



ASIAN AMERICAN
BALLET PROJECT

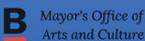
BEGINNINGS

The Inaugural Performance of the
Asian American Ballet Project



FEATURING WORKS BY
Junichi Fukuda
Michael Lowe
Hyung-Ji Yu

July 7, 2023 | 4pm & 7pm
Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center
41 Second St, East Cambridge, MA 02141
www.asianamericanballetproject.org/tickets



CAMBRIDGE ARTS



This program was made possible in part through the fiscal sponsorship of Boston Dance Alliance, with funding provided by Cambridge Arts, a local agency which is supported by Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, the Boston Cultural Council, administered by the Mayor's Office of Arts and Culture, and Cambridge Community Foundation.

A NOTE FROM THE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Thank you for attending the inaugural performance of the Asian American Ballet Project. I am so pleased to present this program *Beginnings* to you. You will see history made today as the very first Asian American ballet company takes the stage.



Please note that today's performance will include loud music and bright lights.

There will be two brief 10 minute intermissions after the 1st and 2nd ballets. Refreshments are for sale in the gallery during intermissions. Bathrooms are located on the first floor near the entrance accessible by stairs or elevator in the hall.

Please visit our merchandise table in the lobby where you can purchase AABP tote bags and posters signed by the cast. Kickstarter rewards are available for pick-up at the merchandise table.

Today is Tanabata - a Japanese holiday - also known as the star festival - celebrated on the seventh day of the seventh month! According to Chinese legend, two stars Altair and Vega, usually separated from each other by the Milky Way, can reunite on this day. AABP is celebrating Tanabata in the traditional way by writing down wishes to hang on our bamboo tree in the lobby. Stop by the lobby to write and hang your own wish!

Please enjoy the show and be on the lookout for an email this weekend with a post-show survey. We would love to hear your feedback so we can bring you more of what you want to see in the future.

Warmly,

Beth Mochizuki



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**Hello and welcome to the Multicultural Arts Center.
Thank you for joining us today, we're delighted to
have you!**

Please note the three exit doors in the room, the way you came in, the door on the opposite side of the theater, and the stairs that lead down to the lobby. In the event of an emergency please proceed to the closest exit.

Please silence your cell phones and refrain from flash photography during the performance.

What you will see today is just the latest going on at the Multicultural Arts Center. Be sure to check out our website, subscribe to our newsletter, or follow us on social media to stay in the loop about upcoming gallery exhibitions, receptions, performances, concerts and other wonderful opportunities coming up.

The Multicultural Arts Center is a 501c-3 nonprofit dedicated to providing access to artists and audiences to experience meaningful creative works. Thank you for attending today's event and please consider making a contribution to our nonprofit to support us in continuing this work. You can make a donation online or downstairs at our box office.

Thank you again for being a part of this performance at the Multicultural Arts Center! Enjoy the show!



COMPANY AND STAFF

ASIAN AMERICAN BALLET PROJECT

ELIZABETH MOCHIZUKI
FOUNDER AND ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

COMPANY DANCERS

Azamat Asangul, Naoko Brown, Mollie Petrizzo, Rheya Shano, Amane
Takaishi, Nina Yoshida

COMPANY TRAINEES

Delilah Danh-Huynh, Tala Sanford

GUEST ARTISTS

Emerson Chan*, Whitney Farrell*, Junichi Fukuda

CHOREOGRAPHERS

Junichi Fukuda, Michael Lowe, Hyung-Ji Yu

COSTUME DESIGNERS

Sumalee Eaton, Vera Kurmasheva, Emily Lovdahl, Christine Alger

HEADPIECE DESIGNERS

Christine Alger, Erika Lambe

PROPERTIES

Christine Alger

ADMINISTRATIVE INTERN Zoe Mueller

PUBLICITY Jim Mochizuki

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Bryan Mochizuki, Cassie Wang

BENEFIT PERFORMANCE HOST Alpha Sanford

COMMITTEE CHAIR

VOLUNTEERS Joanna Levine, Nichola Mott, Kaoru Takaishi

BEGINNINGS

SLEEPING BEAUTY CHRISTENING

Music: Peter Ilyich Tchaikovsky

Choreography: Elizabeth Mochizuki
after Marius Petipa

Costumes: Vera Kurmasheva

Headpieces: Erika Lambe courtesy of
City Ballet of Boston

Lilac Fairy: Rheya Shano

Candide: Amane Takaishi

Coulante: Azamat Asangul

Miettes qui tombent: Nina Yoshida

Canari qui chante: Delilah Dahn-Huynh

Violente: Mollie Petrizzo

Lilac Fairy Attendent: Whitney Farrell

10 MINUTE INTERMISSION

SUHO AND THE WHITE HORSE

Music: Badma Khanda Ensemble

Choreography: Michael Lowe

Costumes: Courtesy of Menlowe
Ballet with additional costumes
designed by Sumalee Eaton and
Emily Lovdahl, sponsored by the
Caldwell Family, Rickey Lumpkin II,
Gary Mochizuki

