

**Press Release**

For immediate release [6 pages]

**Hong Kong Dance Company and West Kowloon Cultural District Co-present  
Yang Yuntao's *Convergence* & Helen Lai's *HerStory***



**Two Award-winning Dance Pieces  
To be Staged at Freespace in December for Two Consecutive Weeks**

**Concept and Choreographer: Yang Yuntao**

**Chinese Dance X Martial Arts Convergence – *Infinity of Movement and Stillness***

Led by Hong Kong Dance Company's Artistic Director, **Yang Yuntao**, *Convergence* is a culminating work created through an interdisciplinary research study on both Chinese dance and Chinese martial arts traditions. Yang and several dancers have studied with the masters of many Southern Chinese martial art styles for three years. After taking much time to investigate, contemplate, and consolidate their learning of both martial arts spirit and routines, the team of researchers were able to find a new body language, and discover the landscape beyond.

"This study has led us to break away from our past; to chart new courses, and to remould ourselves. Formed by the confluence of our external body movements and internal consciousness, we thus experience changes to our physical condition and thus further our cause in pursuit and to experience the 'truth' and 'beauty' that lies within the performing," Yang shared.

*Convergence* was first broadcast online in 2020 due to the pandemic, and was awarded the Hong Kong Dance Award for Outstanding Online Production in 2022. This December, co-presented with West Kowloon Cultural District, *Convergence* is finally going to debut LIVE in Hong Kong. Don't miss it!

## **A Masterpiece by Helen Lai**

### **Contemporary Dance Theatre *HerStory* – Unravelling esoteric writings by, of, and about women**

**HerStory** is a contemporary extension of Nüshu (women’s script), the ancient written language developed and used exclusively by women in Jiangyong county, Hunan province, which has a four-hundred-year history.

Winner of two awards at the 2008 Hong Kong Dance Awards, **HerStory** is the finale of “Women’s Trilogy” series created by internationally renowned Hong Kong choreographer **Helen Lai**. By weaving in the writings of two female authors from Hong Kong, Xi Xi and Wong Bik-wan, along with dance, music and imagery, Lai is joining hands with Hong Kong Dance Company to re-stage **HerStory** in this December. Drawing on personal and collective memories, it explores women’s role in history and literature through a blend of Chinese and western practices of dance, music and imagery, and presents a powerful depiction of female identity.

Hong Kong Dance Company collaborates again with Helen Lai after the great success of restaging *Nine Songs* in 2021. Co-presented with West Kowloon Cultural District, the Company will reprise this contemporary dance theatre classic *HerStory* in December.

**Convergence** will make its live debut in Hong Kong at **The Box, Freespace, West Kowloon Cultural District from 8 to 10 December 2023**; followed by **HerStory** from **15 to 17 December**. Tickets available now on art-mate and damai. An exclusive package discount of **15% off** is offered on art-mate with limited quantities while stocks last.

<p><b>Chinese Dance X Martial Arts <i>Convergence</i></b>  <b>Concept and Choreographer: Yang Yuntao</b></p> <p>8-9 December 2023 (Fri-Sat) 7:45pm            9-10 December 2023 (Sat-Sun) 3:00pm            The Box, Freespace, West Kowloon Cultural District            【Address: 18 Museum Drive, West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong】</p> <p>Ticket Price: \$350</p>	<p><b>Contemporary Dance Theatre <i>HerStory</i></b>  <b>Choreographer: Helen Lai</b></p> <p>15-16 December 2023 (Fri-Sat) 7:45pm            16-17 December 2023 (Sat-Sun) 3:00pm            The Box, Freespace, West Kowloon Cultural District            【Address: 18 Museum Drive, West Kowloon Cultural District, Hong Kong】</p> <p>Ticket Price: \$380</p>
<p>Co-presented by Hong Kong Dance Company</p> <p>Tickets now available at art-mate and damai            Online Purchase <a href="http://www.art-mate.net">www.art-mate.net</a>   <a href="http://www.damai.cn">www.damai.cn</a>            Programme Enquiries 3103 1888   <a href="http://www.hkdance.com">www.hkdance.com</a></p> <p><b><u>Ticket Discounts and Package Offer (only available at art-mate)</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 15% discount on single-transaction purchases for two or more standard tickets per programme for both <i>Convergence</i> and <i>HerStory</i>. The discount cannot be used in conjunction with other promotions and is available on a first come, first served basis.</li> <li>● 50% discount for full-time students, citizens aged 60 and above, people with disabilities and a companion, wheelchair users and a companion, and CSSA recipients. (limited quota)</li> <li>● Members of Friends of HKDC enjoy up to 20% discount (limited quota)</li> </ul>	

