

Asian Dance and Music Program Series



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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WHAT: **Festival of Chinese Arts and Culture**
Beauty in Jingju – March 25, 2003
Forms in Motion – March 26, 2003

WHEN: March 25 through March 26, 2003

WHERE: University of Massachusetts - Amherst

TICKETS: The following events are free to the public
Call 413-577-2486 for more information or go to www.fineartscenter.com/asian

The Asian Dance and Music Program in collaboration with the Chinese Language Program, Springfield Schools, the Department of Asian Languages and Literatures and the International Programs Office Presents:

A Festival of Chinese Arts and Culture

As part of the Festival of Chinese Arts and Culture, a talk and demonstration by Elizabeth Wichmann-Walczak, a scholar and performer of Chinese Opera. Titled, **Beauty in Jingu: Chinese Opera** will be held on Tuesday, March 25th. This multimedia lecture will be held at Herter Hall Rm 227 on campus at 3:30PM and is free to the public. Later that evening Professor Wichmann-Walczak will present a second lecture and demonstration of Chinese Opera characters at the Museum of Fine Arts in Springfield at 7PM. Jingju is a traditional art form that has been performed in China for hundreds of years. It combines singing, poetry, dance, acrobatics, symbolic movement and elaborate costuming and make-up. Professor Wichmann-Walczak, who is currently the director of the Asian Theatre Program at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa is a specialist on the aesthetics of Jingju and their evolution. As the first non-Chinese award-winning performer of Chinese Opera, Professor Wichmann-Walczak will speak about the

major characteristics of a Jingju performance that create beauty for performers and audiences in China. Using demonstrations and visual aids, she will discuss stylization, convention and synthesis along with the four performance skills of the actor – song, speech, dance/acting and combat. Please join us for this fascinating talk from an expert in the field. Admission is free for both events and all are welcome.

The Festival continues on Wednesday, March 26th with two presentations of Chinese calligraphy and its connections to movement, dance and the spirit in two locations. The first workshop and lecture **Forms in Motion** will be presented jointly by dancer and choreographer Nai-Ni Chen and Zhongwei Shen, a master calligrapher. This event will be held in the morning at the School of Science and Technology in Springfield for the Chinese language students, teachers and invited guests including the Consul from the Taiwanese Consulate in Boston. Student participants will learn to write simple Chinese characters and then translate the experience into movement expression. At 3PM, also on March 26th Zhongwei Shen and Nai-Ni will present their second workshop on **Forms in Motion** at UMass in the Fine Arts Center Lobby. The workshop will begin with simple Tai-Chi movements to the motion of the brush pen on paper, giving participants the physical and spiritual experience of working with Chinese visual and movement art. Zhongwei Shen is an award-winning master calligrapher and a professor of Chinese Linguistics at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. Nai-Ni Chen is an acclaimed Chinese dancer and choreographer who is known for blending Chinese and American dance traditions in her work. The UMass workshop is free for the public.

For more details on the Festival including press releases and photos go to our pressroom at www.fineartscenter.com/press.

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