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Ritual Acts

Falun Gong's *Shen Yun* Song and Dance Performances



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Australian Centre on China in the World

The Australian National University

2017 Ticket page



The banner features a central image of a dancer in a green and orange costume performing a high kick, with a group of dancers in similar costumes below. The background is a green-tinted illustration of a traditional Chinese building. The text '神韻晚會 2017 SHEN YUN' is prominently displayed, along with the tagline '신이 전한 문화로의 초대'. The page includes a navigation menu, a search bar, and a list of performance cities.

선원예술단

홈 | 선원에 대해 | 뉴스&리뷰 | 동영상 | 블로그 | 선원백과 | 후원하기 | 채용 공고

도시, 국가, 장소로 검색

공연도시 & 티켓

가까운 공연도시:

- 서울, 한국
- 수원, 한국
- 전주, 한국
- 울산, 한국

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선원과 함께하기: 방명록 뉴스레터 새소식 앱 설치하기

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2017 Ticket page



The banner features a green background with a traditional Chinese architectural scene on the left and a central image of a dancer in a green and orange costume performing a leap. Below the dancer is a group of performers in similar costumes. The text 'SHEN YUN' is prominently displayed in the center, with 'Experience a Divine Culture' underneath. Navigation and utility elements are located at the top and bottom of the banner.

SHEN YUN PERFORMING ARTS

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Tours & Tickets

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神韻晚會 2017
SHEN YUN
Experience a Divine Culture

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Shen Yun 2016 Tour places, performances

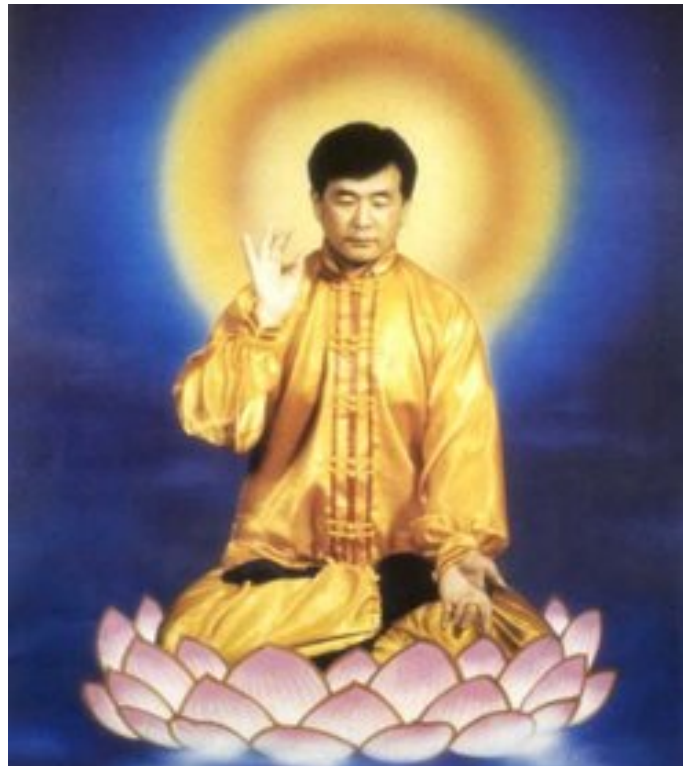
• US	72	185	• Suwon	1
• Canada	9	17	• Seoul	3
• Mexico	2	4	• Ulsan	2
• France	3	7	• Jeonju	2
• Denmark	1	2		
• Germany	2	4	• Taiwan	7 24
• Austria	2	4	• Japan	3 6
• Italy	1	2	• Australia	7 25
• Czechia	1	2	• NZ	2 5
• Belgium	1	2	• Argentina	1 4
• Spain	1	2		
• UK	1	2		
• Switzerland	1	4		

What is Falun Gong?



- Li Hongzhi 李洪志
- Master Li 李师傅
- cultivation or self-cultivation 修养
- qigong 气功

What is Falun Gong, 2



- gong: achievement, efficacy, skill or work
- or: exercises or practice
- Falun: the wheel of the Buddhist Law, or Dharma.
- Falun Gong: the Practice of the Wheel of the Law
- Falun Dafa: the Great Method of the Wheel of the Law

The Falun



- Falun: Originally a symbol of the Buddha's teaching
- Dharmacakra
- Turn the Wheel of the Law 转法轮
- Falun is an actual object that Li Hongzhi inserts into the abdomens of practitioners.

