

BAM

2016 NEXT WAVE FESTIVAL

BROOKLYN ACADEMY OF MUSIC PETER JAY SHARP BUILDING 30 LAFAYETTE AVENUE BROOKLYN, NY 11217—1486

Shen Wei Dance Arts makes BAM debut with a world premiere dance, *Neither*, Oct 5—8

A most unusual collaboration between Morton Feldman and Samuel Beckett fires up the renowned choreographer's imagination to set movement to their "anti-opera"

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Neither

Shen Wei Dance Arts
Music by Morton Feldman
Libretto by Samuel Beckett

World Premiere

Concept, choreography, set, and costume design by Shen Wei
Lighting design by Jennifer Tipton
Projection design by Rocco DiSanti

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House (30 Lafayette Ave)

Oct 5—8 at 7:30pm
Tickets start at \$20

August 30, 2016/Brooklyn, NY—Renowned choreographer **Shen Wei** makes his BAM debut with *Neither*—an evening-length world premiere set to Morton Feldman and Samuel Beckett's celebrated "anti-opera" of 1977.

Choreographer and visual artist Shen Wei draws inspiration for his works from such diverse sources as Western painting, calligraphy, Chinese opera, and nature. For *Neither*, his latest work for the stage, Shen Wei turns to maverick composer Morton Feldman's daringly spare and iridescent mono-drama with a 16-line libretto by Samuel Beckett. With an enigmatic text beginning "to and fro in shadow from inner to outer shadow / from impenetrable self to impenetrable unself by way of neither," this unique collaboration by the two modernist titans is suggestive and elusive rather than dramatic and lends itself to the visual and expressive power of Shen Wei's dance.

At times Shen Wei's twelve dancers move as communal, supportive forces, connected through their limbs so they almost appear as a single organism. At others they are separate, desolate creatures, alone in their spheres of space. Echoing the changing aural and poetic landscape of the music and text, Shen Wei's choreography embodies the inner struggle of an uneven journey from darkness to possible light.

Shen Wei's set design, inspired by the alternating images of light and shadow and the echoing portals that mark Beckett's text, is a series of mysterious open doors suffused with quietly gleaming light. His black, white and gray painting, *Untitled No. 12-1* serves as the work's front curtain.

The dancers in *Neither* include Lilly Balch, Cecily Campbell, Kate Jewett, Cynthia Koppe, Janice Lancaster Larsen, Russell Stuart Lilie, Chelsea Retzliff, Jennifer Rose, Zak Ryan Schlegel, Austin Selden, Alex Speedie, and Michael Wright.

About the Artist

Choreographer, painter, and director **Shen Wei** is internationally renowned for the breadth and scope of his artistic vision. Admiration for his talent has earned him numerous awards including a MacArthur Fellowship, the US Artists Fellow Award, a John Simon Guggenheim Fellowship, Australia's Helpmann Award, the Nijinsky Emerging Choreographer Award, the Algur H. Meadows Prize, and the 2013 Chinese Innovator Award from the Wall Street Journal-China.

Born in China's Hunan province in 1968, the son of Chinese opera professionals, Shen was trained as a youth in the rigorous practice of Chinese opera performance, traditional Chinese ink painting and calligraphy, and was a performer with the Hunan State Xian Opera Company from 1984 to 1989. He also studied Western visual art, which propelled an interest in modern dance. In 1989, he began to train in modern dance at the American Dance Festival's (ADF) first linkage program at the Guangdong Dance Academy in China. Along with other students from the program, in 1991, he became a founding member of the Guangdong Modern Dance Company, the first modern dance company in China. Upon receipt of a fellowship, he moved to New York in 1995 to study with the Nikolais/Louis Dance Lab and, in the same year, ADF invited Shen Wei to present his work. In July 2000, he founded Shen Wei Dance Arts at ADF. The company quickly entered the international touring circuit, performing at premier festivals and venues worldwide.

Shen Wei, who was the lead choreographer for the Opening Ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Olympics, also created dances for Les Grands Ballets Canadiens de Montréal and Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo; choreographed the Rome Opera's production of Rossini's *Moïse et Pharaon*, conducted by Riccardo Muti; choreographed, directed, and designed a new production of *Carmina Burana* for the chorus, orchestra, and ballet of Teatro di San Carlo in Naples, Italy.