- For more details, please refer to HKDC official website

Programme duration of *Convergence* is about 1 hour and 10 minutes without intermission.

Programme duration of *HerStory* is about 1 hour and 20 minutes without intermission.

Suitable for ages 6 or above.

The organiser reserves the rights to change programmes details and substitute artists.

### Programme Exhibition

Period: 30 October – 13 November 2023

Venue: E2, Exhibition Area, Foyer, Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Address: 10 Salisbury Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong

### Creative Teams

<i>Convergence</i>	<i>HerStory</i>
Concept and Choreographer: Yang Yuntao	Artistic Coordinator: Yang Yuntao
Artistic Coordinator: Carolyn Yip	Choreographer: Helen Lai
Music Director and Composer: Paul Yip	Set Designer and Image Consultant: Charfi Hung
Set Designer: Lee Chi-wai	Lighting Designer: Yeung Tsz-yan
Digital Image Designer: Oliver Shing	Sound Designer: Liang Tin-ning
Lighting Designer: Gabriel Fung	
Sound Designer: Wan San-hong	
Co-Choreographers and Dancers: Ho Ho-fei, Liu Wai-yee, Ong Tze Shen, Chou Jo-yun, Huang Haiyun, Lee Chia-ming, Ng Ka-ling, Tai Chon-u, Zhan Qian	

## Choreographers' Biographies



### Yang Yuntao | Concept and Choreographer of *Convergence*

Graduated from the Dance Faculty of Minzu University of China, Yang Yuntao is an accomplished dancer and choreographer. He joined the Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC) in 2002 as Principal Dancer and became the Company's Assistant Artistic Director from 2007. He has been its Artistic Director since November 2013.

Yang has choreographed for numerous dance companies. His award-winning choreography for HKDC includes: *Spring Ritual·Eulogy*, winner of Outstanding Achievement in Production at the Hong Kong Dance Awards 2013 and presented in Beijing and Taipei in 2013; *The Legend of Mulan*, winner of Outstanding Production and Outstanding Ensemble Performance at the 2014 Hong Kong Dance Awards and presented in New York, Sydney, London and Minsk in 2015, 2017 and 2019 respectively; *Storm*

*Clouds*, winner of three awards including Outstanding Achievement in Production at the 2015 Hong Kong Dance Awards; *The Butterfly Lovers*, presented in Seoul in 2016; *L'Amour Immortel*, winner of three awards at the 2016 Hong Kong Dance Awards, presented in Beijing and Guangzhou in 2017, in Taipei in 2018 and in Shanghai and Hangzhou in 2019; *Waiting Heart*, winner of Outstanding Medium Venue Production at the 2019 Hong Kong Dance Award; and *Convergence*, winner of Outstanding Online Production at the 2022 Hong Kong Dance Award.

Other works for HKDC include *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Voices and Dances of the Distant Land*, *Blanc in Reveries of the Red Chamber*, *Chinese Hero: A Lone Exile*, *In the Beginning in Vipassana*, *Lady White of West Lake*, *Dance of Strings*, *Shan Shui: An Ode to Nature* and *Nezha: Untold Solitude*. Yang has also spearheaded a three-year interdisciplinary research study on Chinese dance and Chinese martial arts traditions.

