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cloud gate dance  
theatre of taiwan  
*13 tongues*

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# cloud gate dance theatre of taiwan

## 13 tongues

by CHENG Tsung-lung

# 十三聲

## 13 TONGUES

<b>Choreography</b>	CHENG Tsung-lung
<b>Music</b>	LIM Giong
<b>Art Design</b>	HO Chia-hsing
<b>Lighting Design</b>	SHEN Po-hung
<b>Projection Design</b>	Ethan WANG
<b>Costume Design</b>	LIN Bing-hao
<b>Voice Coach</b>	TSAI Pao-chang

**Premiere:** March 11, 2016,

Taiwan International Festival of Art at National Theater, Taipei, Taiwan

**Commission:** National Theater and Concert Hall, Taipei

### Cast

*(in alphabetical order)*

CHAN Pui pui, CHANG Hung-mao, CHEN Tsung-chiao, CHOU Chen-yeh,  
FAN Chia-hsuan, HSU Chih-hen, HUANG Lu-kai,  
HUANG Mei-ya, HUANG Po-kai, HUANG Yen-cheng,  
LEE Tzu-chun, SHAO Hsing-wen, and YEN Hsueh-hsin

This performance is supported in part by gifts from  
Ms. Ann Goette and Mr. and Mrs. Howard C. Huang.



This tour is made possible in part by the grants  
from the Ministry of Culture, R.O.C. (Taiwan)



## about *13 tongues*

As a child in the 1980s, Cloud Gate Artistic Director Cheng Tsung-lung would contribute to the family business by helping his father sell slippers on the streets of Bangka/Wanhua, the oldest district of Taipei. Bangka/Wanhua was known for its vibrantly diverse and bustling street scene that embraced religious and secular life, rich and poor, work and play, and legal and illegal activities. The young Cheng was transfixed by his mother's accounts of the legendary 1960s street artist and storyteller known as "Thirteen Tongues" who had adopted Bangka/Wanhua for his informal stage. It was said that "Thirteen Tongues" could conjure up all the Bangka/Wanhua characters — high and low born, sacred and profane, men and women — in the most vivid, dramatic, and fluently imaginative narratives. Thirty years on, Cheng's fascination for "Thirteen Tongues" became his inspiration as he transformed his childhood memories into dance.

*This is Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan's first performance at the Moss Arts Center.*



Beginning and ending with the sound of a single hand bell, the music accompanying *13 Tongues* ranges from Taiwanese folk songs to Taoist chant to electronica. The stage is awash with projections of brilliant colours, shapes, and images, and the dancers gather, interact, separate, and re-gather in a thrilling representation of the clamour of street life. As the religious heritage of ancient Bangka/Wanhua fuses with the secular space it is today, so time appears to dissolve. The spirit realm and the human realm also coalesce as the audience is taken on an immersive journey — via imagination and storytelling that recalls the art of “Thirteen Tongues” — through centuries of human endeavour, behaviour, and belief.

*Photos by: LEE Chia-yeh*

# biographies

## *cloud gate dance theatre of taiwan*

Cloud Gate is the name of the oldest known dance in China. In 1973 choreographer Lin Hwai-min adopted this classical name and founded the first contemporary dance company in the greater Chinese-speaking community: Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, also known worldwide as Cloud Gate. In 2020 Cheng Tsung-lung succeeded Lin as the company's artistic director. In 2023 Cloud Gate celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Cloud Gate has set out to engage with local history, culture, and subject matter, and draws on classical, folk, and modern dance from both Western and Asian traditions. Its dancers trained in meditation; Qi Gong, an ancient breathing exercise; internal martial arts; modern dance; and ballet. Under the leadership of Cheng, their training has further expanded to include training from various styles of dance, such as street dance. Manifesting in choreographies, the company transforms ancient aesthetics into a thrilling and modern celebration of motion.