Head Taimen Fish: Rheya Shano

Upper School Taimen Fish:

Delilah Dahn-Huynh and Tala Sanford

Lower School Taimen Fish:
Emerson Chan and Whitney Farrell

Swallow: Amane Takaishi

Suho: Azamat Asangul

White Horse as Foal*: Emerson Chan

White Horse: Nina Yoshida

Governor: Mollie Petrizzo

Musician: Naoko Brown

10 MINUTE INTERMISSION

ANIMA/ANIMUS

Music: Imperfect as One by
Wen-Ting Wong

Choreography: Junichi Fukuda

Costumes: Junichi Fukuda

Dancers: Naoko Brown, Junichi Fukuda

UNSPOKEN WORDS

Music: Subterranean Tunnels by Salon
Dijon, Path of Purpose by Cody Martin,
Our Web of Lies by Moments

Choreography: Hyung-Ji Yu

Costumes: Emily Lovdahl

Dancers: Azamat Asangul, Mollie Petrizzo,
Amane Takaishi, Nina Yoshida

*costume courtesy of South Shore Ballet Theatre

SUHO AND THE WHITE HORSE



SYNOPSIS

Long ago, on the plains of Mongolia, there lived a shepherd boy named Suho. Suho loved the animals that lived near his Ger including a school of Taimen fish and a Forktail Swallow. One day his animal friends introduce him to a newborn white foal. Suho becomes good friends with the young horse who grows up to become one of the most beautiful horses in the land.

However, a greedy governor hears about Suho's beautiful white horse. She challenges Suho to a horse race hoping to win the white horse for herself. Suho wins the race but instead of accepting defeat honorably, the governor separates Suho from his horse and chases him away, threatening to put an arrow in his heart.

The white horse escapes and races after Suho but the cunning governor manages to shoot the horse with an arrow before she can reach Suho. Severely wounded, the white horse collapses at Suho's feet. Using her last breath, she tells Suho to use her body parts to create an instrument so that her soul can live on through music. The instrument is called the "Morin Khuur" or horsehead fiddle; its soothing sounds inspire the nomadic people of Mongolia filling them with peace and strength.

The governor, realizing her greediness has robbed Mongolia of the beautiful horse, joins Suho and his animal friends in a final farewell to the white horse as she transforms into the Morin Khuur that is still played and beloved today.

ARTISTIC TEAM

ELIZABETH MOCHIZUKI

Founder and Artistic Director

Beth is a biracial Asian American with Japanese and Danish/German/English/Irish lineage. Raised in Clovis, California, she studied ballet in nearby Fresno with Diane Mosier, a veteran of New England Civic Ballet (E. Virginia Williams's company that would later become Boston Ballet.) After completing high school, Beth received an apprentice contract with Festival Ballet of Rhode Island (now Festival Ballet Providence) and danced there while attending Tufts University.

Following a year of commuting via buses and trains from Medford, MA to Providence, RI, Beth left Festival to focus on her studies. She performed in Ballet Theatre of Boston's (later Jose Mateo's Ballet Theatre) *Nutcracker* and shows on campus while earning a Bachelor of Arts degree in American Studies with a focus on Performance and Representation. She graduated in 2003, receiving highest thesis honors for her paper *The Asian American Experience in Ballet*.

Beth freelanced in the New England area for the next five years, performing such roles as Fairy Godmother in *Cinderella*, Sugar Plum Fairy in *Nutcracker*, Taglioni in *Pas de Quatre*, and the *Sylvia* pas de deux. She moved with her then-boyfriend, now-husband to Ithaca, NY in 2008 where she performed with local company Ithaca Ballet. Her roles with Ithaca Ballet included: *Giselle*, *Raymonda*, *Snow White*, *Cinderella*, and *Aurora* from *Sleeping Beauty*. In 2010 they moved back to Boston and the following year she was offered a company contract with State Street Ballet in Santa Barbara, CA. While at State Street, she performed classical and contemporary works by Rodney Gustafson, William Soleau, and Josie Walsh.

Beth returned to Festival in 2012 and danced there for the remainder of her performing career, retiring in 2019. Her classical repertoire included: *Flower Festival* pas de deux, *Le Corsaire* pas de deux, *Chopiniana* pas de deux, Fairy of the Golden Vine/White Cat/Princess Florine in *Sleeping Beauty*, Princess Elena in *Firebird*, *Pas de Trois* from *Swan Lake*, and Sugar Plum Fairy from *Nutcracker*. She danced in Balanchine's *Agon* (First *Pas de Trois*), Christopher Wheeldon's *The American* and *5 Movements 3 Repeats* ("This Bitter Earth" pas de deux), Yuri Yanowsky's *Reverso*, and Yon Tande's *Rite of Spring* in which she originated the role of the Elder. She also performed in works by choreographers such as: Mary Ellen Beaudreau, George Birkadze, Louisa Chapman, Mark Diamond, Misha Djuric, Boyko Dossov, Kurt Douglas, Mark Harootian, Spencer Gavin Hering, Ilya Kostradayev, Jordan Morris, Victor Plotnikov, Vilia Putrius, and Tom Vacanti.

