Lilly Cai Chinese Dance Company Comes to Cal Poly

SAN LUIS OBISPO -- Traditional Chinese movement is blended with modern dance as Cal Poly Arts presents the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company performing the original three-piece work, "Dance Calligraphy," at 8 p.m. Oct. 26 at the Cal Poly Theatre.

A prominent member of the Bay Area's dance community, founder and choreographer Lily Cai is a native of Shanghai and former principal dancer with the Shanghai Opera House. She established the Lily Cai Chinese Dance Company in 1988 and is known for creating bridges between the past and the contemporary -- from spectacular court dances of Chinese dynasties to modern works fusing classical Chinese and ballet, complemented by dazzling costumes, original music, and multi-media designs.

The San Francisco Chronicle declared that the troupe delivers "moments of great beauty."

The Cal Poly Theatre event includes the music of a string quartet, an erhu soloist, and dramatic visual projections. The first piece, "Strings Calligraphy," draws inspiration from the intersection of strings music and the Chinese art of calligraphy, where the uses of motion and lines are explored both musically and visually in a performance interweaving dance, music, and projected visual imagery.

The second piece is set to the solemn music of Gustav Mahler. "Candelas" offers the lighted candle as a symbol of humility. As the dancers move with a reverence towards their source of light, "Candelas" is a commentary on self-sacrifice, respect, and modesty.

The last piece, "Bamboo Girls," combines feminine beauty with virtuosity, humor, and charm. "Bamboo Girls" is Cai's original minority dance suite capturing the shy but playful folk spirit of village girls.
from Southern China.

A pre-performance lecture will be given by senior Dance faculty member Moon Ja Minn Suhr at 7 p.m. in the Philips Recital Hall.

Tickets for the performance are $28 & $34, with student discounts available, and may be purchased at the Performing Arts Ticket Office, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturdays. To order by phone, call 805/756-2787; to order by fax: 805/756-6088.

This performance is sponsored by Barbara Bell and funded in part by the California Arts Council, a state agency, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

For audio and video samples of Cal Poly Arts events, visit www.calpolyarts.org.