Falun Gong Teachings



- Falun Gong is not Buddhism
- Falun Gong is not religion
- a charismatic founder
- a scripture
- a moral code
- an end point of cultivation
- a multi-dimensional cosmos
- an apocalypse
- spiritual exercises
- Religious gatherings
- No formal rituals

Falun Gong adherents



- No initiation or equivalent
- Falun Gong has practitioners
- How many Falun Gong followers?
- Now or before 1999?
- Chinese government: 2.1 to 2.3 million.
- Falun Gong: 70-80 million in China, 20 million overseas.
- News report (late 1998)
Falun Gong: 20 million

2005 Chinese New Year Gala



2005
全球華人新年晚會

紐約晚會
周五2月4日晚8:00
1 (888) 300-0761

THE THEATER AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN
7th Avenue at 52nd Street, NEW YORK, NY 紐約曼哈頓7大道32街
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售票熱線: 1 (888) 260-6223
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www.ntdtv.com
新唐人电视台
New Tang Dynasty Television

在金鐘報曉的2005年新春, 新唐人全球華人新年晚會將在紐約、華盛頓、舊金山、多倫多、倫敦、台北、香港等七大城市隆重登場, 為您獻上新年的祝福。

- Song and dance shows began in 2004 with Chinese New Year Gala
- sponsored by New Tang Dynasty TV. Modelled on Chinese New Year Gala broadcast by Chinese Central TV
- Original NTDTV show toured five cities in North America
- Later, Chinese New Year Spectacular, Holiday Wonders, Divine Performing Arts, Shen Yun Performing Arts
- Three separate troupes of performers touring different parts of the world simultaneously

Shen Yun programs

- Begins with creation story. Each half has:
- a. several dances on ethnic, historical, or decorative themes
- b. one song on Falun Gong theme
- c. one dance on Falun Gong theme, including the finale



Falun Gong's Version of the Chinese State

- Ethnic Dances
- Minzu tuanjie – “Unity of the Nationalities”
- Under the leadership of the CCP
- Loyal and subordinate
- Falun Gong as the new dispensation
- A Han dispensation
- Dances on historical themes
- Classical Chinese dance
- Costumes from the Tang, Song and Ming
- Excludes “designs based on other ethnic groups such as the popular Hu clothes of Tang Dynasty, the Mongolian clothes of Yuan Dynasty, and the Manchu clothes of Qing Dynasty”
- Since the Communist Party is outlawed in the United States, all songs and music that eulogize the Communist Party will be prohibited during this competition. Contestants would be well advised to send their dance music to the Panel of Judges for assessment in order to avoid unnecessary problems

Songs: 2010, 2015

“Pause to Notice”

In the cold winter I hand you true information
But it's as if you don't see me, oblivious and unaware
The calamity at hand offers nowhere to turn
Perhaps this offering is the hope you've awaited

In the intense summer heat I hand you true information
It is falsehood that leads you to oppose
Don't simply believe the wicked Party's lies,
They are but a ruinous plot at a perilous time.

The disciples of Dafa widely seek to save lives,
Within those true facts is what you've long awaited
So many lifetimes of pain and sorrow you've lived
through
In this mortal world, this sea of endless wants,
Waiting for that leaflet that seems like ordinary paper.

“Divine Pledge Fulfilled”

The Gods made an oath:
To deliver us to heaven at the end of days
For countless ages, lives have awaited this day

Yet now, when called, they turn away
Dafa has been taught this whole time

The blood of the holy believers is shed on others' behalf
They spread truth to save us, even while oppressed

The gods are fulfilling their oath
Yet some people are only interested in profit

And don't bother to find out the oppressor's lies
They dare not imagine that the gods are fulfilling their
oath

Falun Gong first half dances

2010, 2105

“Heaven Awaits us Despite Persecution”

Oppression is a painful reality for many millions of persons in China today, as witnessed by an innocent family whose father is persecuted for practicing Falun Dafa, a traditional spiritual discipline. Theirs is the human face of the countless tragic, broken lives in China we seldom hear about. The fantastic scenes that ultimately unfold in this piece present a message of hope and bespeak of a longstanding Chinese belief that good people are ultimately rewarded, even if not in this lifetime.

“The Power of Compassion”

In a town in contemporary China people are practicing Falun Dafa, also know as Falun Gong, whose practitioners are persecuted in China today. But in the beginning of this story, these are still peaceful days, a time when the practice was a common sight in Chinese parks; even passersby were inspired by its principles of truth, compassion and forbearance.

Persecution suddenly erupts, with Communist Party policeman attacking the meditators. While trying to arrest a young man, a police officer slips and hurts his knee. The young man stops trying to flee and helps the resistant officer. They eventually sit down together to read *Zhuan Falun*, Falun Dafa's main text. The police officer comes to regret his actions, as understanding and sincerity pave the way to an unexpected blessing.