Cloud Gate has received international acclaim as "Asia's leading contemporary dance theater" (*The Times*), and "one of the best dance companies in the world" (*FAZ*). Cloud Gate is also honored as the "Outstanding Company" for the 2018 National Dance Awards, U.K.

The company has toured worldwide with frequent engagements at the Next Wave Festival in New York, Sadler's Wells Theatre in London, Moscow Chekhov International Theatre Festival in Russia, Movimentos International Dance Festival, and Internationales Tanzfest NRW, directed by the late Pina Bausch in Germany.

Cloud Gate has also danced into local campuses and grassroots communities. Its annual free outdoor performances staged across Taiwan in cities and villages draw a minimum of 30,000 people per performance, hailed as one of the biggest dance events on earth.

***lin hwai-min***, founder

Lin Hwai-min founded Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan in 1973 and has led the company to international prominence through his thrilling creations that transform Asian aesthetics into a contemporary celebration of motion. Among the honors Lin has received are the Samuel H. Scripps /American Dance Festival Award for Lifetime Achievement; the John D. Rockefeller Award, New York; the Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters, France; and a Lifetime Achievement Award from the Movimentos International Dance Festival, Germany. He has also been celebrated by *Time* magazine as one of "Asia's Heroes." At the end of 2019, Lin stepped down as the artistic director of Cloud Gate and handed the reins of the company to Cheng.

***cheng tsung-lung***, artistic director and choreographer

From street hawker selling slippers to internationally recognized choreographer, Cheng Tsung-lung succeeded Lin Hwai-min as artistic director of Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan starting in 2020. Cheng took his first dance class at the age of eight. Upon graduation from the Dance Department at Taipei National University of the Arts, he joined Cloud Gate in 2002 and became the artistic director of Cloud Gate 2 in 2014.

Cheng has been awarded prestigious prizes for his choreography internationally as well as at home, such as the No Ballet International Choreography Competition (Germany), Premio Roma Danza International Choreography Competition (Italy), MASDANZA Choreography Competition (Spain), and Taishin Arts Award (Taiwan). He has also worked with companies worldwide, including Sydney Dance Company; the Transitions Dance Company at the Laban Centre, London; Expressions Dance Company, Brisbane; and the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts.

Cheng's work is deeply rooted in both ancient and modern Taiwanese culture — and he is a strong supporter of Cloud Gate's extensive engagement with grassroots audiences across Taiwan — yet it also

# biographies, cont.

embraces global influences. He is praised by the *Stage Newspaper* with “an eye for a cinematic moment.” His *13 Tongues* (2016) integrates folk dance, religious rites, and Taoist chant to conjure the streets where he worked as a child. *Lunar Halo* (2019) is performed to an ethereally haunting soundtrack by Icelandic band Sigur Rós and explores the complex area of human connection and technology. *Sounding Light* (2020) was written in response to COVID-19 pandemic-induced isolation and reflects on the precariousness of both the human and the natural world. Visually stunning, *Send in a Cloud* (2022) displays in shifting colors a panorama of dancers’ life journeys. The most recent choreography *Waves* (2023), a collaboration with Japanese media artist Daito Manabe, explores societal and individual facets affected by the rapid progress of technological advancements.

Cheng has been a fixture of Routledge’s respected annual survey of dance practitioners, *Fifty Contemporary Choreographers* (2020), alongside the likes of William Forsythe, Akram Khan, Hofesh Shechter, and leaders in the form.

## *lim giong*, music

Lim Giong’s music career began as a singer-songwriter and then moved behind the scenes to meet DJs. Encouraged by director Hou Hsiao-hsien, Lim started the work of film soundtrack from *Goodbye South, Goodbye* and has participated in the soundtracks of short films, advertisements, animations, and documentaries. After he started collaborating with artists in various fields in 2004, his compositions became more experimental and are increasingly infused with electronic music, evolving drum and bass, breakbeat, ambient, and electronica. Lim composed for choreographer Cheng Tsung-lung’s *13 Tongues* (2016), *Full Moon* (2017), *Multiplication* (2019), and *Sounding Light* (2020), with his unique music style adding a variety of flavors to the pieces. Lim recently created music for *Nothing Between Body and Earth*, a film co-directed by Cheng Tsung-lung and Chuan Ming-yuan.