Concurrent to her career as a dancer, Beth has taught ballet in New York, California, and Massachusetts including at Tony Williams Dance Center where she is currently the Ballet Division Coordinator. She was the Ballet Master and later the Assistant Director of the Urban *Nutcracker* from 2013-2021. She launched the Asian American Ballet Project in 2022. She lives with her husband and their son in Easton, MA.

JUNICHI FUKUDA

Choreographer

Japanese native Junichi Fukuda has received the Massachusetts Cultural Council Artist Fellowship Award, the Boston Conservatory Alumni Commissioning Award, the Bates Dance Festival Emerging Choreographer residency, and the S&R Washington Award. His choreography has been presented at MASDANZA in Spain, Dance St. Louis' Spring to Dance Festival, DanceNow at Joe's Pub Festival, Bates Dance Festival, FIDCDMX in Mexico City, and at festivals all around New England. The Washington Post describes Junichi's work as a "tasteful proposal" and "a work of easeful harmony."

Junichi formed FUKUDANCE as a vehicle to continue his journey as a choreographer. Since its inception, the company has performed nationally and internationally, including in Spain, France, Mexico, and Japan. FUKUDANCE has received support from Boston Foundation, American Dance Abroad, Boston Cultural Council, Mass Cultural Council, and New England Foundation for the Arts, and it continues to thrive by presenting new works that are significant to the current society.

MICHAEL LOWE

Choreographer

Born in Oakland, California's Chinatown, Michael Lowe was encouraged at an early age to explore the discipline of classical ballet to augment his coordination and strength in athletics. With his first dance lesson, his love for music found a counterpart to his natural agility and he discovered his life's path. A scholarship student at Alvin Ailey American Dance Center in New York, Lowe joined Oakland Ballet in 1974 and became a vital force in Oakland Ballet's history as a dancer, choreographer and director.

During his decades-long career with Oakland Ballet, Lowe worked with choreographers including Agnes de Mille, John Butler, Eugene Loring, Leonide Massine, Frederic Franklin, Anna Sokolow, Betsy Erickson, Willam Christensen, Alonzo King and Ronn Guidi. He participated in company's groundbreaking Americana and Diaghilev era reconstructions, and recreated the role of Beau Gosse for the premiere of Bronislava Nijinska's *Le Train Bleu*.

During and after his performing career, Lowe revealed himself to be a gifted choreographer. Over the years he has created a number of striking ballets for Oakland Ballet including *Bamboo* for which he received the Isadora Duncan Dance Award for Best Choreography. As founding Artistic Director of Menlowe Ballet, Lowe choreographed numerous works for his own company and he serves as an integral teacher, coach and choreographer at Menlo Park Academy of Dance.

HYUNG-JI YU

Choreographer

Hyung Ji Yu (Heidi) is an international choreographer, dancer, and instructor based in NYC. Originally from South Korea, she relocated to NYC to study at the Merce Cunningham School and continued her studies at SUNY Purchase. Her studies culminated in 2015 with an MFA in dance from NYU Tisch focusing on pedagogy and choreography. Heidi is an American Ballet Theatre Certified Teacher.

Heidi has taught and choreographed at Tufts University, Sacred Heart University, Ailey Camp at Johns Hopkins University, American Youth Dance Theater, and Broadway Dance Center. Heidi established As Arts NY Dance in 2013. She received a CUNY Dance Initiative Residency at The City College of New York. Her choreography has been shown throughout NYC, including the Bassin Performing Arts Center, Dixon Place, Manhattan Movement & Arts Center, Symphony Space, and Kaye Playhouse.

DANCERS

For complete biographies please visit our website: www.asianamericanballetproject.org/companydancers



AMANE TAKAISHI
Elmhurst School of Ballet
City Ballet of Boston



AZAMAT ASANGUL
Vaganova Ballet Academy
Ballet Rhode Island



JUNICHI FUKUDA
Boston Conservatory
FUKUDance



MOLLIE PETRIZZO
Ailey/Fordham BFA program
Visions Contemporary Ballet



NAOKO BROWN
Boston Conservatory
City Ballet of Boston



NINA YOSHIDA
New Jersey Ballet School
Ballet Rhode Island



RHEYA SHANO
Brookline Ballet School
Tulsa Ballet



DELILAH DANH-HUYNH
Dance Theatre of New England
AABP Trainee



TALA SANFORD
South Shore Ballet Theatre
AABP Trainee

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\$50-\$99

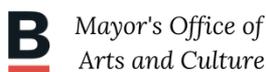
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thank you.



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Thank you for attending Beginnings! Please consider making a donation to support the Asian American Ballet Project on our website at:

www.asianamericanballetproject.org/donate



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