



Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company

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DANA TAI SOON BURGESS DANCE COMPANY ANNOUNCES 2013-2014 SEASON

Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company's 2013-2014 season will feature some of the most exciting performances in the company's 20-year history including appearances at the National Gallery of Art, The John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts and as artists-in-residence at the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery (NPG). In addition, in September, the company will begin the fifth year of its Asian American Youth Program.

"Our new season is already off to an exciting start, with our participation in the White House's recent Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month celebration," said Burgess, who founded Washington's premier contemporary dance company in 1992. "While it's hard to top being invited to perform for the President, it's also an honor to be the Smithsonian's first-ever dance company in residence. Creating site-specific works in art museums is an especially rewarding experience – one that brings visual art audiences to dance and dance audiences to the visual arts. As a choreographer who is the son of two visual artists, nothing could please me more."

National Gallery of Art

In conjunction with the exhibition, "Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, 1909–1929: When Art Danced with Music," the company will perform a new work at the National Gallery of Art on Aug. 11. The free performances will take place at 1 and 3:30 p.m. on the East building mezzanine adjacent to the exhibition. Inspired by the exhibition and the ballet, "Le Bal," about a thwarted romance at a masked ball, Burgess's new work – "Revenant Elegy" – will explore a romantic relationship through the eyes of the protagonist who is reflecting on her youth. The dancer is both observer and participant, revealing an inner landscape of emotions. The 30-minute piece will be performed by 10 dancers. "Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes" continues through Sept. 2 in the National Gallery of Art East Building, 401 Constitution Avenue, N.W.

National Portrait Gallery

Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company will serve as NPG's artists-in-residence in conjunction with the museum's "Dancing the Dream" exhibition (Oct. 4, 2013, through July 13, 2014), the Smithsonian's first exhibition to focus on dance in America. Rehearsals, which will be held at the museum on Oct. 5, 12, 19, 26 and Nov. 2 from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. (as well as in March and April) will be open to the public and streamed live on the museum's web site. Feedback from museum visitors and internet viewers will help shape two site-specific works, which will be based on the museum's collection and focus on the changing face of America. The result will be two hour-long works which will be performed in the museum's Robert and Arlene Kogod Courtyard on Nov. 16, 2013, and in April 2014. The NPG is at 8th and F Streets, N.W.

"Dana Tai Soon Burgess Dance Company's participation will be an integral part of the exhibition experience," said curator Amy Henderson. "Dana is a great storyteller and the National Portrait Gallery is committed to telling great American stories. In Dana's case, that takes place through movement."

“Dancing the Dream” explores the relationship between the art of dance and the evolution of a modern American identity, telling stories of the generations of performers, choreographers, and impresarios who harnessed America’s diversity and dynamism into styles that reverberated with the American experience. It will trace this story through images of performers such as Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, Michael Jackson, Savion Glover, Balanchine, Baryshnikov, Beyonce, Agnes deMille and Lady Gaga.

Burgess’s portrait will hang in the gallery alongside modern-dance pioneers such as Isadora Duncan and Martha Graham and contemporary masters Twyla Tharp and Mark Morris, among others. This is not the first time his likeness has been on view in the museum. His portrait was one the works by Korean-American artist CYJO on view in the 2012 exhibition, “Asian American Portraits of Encounter.”

John F. Kennedy Center

The works choreographed for the National Gallery of Art and the Portrait Gallery will be reformatted for the company to perform at the Kennedy Center on Feb. 7-8. The Kennedy Center is located at 2700 F St. N.W.

Asian American Youth Program

Burgess created the Asian American Youth Program to mentor District high school students of Asian heritage. With funding from the Mayor’s Office on Asian and Pacific Islander Affairs and a partnership with the School Without Walls, Burgess and journalist Wilma Consul take students to cultural institutions, facilitate discussions about their racial and cultural identity and inspire the creation of a film documenting their experiences. The program aims to strengthen participants’ relationships with their peers, enrich their view of Asian-American culture and increase their appreciation of dance.

About Dana Tai Soon Burgess

Described by Washington Post dance critic Sarah Kaufman as “not only a Washington prize, but a national dance treasure” and “poet laureate of Washington dance,” Burgess has for two decades exposed local, national and international audiences to a unique fusion of contemporary dance, ballet lines, martial arts style and gesture and visual arts, receiving critical acclaim for synthesizing Eastern and Western aesthetics.

Having grown up in Santa Fe as the son of an Irish-Scottish-American father from upstate New York and a Korean-American mother from Hawaii, Burgess has a personal interest in issues of identity, immigration, belonging and cultural acceptance, as seen in such works as “Becoming American,” “Hyphen,” “Island,” and “Chino Latino.” His company includes dancers from diverse backgrounds – Bolivian, Colombian, Cuban, Irish, Korean, Japanese and Peruvian. In addition, Burgess has served for 16 years as a U.S. State Department cultural ambassador, traveling with his company to Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, India, Israel, Jordan, Korea, Latvia, Mexico, Mongolia, Panama, Peru and Venezuela, among other places.

Burgess has also performed and taught in Maryland, New Mexico, Tennessee, New York and Virginia. Closer to home, he is chair of George Washington University’s Department of Theatre and Dance. Burgess and his company have received numerous awards including the Mayor’s Arts Awards.

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