In recent years, his work as a visual artist and choreographer have closely intertwined in a series of performative installations and site-specific works which have been presented at a number of museums and galleries including: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the North Carolina Museum of Art, Collezione Maramotti in Italy, Mana Contemporary, the Forum at the Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, the Rockbund Museum of Art in Shanghai, the MDC Museum of Art + Design in Miami, and Asia Society Hong Kong Center.

As a painter, Shen Wei has had solo exhibitions in leading galleries and museums: the Chambers Fine Art Gallery (New York); the Crow Collection of Asian Art (Dallas); the Hong Kong Cultural Center; and the Tucson Museum of Art. This past fall, he participated in a group show at London's Fine Art Society: *Performance & Remnant*. The MDC Museum of Art + Design in Miami opened *Shen Wei: In Black, White and Gray*, a solo exhibition featuring 11 of his large-scale paintings, during Art Basel/Miami Beach (December 2014). Most recently, an exhibition of his paintings, *Shen Wei: Dance Strokes*, opened at Asia Society Hong Kong Center during Art Basel/Hong Kong and ran March 20 to April 4, 2016.

For press information, contact David Hsieh at dhsieh@BAM.org or 718.636.4129 x5.

Credits

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Programming in the BAM Howard Gilman Opera House is supported and endowed by the Howard Gilman Foundation.

Support for the Signature Artist Series provided by the Howard Gilman Foundation.

Leadership support for dance at BAM provided by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and The Harkness Foundation for Dance.

Major support for dance at BAM provided by The SHS Foundation.

Endowed funds supporting the Next Wave Festival: The Howard Gilman Foundation; Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Endowment Fund for Community, Educational, and Public Affairs Programs at BAM; The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Fund for Opera and Music-Theater; The SHS Foundation; The Peter Jay Sharp Fund for Opera and Theater; The Ford Foundation Fund to Support Collaborative Creativity Among U.S. Artists; Estate of Richard B. Fisher; BAM Fund to Support Emerging and Local Musicians; The Starr Foundation; Next Wave Forward Fund: Altria Group, Inc./Founding Sponsor "Supporting the Spirit of Innovation"; and The Devitre Fund.

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Neither is commissioned by BAM and co-commissioned by the Performing Arts Center at Purchase College.

Support for the creation of *Neither* was provided with lead funding from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund; the US-China Cultural Institute, a Cultural Associate of the Committee of 100, Shirley Young, Chair; the SHS Foundation, the Howard Gilman Foundation, and the National Endowment for the Arts. Additional institutional support was provided by the Irwin S. Scherzer Foundation, the Harkness Foundation for Dance, the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs, and La Fondazione I Teatri di Reggio Emilia (Italy).

General Information

BAM Howard Gilman Opera House, BAM Rose Cinemas, and BAMcafé are located in the Peter Jay Sharp building at 30 Lafayette Avenue (between St Felix Street and Ashland Place) in the Fort Greene neighborhood of Brooklyn. BAM Harvey Theater is located two blocks from the main building at 651 Fulton Street (between

Ashland and Rockwell Places). Both locations house Greenlight Bookstore at BAM kiosks. BAM Fisher, located at 321 Ashland Place, is the newest addition to the BAM campus and houses the Judith and Alan Fishman Space and Rita K. Hillman Studio. BAM Rose Cinemas is Brooklyn's only movie house dedicated to first-run independent and foreign film and repertory programming. BAMcafé, operated by Great Performances, offers a dinner menu prior to BAM Howard Gilman Opera House evening performances. BAMcafé also features an eclectic mix of live music for BAMcafé Live on Friday and Saturday nights with a bar menu available starting at 6pm.

Subway: 2, 3, 4, 5, Q, B to Atlantic Avenue – Barclays Center (2, 3, 4, 5 to Nevins St for Harvey Theater); D, N, R to Pacific Street; G to Fulton Street; C to Lafayette Avenue
Train: Long Island Railroad to Atlantic Terminal – Barclays Center
Bus: B25, B26, B41, B45, B52, B63, B67 all stop within three blocks of BAM
Car: Limited commercial parking lots are located near BAM. Visit BAM.org for information.

For ticket information, call BAM Ticket Services at 718.636.4100, or visit BAM.org.

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