni Chen

Company: Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company
Venue: PBS
Location: New York, NY

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state of the arts

Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company announces UNITY: Nai-Ni Chen Remembered, a PBS documentary celebrating the life of internationally renowned dancer and choreographer Nai-Ni Chen. The documentary will air on NJ PBS, WNET Thirteen, and ALL ARTS on various dates, July 27-August 3, 2022. Nai-Ni Chen died tragically in a swimming accident late in 2021. In a special program, State of the Arts takes a touching look back at the life and artistry of one of New Jersey's most revered artists.

Born and trained in Taiwan, Nai-Ni Chen came to the USA in her early 20s, melding her own centuries-old traditions with the contemporary dance she enthusiastically embraced in New York City. She founded the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company in Fort Lee, New Jersey in 1988. The multi-racial and multi-national company continues to perform their founder's work, as well as traditional Chinese dances. The documentary draws on State of the Arts footage and interviews dating back to the early 1990s.

"For me, it has been a very difficult six months without Nai-Ni, and getting used to the fact that she will not be physically present with us any longer." said Andy Chiang, Nai-Ni's husband and executive director of Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company. "However, as I look forward, I see that we have built a foundation for future generations. At the core of this foundation is her pride for who she was and her fearless, indomitable spirit for dance, collaboration and cultural dialog. I know that spirit will be staying with me for the rest of my life. I hope this documentary can serve as a way for you to get to know her vision and invite you to come to meet her in the intersection of cultures and the arts."

Throughout the documentary we hear from colleagues, friends, dancers, and family, including Nai-Ni's husband Andy Chiang and daughter Sylvia Chiang. Maria Ahn of the Ahn Trio and composer Jason Kao Hwang are also featured. Jason composed the music for Nai-Ni's last work, Unity. It premiered at the New York Live Arts Festival just three months after Nai-Ni died. Nai-Ni's former student Paul Liu, now a member of the Pilobolus Dance Company, also appears along with Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company's new artistic leaders, Greta Campo, Peiju Chien-Pott, and Ying Shi.

The documentary will air on the following stations:

NJ PBS

Wednesday 7/27 @ 8:30pm ET

Thursday 7/28 @ 11:30pm ET

Saturday 7/30 @ 7:30pm ET

Sunday 7/31 @ 9:30am ET

WNET Thirteen

Sunday 7/31 @ 11:30am ET

ALL ARTS

Monday 8/1 @ 10:30am & 3:30pm ET

Wednesday 8/3 @ 10am & 3pm ET

About Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company:

"Chen's phrases, part exoskeletal rigidity, part boneless grace, embodied an epic dignity." - Village Voice

Choreographer/Dancer Nai-Ni Chen (1958-2021) was a unique artist whose work crosses many cultural boundaries. Each of her dances reflect her personal vision as an immigrant and an American female artist with deep roots in the Asian culture. From this very personal perspective, she created new works that reflect current issues with global influences. Some of her works were developed in collaboration with renowned artists such as the Ahn Trio, Glen Velez, Joan La Barbara, Jason Kao Hwang, Tao Chen, Tan Dun and the Chinese Music Ensemble of New York.

Bridging the grace of Asian elegance and American dynamism, the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company is a premier provider of innovative cultural experiences that reflect the inspiring hope and energy of the immigrant's journey. The company's ground-breaking works have focused on themes from ancient legends that reflect issues of the present time to purely abstract, contemporary dances influenced by a mix of cultures Nai-Ni Chen experienced in New York. An Asian American company that celebrates cross-cultural experience, the Company's productions naturally bring forth issues of identity, authenticity, and equality.

The Company has presented at some of the most prestigious concert halls such as the Joyce Theater, Lincoln Center in New York, and the Tampa Bay Performing Arts Center in Florida. The Company appears annually at the New Jersey Performing Arts Center, Queens College, the College of Staten Island and on Ellis Island. Internationally, the Company has presented at international festivals including Open Look Festival in Russia, the Silesian International Contemporary Dance Festival, the Konfrontations International Festival in Poland, the Chang Mu International Dance Festival in Korea, the Meet in Beijing International Arts Festival in China, and the Tamaulipas International Arts Festival in Mexico.

The Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company has received more than 20 awards from the National Endowment for the Arts and numerous Citations of Excellence and grants from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts. Advancing Dance Education, the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company is currently in residence in New Jersey City University pioneering a program with the University's A Harry Moore Laboratory School teaching dance to urban children with disabilities. For additional Company information, visit their website, www.nainichen.org; write to Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, P.O. Box 1121, Fort Lee, NJ 07024; or call (800) 650- 0246.

Programs of the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company are made possible by the generous support of our Board members, 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 Mid-Atlantic Arts Foundation (MAAF), the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature, The New Jersey Arts and Culture Recovery Fund administered by the Princeton Area Community Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Hyde and Watson Foundation, E.J. Grassman Trust, The Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, New Music USA, the Blanche & Irving Laurie Foundation, Dance/NYC Dance Advancement Fund, the Rapid Response Program of 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 and the Dragon and Phoenix Foundation.

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Schedule
July 27, 2022: 8:30pm
July 28, 2022: 11:30pm
July 30, 2022: 7:30pm
July 31, 2022: 9:30am
August 1, 2022: 10:30am
August 3, 2022: 10:00am

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