Opening Dance 2009

“The Five Millenia Begin”

- Divine beings assemble in Heaven to prepare for their descent to earth, where they will impart the very gift of culture. Among the group is the Yellow Emperor of Chinese lore along with his royal court, who take the stage following a thunderous welcoming. The words appearing on the backdrop, which translate as “Inaugurating Five Thousand Years of Culture”, bespeak of a longstanding belief that the glories of China’s classical culture owe to a higher source.



2009 Shen Yun Program

China was historically called the Divine Land, a land protected by gods. Because people believed that in ancient times gods and humans coexisted in the heart of China, Chinese culture is also referred to as divinely imparted culture. Respect for gods and aspiration to achieve high virtue have permeated Chinese civilization.

DPA [that is, Divine Performing Arts] performances contain the essence of China's 5000-year history. They showcase the glorious history of China from a brand-new angle, by demonstrating the spirit of pure *truthfulness, kindness, and beauty* present in traditional Chinese culture. They seek to incorporate and establish upright, traditional culture, and once more to bring to life the essence of the Eastern divinely imparted culture.

Opening Dance 2015

“Following the Creator to Renew all Things”



- High up in the heavens we find ourselves in a sacred divine realm. Suddenly a golden Chariot appears, signaling the arrival of the Creator. He announces to the deities his intention to descend to the mortal world and establish civilization on Earth. Many divine beings join his mission reincarnating in the Middle Kingdom as members of China’s splendid Zhou Dynasty.

The opening dance



- Remarkable consistency
- Not explicitly Falun Gong content
- But claiming knowledge of an ancient spiritualized creation
- Parallels with Li Hongzhi
- Parallels with opening of rituals: calling down the gods

Typical Chinese Rituals

- Daoist *jiao* ritual
- Imperial ritual
- Setting the cosmos or community to rights
- Begins with an invocation to the gods and calling on them to be descend to the ritual area
- Ends with the gods being sent away after the relationship between the sacred realm and the mundane realm has been re-established.

Final Dance, 2015

“The Divine Renaissance Begins”

- Returning to China today, the scene opens with a little girl who sees a group of people meditating. Moved by their serenity, she discovers they are practicing Falun Dafa, and befriends them, despite the disapproval of her police officer father. She joins them in holding a banner: “Falun Dafa is Good”. A group of Communist Party policeman suddenly appear, and with them dark clouds, signalling the onset of nationwide persecution. Amidst the chaos, the girl’s father arrives just in time to see a fellow officer land his daughter a lethal blow. Anguished, he renounces his loyalty to the Party. When all seems lost, and even the earth begins to erupt in fury, Lord Buddha appears, with divine beings trailing in his wake. And, with this heavenly scene, a new era begins.

Shen Yun as Ritual

- A set of actions that have real effects
- Specifically, a healing ritual
- A ritual that is pure and cleansing
- Not a ritual that is impure and polluting

Shen Yun has real effects

- After Watching the Shen Yun Performance, a Stroke Patient Walks Normally Again
Li Xin (a pseudonym), retiree from the Commodity Bureau of Weichang County, Hebei Province, is in her sixties. Li had a stroke in July of last year. The side effect was that she had difficulty walking. This year after Li watched the 2009 Shen Yun performance on DVD, she recovered miraculously and could walk normally again.

Pure and Impure Ritual

All my family members were busy doing their own things on New Year's eve. I am such an old woman that I had nothing to do, so I retired to my own bedroom. I turned on the television and lay down on the bed to watch a program while waiting for dinner to be served. The special New Year's programs broadcast by CCTV all contained a lot of chaotic noise with wild dancing, and they annoyed me. I felt the pressure of unseen evil forces closing in around me, pushing me toward a bottomless abyss. I felt suffocated and had a feeling of wanting to vomit and having diarrhea at the same time. I struggled out of bed and felt darkness closing in on my eyes, so I leaned against the door frame. A sudden severe pain in my stomach caused me to lose control and soil my pants...Suddenly I remembered that a friend had given me a copy of the 2008 Shen Yun Performing Arts Chinese Spectacular DVD, which I enjoy watching very much. I found it right away and started to watch. After a while, I felt my entire body relaxing; all of the illness symptoms disappeared and I felt immensely comfortable...You really have to see it in order to understand. This is my real experience

Retired Cadre from Shuangcheng, Clearwisdom, 24 March, 2009

Thanks for Listening!



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