

# Lily Wang: Lead dancer of Divine Performing Arts

## Dancing amongst clear trickling streams and cascading blossoms

By LI JIA and LIN YAN  
Epoch Times Staff

"Maidens as pure as flowering buds, dance amongst clear trickling streams and cascading blossoms. Their dance steps caress the lake surface like breezes and as they glide along like passing clouds and running streams. They are just like nymphs—quiet, elegant, nimble and harmonious. As their purity move the audience to tears, the ingenuity of the 'water sleeves', long and flowing dance and play with the cascading blossoms in the gentle spring wind."

This is an excerpt from a review by a renowned performing artist from mainland China, after watching *Water Sleeves* at Radio City Music Hall, Broadway, New York City in early 2008.

On stage, Lily, lead dancer of Divine Performing Arts New York Company, eloquently captures the poetic beauty and the graceful dance movements that comes with *Water Sleeves*. The techniques of Chinese classical dances were all there, the suspense, the stability, the surge, the leaning, the containment, the coyness, the shifting, the reverse discipline and all others.

Lily was also the lead dancer in *Blossoming Flowers*, *Dai Nationality Dance*, *Nymphs of the Sea* and *White Lotus*, *Snow Mountains* in the Divine Performing Arts 2008

tours. *Water Sleeves* is one of her favorites.

Lily won the "Excellence Award" in the Junior Female Division of the 2008 International Chinese Classical Dance Competition hosted by NTDTV, New York. Lily started learning Chinese classical dancing and the piano at the age of 4. Her teacher was a well-known dance instructor in mainland China.

Lily exudes purity. She said, "As a young woman in a modern society, being a Chinese classical dance student at Divine Performing Arts, New York has enabled me to capture the unique elegance and softness of ancient Chinese women."

Today's youth rarely show an interest in traditional Chinese culture. Yet Lily enjoys reading *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, *Between the Mirror and the Flowers*, and *Journey to the West*. These books are sources of information on background knowledge of Chinese classical dances.

As for Lily, having to emulate the traditional Chinese cultures and values are influencing her life as a whole. She has learnt that inner beauty is the pillar for genuine great arts.

Taking *Water Sleeves* as an example, Lily explained, "To do well in this dance, the most difficult part is tapping into the rhythms of the body movements. I feel that in our daily life, a young woman needs to

be in harmony with her inner and outer self. If one is to act one way on stage and a completely different way off stage, the performances wouldn't have truly touched the audiences."

Lily also plays an important role in *Victory Drums*. She is dressed in ancient military uniform, holding the commanding flag, giving orders and coordinating the entire battlefield to the resounding beatings of 18 small drums and 4 large drums. A series of over a dozen clear-and-cut jumps and rotations display her heroic stance that is on par with the male warriors.

She said, "The style of this dance is dramatically different from that of *Water Sleeves*. Technically, it is not too challenging but the coordination among dancers is the key."

In the Divine Performing Arts show, *Awakening*, a relatively large-scale performance, tells the story of the public support to Falun Gong practitioners despite the nationwide persecution in China.

Lily, who dances in *Awakening*, said, "Falun Gong practitioners in China are undergoing severe abuse. Compared to the orphans who had lost their parents as a result of the persecution, I am in a rather comfortable environment. To help people know about the persecution through performing arts is the least I can do. Culture and arts share the responsibility of upholding justice."



Lily Wang, winner of the "Excellence Award" of Junior Female Division in the 2008 International Chinese Classical Dance Competition hosted by NTDTV, NEW YORK. DAI BING/THE EPOCH TIMES

# The language of image

By ALEJANDRO NADAL  
Epoch Times Staff

MADRID—Award-winning photographer Rafael Trapiello uses his camera to show man's effect on the natural environment in a series of photographs based on altered landscapes. His photograph "Near the Dam" was honoured with a Silver medal in *The Epoch Times* 2008 International Photography Competition.

Trapiello said he chose this issue to photograph because, "It's related to climate change and the influence of man over the environment. There are several artistic currents that express these concerns through images, such as the New Topography School, which I'm very interested in."

His career as an engineer helped his photographic art. "Being an engineer has helped me to be very organized in my work, to be very rational."

The eerie landscape in the winning photo has an unreal quality that the photographer relates to classic images. "It's man's hand that causes strangeness. Actually, it is a very classical photograph in the style of Ansel Adams."

Trapiello shared technical secrets of his winning entry. "It was taken at dusk—hand-held, without a tripod—and from a viewpoint over the dam. I had to be very still to achieve the desired sharpness. I used a Sony DSC F828 digital camera, with a 35 mm lens."

The photographer said the low light and not using a tripod required several shots to gain the desired effect. He edited the image in Photoshop with some retouching but no digital manipulation.

Although the photograph was originally in color, Trapiello decided on a final image in black and white. In the editing process, he overexposed the sky and added volume to the rocky landscape and depth to the water below. "I take lots of care with the editing of my photographs," he said.

Five years ago, Trapiello realized he could express himself in another language—that of images. "The language of image is a very peculiar one; you have to be patient to learn to understand it and speak it. It was a bit hard for me, but I was good at reading and speaking it."

He says he became more fascinated and his hobby turned into "an obsession." By observing the work of other photographers, he said, "You realize that it's a language far more complex than what it seemed."

When asked what it takes to take a good photograph, Trapiello said that the hardware is not important and that with determination, one can learn the necessary technical knowledge.

"It is important to have sensibility,



ALTERED LANDSCAPE: Photographer Rafael Trapiello combines his natural sensibility and serenity with rationality and an engineer's organization to create winning photographs. RAFAEL TRAPIELLO/THE EPOCH TIMES

ity, to have a poetic look, loaded with sentiment, and also be willing to tell something."