## ***ho chia-hsing***, art design

An AGI (Alliance Graphique Internationale) member since 2017, Ho Chia-hsing is nourished in his artistic designs by the rich cultural atmosphere of Dadaocheng, an old city district in Taipei. Ho established a graphic design studio called the Timonium Lake in 2006. In 2019, with partners at work, he runs the Monsoon Plasticizing Culture Work Team, focusing on the rapid changes in the design industries of Taiwan and East Asia. Ho's team uses the calligraphic line of traditional Chinese scripts as means to create modern designs. In collaboration with artists in different fields, his team fuses local Taiwanese culture with their spiritual nourishment in their plastic arts and design works.

## ***shen po-hung***, lighting design

Graduating from the Graduate Institute of Drama and Theatre at National Taiwan University, Shen Po-hung has created his personal marks on lighting design through in-depth reading into interdisciplinary fields. Shen currently works as a freelance designer, and his designs encompass works in dance, drama, concert, and special events. He has collaborated with Cheng Tsung-lung for many years, with designing credits including *Waves* (2023), *Send in a Cloud* (2022), *Lunar Halo* (2019), *Dream Catcher* (2017), *13 Tongues* (2016), *Beckoning* (2015), *Dorian Gray* (2014), *Blue Hour* (2013), and *On the Road* (2011).

## ***ethan wang***, projection design

One of the most active projection designers in Taiwan, Ethan Wang received a M.A. in communication design, majoring in new media pathway from Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, University of the Arts London, and has been devoted to creation and education on video design in performing arts. Wang was the curator for 2019 Prague Quadrennial Taiwan Exhibition and currently services as an associate professor for the Department of Theatre Design and Technology at the Taipei National University of the Arts. Wang was awarded the outstanding alumni of the Taipei National University of the Arts in 2017.

# biographies, cont.

Wang has received numerous awards, including the first prize of World Stage Design 2022 in Projection Design for U Theatre's *The Colours*; the silver award in Digital Arts and Graphic Design from the Novum Design Award (NDA, France) for his outdoor lighting sculpture of *Weiwuying Lights Up: The Island of Memories* in 2022; the bronze medal of World Stage Design 2013 New Media Award for Cloud Gate's *Water Stains on the Wall*; and the winner of 7<sup>th</sup> Knight of Illumination Awards 2015 for Cloud Gate's *Rice*. His projection design for Cheng Tsung-lung's *13 Tongues* won him the silver award at the World Stage Design 2017.

## *lin bing-hao*, costume design

Lin Bing-hao started learning dance at the Taipei National University of the Arts. Later discovering his true passion for costume design, Lin dropped out of school to serve as an apprentice to the renowned designer Lin Ching-ju in 1998. In 2001, he opened his costume shop, and soon in the next year launched Taiwan's first professional brand of leotards, KeithLink.

Lin has collaborated with important performing arts groups and artists in Taiwan, including Cloud Gate 2, Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan, Ju Percussion Group, and GuoGuang Chinese Opera Company. Acclaimed by critics as a promising artist, in 2011 Lin was invited to design for the opera *La Dame aux Camélias* directed by the renowned Japanese theatre director Tadashi Suzuki.

## *tsai pao-chang*, voice coach

Tsai Pao-Chang graduated from National Taiwan University with a bachelor's degree in drama and theatre and received a master's degree in music theatre from Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, University of London. In 2011, with a grant from Asian Cultural Council, Tsai received his voice and speech trainings from the America Repertory Theater at Harvard University and furthered his theater adventure at Moscow Art Theatre (MXAT). He is actively involved in various international artist-in-residency and programs, including in France, Iceland, the U.S., Denmark, South Korea, and Germany. Known as a playwright, director, and actor,

Tsai collaborates with many performing arts companies in Taiwan. He served as the co-artistic director of Tainaner Ensemble, one of the most established theatre companies in Taiwan from 2009 to 2018.

