

PHILEIN/ZIRU PRODUCTIONS ANNOUNCES ITS 5th ANNIVERSARY HOME SEASON AT ODC

Seeking Resolve: new works by
**Philein Wang, Charles Anderson, Liu Yi Feng,
Scott Putman & Sunny Shen**

Fri-Sun, Oct 26 - 28, 2012



Madelyn Biven, Sunny Shen, Elizabeth Chitty, Michele Wong perform in Charles Anderson's *Rite*.
Photo courtesy of the Beijing Modern Dance Festival.

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SAN FRANCISCO, CA— Philein/ZiRu Productions (ZiRu Productions) is proud to announce its fifth anniversary home season to take place this month at ODC. The San Francisco-based company takes seriously its mission to foster collaboration across cultural boundaries, and this year's home season showcases the work of a diverse roster of choreographers from China and the U.S., working within a range of choreographic traditions. In the best sense, the subject here on display is the "global citizen" – part Asian, African, European, and American.

ZiRu Productions artistic director **Philein Wang** has invited four choreographers to join her on this year's bill: **Charles O. Anderson**, currently a professor of African Diaspora Dance Studies and the MFA coordinator in Dance at The University of Texas at Austin; **Liu Yi Feng**, an instructor at Beijing Dance/LDTX in China; **Scott Putman**, a dance professor at Virginia Commonwealth University and the founder of Amaranth Contemporary Dance; and **Sunny Shen**, a founding member of ZiRu Productions and an independent artist based in Beijing and San Francisco.

The title for this year's home season, *Seeking Resolve*, came to Wang after a demanding tour in China. "*Seeking Resolve* encapsulates the imperative to be nimble and to adapt under the constraints of conflicting cultural expectations," says Wang. "All the choreographers on our bill have performed extensive dance research on a continent away from their homeland. Sunny [Shen] and [Liu] Yi Feng have traveled to the U.S. Scott [Putman] has traveled to Italy, and Charles [Anderson] to West Africa. And for my part, I've been shuttling back and forth between the U.S. and China my whole life."

The evening's program will include four short pieces by Wang, three of which are U.S. or world premieres.

Picture Frames represents the journey from imagination into reality with all of its attendant struggles. *In Search Of* meditates on the themes of friendship and happiness. *Spirit Awakens* is a solo piece taken from the evening-length work *Zero Hour*, which tells the story of an immigrant mother and her Chinese-American son as he navigates the pitfalls of growing up within two cultures. In this solo, the mother struggles to balance motherhood with the demands of her career. Lastly, *Blend. Be.* explores the tug-of-war between merging and asserting one's identity with a partner.

The home season includes four additional short pieces – one each by Putman, Anderson, Liu Yi Feng, and Shen. In *Navigating Stars*, an excerpt from a longer piece titled *Dead Reckoning*, Putman imagines his ensemble of six dancers to be “sky travelers of the heart”, exploring the farthest reaches of our internal universe. Charles O. Anderson's *Rite*, an excerpt of *Evidence of Things Unsaid*, is inspired by the writings of science fiction writer, Octavia Butler. Informed by movement from the African diaspora, *Rite* performs the transition from one plane of existence to another. It is a call to action, to prayer, to care.

Shen's piece, entitled *Independence Day*, is a personal work inspired by the choreographer's freedom to travel outside of China and it's an ode to the United States' right to freedom of expression, a freedom which is currently unavailable to artists working in China. Finally Liu Yi Feng will present a work currently untitled. It's a tribute to the sacred and haunting beauty inside every woman.

Philein/ZiRu Productions is a fiscally sponsored project of Dancers' Group. The company gratefully acknowledges the support of Sybarite Investments and Jinrui Technologies.

About Philein Wang

Philein Wang is a Chinese-American dancer, musician, and poet. She was raised in California by her mother from Hubei and father from Taiwan. Wang studied at the prestigious Beijing Ballet Academy and privately with Zhong Ren Liang, who performed with Mikhail Baryshnikov. She has received choreography mentorships from the late Bella Lewitzky and Lin Hwai-Min (artistic director of Cloudgate). Wang studied martial arts under Beijing Wushu Team's five-time champion Patti Hao Li and received scholarships to the American Dance Festival and the Lewitzky Workshop. She was a member and soloist with several companies including: Janice Garrett, Ron Brown, Winifred R. Harris, Liss Fain Dance, and Taiwan's world-renowned Cloud Gate Dance Theater. In 2005, Wang released a solo album, *Child of No Nation*, which she has toured throughout the United States and abroad. Since forming Philein/ZiRu Productions in 2007, her work has received critical acclaim from reviewers in the US and in China. Her work has been performed in China at the Guangzhou Modern Dance Festival, the Beijing Modern Dance Festival, the Penghao Theater, Lan Tian Theater, The Red Flag Theater, and LDTX Theater, and in the Bay Area at the Women on the Way Festival, Second Sundays, Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, and Dance Mission Theater.