Photographs "without content ... are not good photos to me." He says the best way to take a great photo is to study the masters in the field "to discover your photographic parents."

He mentioned outstanding photographers in Spain: "Juan Manuel Castro Prieto, Juan Valbuena, and Alberto Garcia Alix have influenced me in this regard. They have in common the ability to know how to tell things with a sensitive eye."

When describing the process of making a beautiful photograph, Trapiello quoted Bernard Clouseau: "It's something inside you, the process appears before and during the time it takes you to make it. It's already inside of you. That's why you look at that specific thing, because it is a picture you had already taken."

Trapiello has taken many photography courses and has also taught photography. He admits to taking many unsuccessful photos before succeeding. Speaking of mastering the art, he said, "The moment you begin to be proud of the pictures you take is when you can notice your influences, and also see a personal touch."

Looking at the work of others and understanding one's inner qualities are important to taking beautiful photographs. "You have to look at other's pictures continuously to cultivate that language. It's a way of enriching our form of expression, the rest is what's inside of each one of us."

He says his photos are an intimate part of him. "My photos are a faithful reflection of my personality. I am a very sensitive person, very quiet. My photos are very calm—like me. You can know me perfectly by reading my pictures, beyond a superficial reading."

# Theatre review: Vancouver Opera production of Carmen

By JASLEEN KANDHARI  
Special to the Epoch Times

"He looked into her eyes," big mistake. Georges Bizet's dramatic opera, *Carmen* is the perfect example of the ecstasy and despair of romantic love and its power and passion leading to a tragic end. Staged by Vancouver Opera within a traditional setting at the Queen Elizabeth Theatre, it opened to a rapturous performance led by the sensual Israeli mezzo-soprano Rinat Shaham who effectively played the role of the seductive gypsy who sets men's hearts a-flutter. To the unfortunate moral demise of the hapless officer, Don Jose played by the tenor David

Pomeroj.

From the prelude, Bizet sets the scene through the overture. He presents two musical themes of festive, celebratory, public music which we later hear as the bull-fighting music of the *Toreador* song and the menacing, ominous sombre tones representing Don Jose's fatal obsession with *Carmen*.

From the first act we are able to differentiate the characters dramatically and musically with *Carmen*'s sultry entry *Habanera* aria. The sultriness of the melodic lines lend clues to *Carmen*'s seductive character. The highlight of this production was the *Seguidilla* aria when *Carmen* manages to seduce Don Jose

with a passionate rendition of the Act two duet of *La bus, la bus dans la montagne* replete with writhing bodies in fervent ardour.

Bass-baritone Daneil Okulitch's swaggering bull-fighter Escamillo and soprano Mariateresa Magisano's virtuous, moral Michaela rounded off a strong cast.

Although historically a departure from the standard French classical operas of the mid-nineteenth century, *Carmen* has arguably become the most popular opera of our time. Characterised by passion, danger and obsession *Carmen* proves to be a production for opera aficionados as well as newbies that is to be revisited time and time again.

## Crossword

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### Across

- 1 Take off your hat
- 5 Any
- 10 Replace a sliver
- 14 Belief
- 15 Small money units
- 16 Walk through water
- 17 Memo
- 18 Forfe
- 19 Very dry mine
- 20 Form into granules
- 22 Lived

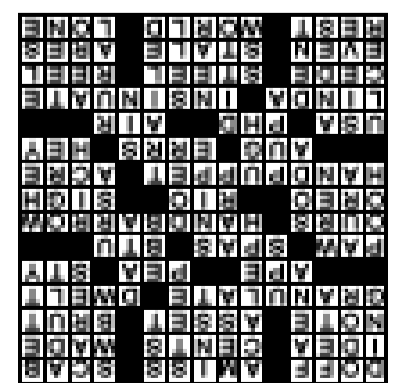
- 23 Copy
- 24 Red vegetable
- 28 Pigeon
- 27 Animal foot
- 30 Baths
- 33 Heat unit
- 36 Belongs to us
- 37 Frame with handles on both sides
- 42 Brand of sandwich cookie
- 43 River (Spanish)
- 44 Wheary sound

- 45 Puppet controlled by fingers (2 wds.)
- 49 Land unit
- 50 August (abbr.)
- 51 Goals
- 53 yout (attention getter)
- 54 United States
- 57 Doctoral degree
- 58 Atmosphere
- 61 Singer Renescent
- 63 Hint
- 69 Surrender
- 70 Strong metal
- 71 Spin
- 72 Flat
- 73 Sour
- 74 Greek god of war
- 75 Sleep
- 76 Globe
- 77 Only

### Down

- 1 Chime
- 2 Small
- 3 Soft white cheese
- 4 Paces at the bull
- 5 Jellyfish
- 6 Teal island
- 7 Irritation (abbr.)
- 8 Intense
- 9 Fast plane
- 10 Compass point
- 11 Looks after
- 12 Grow-up
- 13 Miss Bloop
- 21 United Parcel Service
- 22 Input
- 25 Recede
- 27 Winnie the \_\_\_

- 28 Manner
- 29 Small bird
- 31 American Association of Refined Persons (abbr.)
- 32 Shaghead
- 34 Major (Big Dipper)
- 38 Soft drink
- 39 Winter
- 39 Opp. of poor
- 40 Giant
- 41 Caves and
- 48 Insect in a cocoon
- 47 Good grief!
- 48 Lugged
- 52 Goal
- 54 Stomach sore
- 55 Screen cut
- 58 Mountain range
- 59 Also
- 60 Not urban
- 62 Nick
- 64 Come close to
- 65 Market
- 68 Air (prefix)
- 67 Adolescent
- 68 Otherwise
- 70 South southwest



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