***lee ching-chun***, associate artistic director

Lee Ching-chun obtained a master's degree degree in dance studies from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, London, in 1999. In 2004 Lee received the National Award for the Arts from Taiwan National Culture and Arts Foundation, the highest award for artists in Taiwan. Joining Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan in 1983, she took leading roles in most of Lin Hwai-min's choreographies, including his signature works, *Cursive: A Trilogy*, *Songs of the Wanderers*, and *Nine Songs*, among others. Appointed as associate artistic director in 2003, she has often represented Lin Hwai-min to re-stage his works for international dance companies, such as Zurich Ballet.

Lee's other dance credits include Helen LAI's *The Rite of Spring*, *Invisible Cities*, *La Vie en Rose*, and *Frida*. In addition to performances, she has also been invited to choreograph for Cloud Gate, Spotlight Dance Company, and Kaohsiung City Ballet Company. In 1999, collaborating with Canadian stage designer Tania Etienne, she choreographed and performed her solo dance work, *Courtyard of Pearls*. Serving as the chief consultant for Cloud Gate Dance School, Lee has helped to create and develop class syllabuses for students aged from four to 84.

***yang ling-kai***, rehearsal director

Learning dance at a very young age, Yang Ling-kai toured internationally in her adolescence with Taiwan's Lan Yang Dancers Troup. Immediately after graduating from Taipei National University of the Arts in 1999, Yang joined Cloud Gate 2 as one of its founding members and has since taken major roles with praise in works by renowned choreographers such as Lin Hwai-min, Helen Lai, Lo Man-fei, Wu Kuo-chu, Bulareyaung Pagarlava, Huang Yi, and Cheng Tsung-lung. Yang has been the rehearsal director for Cloud Gate since 2014.



# cloud gate dance theatre of taiwan staff

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## **Cloud Gate Dance Theatre of Taiwan**

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Artistic Director	CHENG Tsung-lung
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Rehearsal Assistants	HUANG Mei-ya, WU Jui-ying, and YEH Po-sheng
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Ballet Teachers	LIN Li-chuan and WU Ching-yin
Modern Dance Teachers	HUANG Pei-hua and TSAI Ming-yuan
Popping Teacher	Popping ED
Accompanists	HONG Jia-ling, KUO Tsung-han, LIANG Chun-mei, and WU Jia-jin

### **Dancers**

CHEN Mu-han HOU Tang-li HUANG Mei-ya  
LEE Tzu-chun WU Jui-ying YEH Po-sheng

CHAN Pui pui CHEN Lien-wei CHEN Tsung-chiao CHOU Chen-yeh  
FAN Chia-hsuan HSU Chih-hen HUANG Lu-kai  
HUANG Po-kai HUANG Yen-cheng SHAO Hsing-wen YEN Hsueh-hsin  
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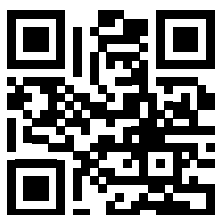
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We'd love your feedback on this performance. If you complete the short survey, you can enter for a chance to win two tickets to Lakecia Benjamin on Friday, February 14, 2025.

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*Please note, survey responses are anonymous. If you would like a response to your feedback, please email [mossartscenter@vt.edu](mailto:mossartscenter@vt.edu).*



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*Moss Arts Center Grand Lobby*

Michael Rakowitz; *The invisible enemy should not exist – Seated Nude Male Figure, Wearing Belt Around Waist (IM77823) (Recovered, Missing, Stolen Series)*, 2018; Middle Eastern packaging and newspapers, glue, and cardboard; 37 4/5 in. x 28 3/4 x 28 3/4 inches; courtesy of the artist and Barbara Wien Gallery



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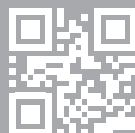
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