

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Rob Li Photography

the wave of ending and beginning

by des amaiya

like the opal stone on my bedside beneath a full moon, we begin with charging as the lights slowly come up on the company of Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers. a tight but forceful group. the movements of these dancers are precise, controlled, full of air and life. slow sustained movement to a quick whip of the hand through the space utilizes the practice of Chi, a breathwork technique. with a blend of angular mirroring, long horizontal shapes, and never ending spirals, we meet each of the dancers through their partnerships with one another. with the state of the world being so uncertain and art requiring more cherishing than ever, Lin both cherishes the dancers and the giving act of performance, as do the dancers with one another. the use of ripples communicates an undeniable cause and effect; how we affect each other, follow one another, and the inexplicable strings between our lives.

seasoned, virtuosic dancer Weiwei Ma controls the floor in Moon Dance, a practice of meditation and articulation. understanding the moon as a tide changer and regenerative source, Ma is both the tide and the source. she pushes and pulls, beckoning the attention and focus of the crowd. her grounding performance bleeds from her heart, as we seamlessly weave into the next piece.

Moon Tide, choreographed by previous soloist Weiwei Ma, is based on a Tang Dynasty poem, "the bright moon on the sea is shared by the whole world." magically pointed dancer Kendall Niblett begins with a long rectangular tulle fabric, billowing through the air as a sparkle of moonlight, growing and shrinking. they are truly stunning. this love story created through the soundscore, generated by Nawang Khechog and Jingzhe Wang, along with the movement, is a one-current body. they move together, longingly, as Niblett does with the tulle. as three more dancers follow Niblett, i am reminded of the Fates. this group lives and moves on through/with one another, as all of our communities do, as we would do well as audience/community members to remember: the life-sustaining forces we are to one another.

the second half opens with Evalina Carbonell's self choreographed solo, a pondering into regeneration as Carbonell queries on the

capacity of the snake and the myth of Medusa. she wears a large mask characterized by round eyes, high cheekbones, and soft silver locks atop a flowing orange robe with several long ropes hanging off of her body. she changes perspectives, fixing the mask to the back of her head, and around in circles. almost creature like, she expresses an animated and vexed quality. she takes off the mask, and her eyes lock with her own eyes, brought forth into the mask, in fear, in shock, as she watches herself become herself, watches herself undo herself. she cradles herself like a baby, and puts herself to rest. to recharge, and regenerate. further exploration into the community work of rebuilding, and the healing that is necessary for a community to do together.

self reflection as a reference to art making in general existing as a process and survival tactic; the complexities and necessary connection to the good and the bad.

the final segments see Kendall Niblett and Keila Pérez-Vega leading the waves. in “an ode to invisible forces,” we see an almost-battle between the pair of soloists. i feel like a tornado is sweeping the stage; the dancers are forces and so is their tangible connection. it reminds us how almost imperceptibly life changes, as the dancers undo their hair, letting their locks flow; how we lose sense of who is leading, who is following— the charge and the wave. a taste of the moonlight. as we regenerate, we take in the space Lin sets, the tone of calculation and clear storytelling. there is an undeniable strength in each dancer and what proved most moving was the unexpected vulnerability and play. this is a well themed and cultivated performance that keeps KYL/D in a position of inspiring artistry and a true eye for detail and dynamism. KYL/D has no confusion about their glow, and as art comes under target in light of the new administration, it is a grounding force that makes me proud to be a critic and fellow artist in Philadelphia.

[Luna](#) (?) *Dance, Myth, & Nature*, Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers, Mandell Theater, March 28-29, 2025.

Homepage Image Description: *three dancers with large white blankets of tulle fabric pull them across each other, the camera catches them in a blurry flurry of motion. each dancer looks toward a different direction, arms to the sky. the photograph is a wash of the transparent tulle.*

Article Page Image Description: *two groups of dancers split the stage, each one catching a falling dancers body. they all wear black with gold accents, the stage is lit in two large diagonal, crossing rectangles.*

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