About Charles O. Anderson

Charles O. Anderson is artistic director of dance theatre X (dtX), an afro-contemporary dance theatre company founded in Philadelphia in 2003. He received his B.A. from Cornell University and his MFA in Dance from Temple University. He has performed in the companies of Ronald K. Brown, Sean Curran, Mark Dendy and Miguel Gutierrez among others. His work has been presented nationally and internationally and has earned recognition by numerous grants and organizations such as the Pew Fellowship in the Arts, one of “25 to Watch” by *Dance Magazine*, and one of “12 Rising Stars in the Academy” by *Diverse: Issues In Higher Education Magazine*. Anderson is currently based in Austin, Texas where he is an associate professor of African Diaspora Dance Studies and the MFA coordinator in Dance at The University of Texas at Austin.

About Liu Yi Feng

Liu Yi Feng graduated from the School of Art and Dance at Central University for Nationalities in Hengyang,

China. Among his prize-winning works as a choreographer are *Drum Song* for the Beijing Dance Competition and *Meditation* for the Tian Jin Dance Competition. In 2006 he was commissioned by Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs Ministry of Culture to create new work. As a dancer Liu Yi Feng has performed with the China Central Nationalities Song and Dance Ensemble and was company member of LDTX/BeijingDance for six years, touring internationally as an original cast member in several award-winning works. Liu Yi Feng is currently an independent choreographer. He also teaches at LDTX/BeijingDance and the Rainbow Studios in Beijing, China.

About Scott Putman

Scott Putman is an Associate Professor in dance and choreography at Virginia Commonwealth University. He is the founder and Artistic Director of Amaranth Contemporary Dance (amarantharts.com) as well as the creator of the Elemental Body Alignment System (doebas.com) and faculty member in the Summer Arts Program at the Accademia dell'Arte in Arezzo, Italy. Putman received the distinguished 2008 Theresa Pollack Excellence in the Arts Award for his work with his company, Amaranth Contemporary Dance, and continues to be presented internationally in Italy, Mexico and Scotland along with choreography showcases throughout the United States and commissions by both ballet and modern dance companies. Putman's acclaimed choreography has received several awards including the National Choreography Plan Award for exceptional choreography from RDA, Pacific. He has danced for Mordine and Company Dance Theatre, Dimitrius Klein Dance Company, Minnesota Ballet, Ballet Theatre of Chicago, Donald McKayle, David Alan, Douglas Becker, and Geri Houlihan. Putman received his B.A. from Columbia College, Chicago, and an M.F.A. from the University of California at Irvine, where he was a Chancellor's Fellow and William Gillespie Scholar.

About Sunny Shen

Sunny Shen is an independent dancer and choreographer based in Beijing and San Francisco. He is a founding member of Philein/ZiRu Productions and a freelance script writer. Shen was born in Wuxi, China. After graduating from Beijing Capital Normal University in 2005, Shen worked with Beijing Dance/LDTX until 2009. As a dancer and choreographer in LDTX, he participated in many international dance festivals from the US to Germany, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Mexico, and South Korea. Among the broad themes Shen's work addresses are the limitations of humanity, the relationship between humans and the environment, as well as love and cigarettes.

About Philein/ZiRu Productions

Philein/ZiRu Productions (ZIRU Productions) was founded in 2007 with a mission to foster collaboration across cultural boundaries, actively addressing the question of cultural identity in America. Based in San Francisco, ZIRU Productions strives above all to create an artistic base for the Chinese-American diaspora. It produces local and international productions, using collaboration as a means to build a cross-cultural bridge between the United States and China. Since its founding, ZIRU Productions has produced a total of 10 tours and exchanges between the United States and China with grants from the Zellerbach Family Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Packard Foundation, as well as corporate sponsorship from Feng Lin, Dentsply, TEL, Google and Peak Capital. Its most recent tour to Beijing in December 2011 featured the critically acclaimed production *Zero Hour*.

FACT SHEET

Philein/ZiRu Productions' 5th Anniversary Home Season

WHO:

Choreographers:

Charles O. Anderson, Liu Yi Feng, Scott Putman, Sunny Shen & Philein Wang

Dancers:

Madelyn Biven, Vincent Chavez, Jesse Chin, Elizabeth Chitty, Courtney Gulick, Babatunji Johnson, Ong Pholchai, Sunny Shen, Emily Withenbury, Katerina Wong, Michele Wong

WHAT:

***Seeking Resolve*: Philein/ZiRu Productions' 5th anniversary home season**

I. **Philein Wang's** *Picture Frames* (U.S. premiere); *In Search Of* (U.S. premiere); *Spirit*

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Choreographers:

Charles O. Anderson, Liu Yi Feng, Scott Putman, Sunny Shen & Philein Wang

Dancers:

Madelyn Biven, Vincent Chavez, Jesse Chin, Elizabeth Chitty, Courtney Gulick, Babatunji Johnson, Ong Pholchai, Sunny Shen, Emily Withenbury, Katerina Wong, Michele Wong

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II. **Scott Putman's** *Navigating Stars*, a section from *Dead Reckoning* (world premiere)

III. **Charles O. Anderson's** *Rite*, a section from *Evidence of Things Unsaid*

IV. **Sunny Shen's** *Independence Day* (world premiere)