Yang has won Hong Kong Dance Awards in 2003 and 2006 for his outstanding dance performance, and the Best Artist (Dance) at the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2009. In 2023, Yang has been awarded the Medal of Honour by the Chief Executive of the Government of HKSAR in recognition of his contributions to the dance sector, years of devotion in creating and promoting Chinese dance and nurturing dance talents.



## Helen Lai | Choreographer of *HerStory*

One of Hong Kong's foremost choreographers, Helen Lai's work has been featured at Hong Kong City Hall in 1977 and 1978. Lai joined City Contemporary Dance Company in 1979, and was Artistic Director from 1985 to 1989 and Resident Choreographer from 1991 to 2011. Lai has also choreographed for Hong Kong Dance Company, Hong Kong Repertory Theatre and Hong Kong Ballet, as well as overseas companies including Cloud Gate Dance Theatre, Guangdong Modern Dance Company and Singapore Dance Theatre. Her major works include *Nine Songs*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Plaza X*, *HerStory*, *Testimony* and *The Comedy of K*. An eight-time winner of the Hong Kong Dance Awards for her choreographic works, Lai was the recipient of numerous awards including Choreographer of the Year from the Hong Kong Artists' Guild (1990), Distinguished Achievement Award from the Hong

Kong Dance Alliance (2002), the Award for Arts Achievement (Dance, 2003), an Outstanding Contribution in Arts award (2015) from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, and an Honorary Fellowship (2004) and an Honorary Doctorate (2021) from The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.



## Hong Kong Dance Company

“Dancing across East and West, Moving to the Tempo of Hong Kong”

### Mission Statement

We are nurtured in the cultural tradition of China, combining with the creativity of contemporary art, to impress the world with Chinese dance of Hong Kong character.

Established in 1981, Hong Kong Dance Company (HKDC) was incorporated in 2001 as a charitable and non-profit-making institution, and is financially supported by the Government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. As one of the major flagship performing arts companies in Hong Kong, our mission is to promote Chinese dance with contemporary artistic visions and Hong Kong character. Since its inception, HKDC has staged over 200 productions over the decades, many of which were highly popular and critically acclaimed. Recent productions include *The Legend of Mulan*, *Red Poppies*, *Spring Ritual-Eulogy*, *The Butterfly Lovers*, *Storm Clouds*, *L'Amour Immortel*, *Dream of the Past: Ancient Chinese Court Dances*, *Reveries of the Red Chamber*, *Chinese Hero: A Lone Exile*, *Vipassana*, *Lady White of West Lake*, *Tale of Three Cities*, *Waiting Heart*, *Liu Sanjie*, *Ode to the Silk Road*, *Dance of Strings*, *A Tale of the Southern Sky*, *Mazu the Sea Goddess*, *The Moon Opera*, *Shan Shui: An Ode to Nature*, *Nine Songs*, *Nezha: Untold Solitude*, *Myth of the Dancing Durumi*, as well as *Convergence*, a culminating work created through a three-year interdisciplinary research study on Chinese dance and Chinese martial arts traditions.

As a cultural ambassador of Hong Kong, HKDC constantly brings the city's unique artistic style to the world by touring to different cities across the globe, engaging local audiences and encouraging cultural exchange. In recent years, we have brought our award-winning productions to Lincoln Center in New York, Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C., Sony Centre in Toronto, Concourse Theatre in Chatswood, Sydney, Southbank Centre in London, the Belarusian State Academic Musical Theatre in Minsk, Arko Arts Theatre in Seoul, National Centre for the Performing Arts in Beijing, Tianqiao Acrobatics Theatre in Beijing, Shanghai Grand Theatre, Shanghai International Dance Centre, Hangzhou Grand Theatre, Guangzhou Opera House, Taipei New Stage and Taiwan Traditional Theatre Center, among others.

#### **Media Enquiries**

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