

L'ÉVEIL DE LA MONTAGNE

山嵐

Excerpt: <https://youtu.be/vhofwOjMofE>

Synopsis

L'éveil de la Montagne is a poetic tribute to Laoquan Mountain, the longtime spiritual and training home of U-Theatre. Through rhythm, silence, and movement, the work unfolds as a contemplative theatrical journey in which stillness and motion, sound and silence, resonate in quiet harmony. Free from heavy symbolism or spiritual grandiosity, the performance reveals itself with authenticity, evoking the atmosphere of a moonlit forest and the gentle whisper of wind through treetops.

Featuring the xiao, Chinese two-string fiddle, sheng, yangqin, cello, flute, alongside drums and gongs, the work becomes an intimate symphony in which nature and music breathe as one.

Programs

Breaking Dawn

Breeze

Sudden Rain

Coolness

Alone in Dusk

Breath of Light

Misty Mountain



Creative Team

Founder / Director

Liu Ruo-Yu

Music / Artistic Director

Huang Chih-Chun

Costume Design

Tim Yip

Installation Design

Zhang Wang

Lighting Design

Lulu Lee





Breeze

*Regarding your own elusive nature,
whether in a single phrase or a thousand words,
it remains impossible to define.
Silence, uproar,
or the whispering touch that grazes hair and skin –
all trace back to the shape of your being,
circling through
clouded skies, bamboo groves, open wilderness, hollowed valleys –
even weaving in and out of lungs and organs,
your essence named only by its uncertainty.*

*This body has witnessed firsthand your mastery –
the sea rages at your command,
the forests resonate by you,
and through the shifting seasons,
you compose
a twenty-four-tone symphony,
whether joy, or sorrow, astonishment, or sighs, grief, or exaltation
Yet, because your nature is forever untamed,
no one has ever truly seen the face of your being.*

*Formless –
can it be named this?
And yet,
it seems you truly exist.*



L'éveil de la Montagne unfolds like a living poem, each scene a breath of nature, each movement echoing the rhythms of Laoquan Mountain. This is a performance of striking beauty, blending musical virtuosity, traditional percussion, martial arts, dance, and meditation.

The musical instruments – primarily drums and gongs, some of them small and seemingly hung from trees – create a scenography of great beauty. Barefoot, the performers – some musicians, some dancers – wear long white tunics of remarkable elegance. The drums, repositioned throughout the performance on wheeled stands, contribute to the choreography, while the ritualized, high-arm gestures of striking them are equally expressive. Musicians – playing vertical and transverse flutes, Erhu, cello, Sheng, Yangqin, cymbals, gongs, and Tibetan bells, engaging in a dialogue with the drums to create a perfect counterpoint. The master drum is played by a man with his back to the audience, demanding immense physical strength.

L'éveil de la Montagne invites you not to watch, but to remember. Not to interpret, but to feel. This is not just a performance – it is an offering. A return to something ancient, something wordless. A dance older than time, ever rehearsed, yet always unfamiliar.



"L'Éveil de la Montagne is the expression of a culture that is at once ancient and contemporary, revealing the richness of Taiwan's cultural heritage."

~ Pierre Delvolvé, Membre de l'Académie française

"Like a ritual, L'Éveil de la Montagne weaves a richly textured language of gesture and sound. Concentration and emotion, the resonant dialogue of the drums, mysticism and transcendence all envelop the performance."

Brigitte Rémer, Ubiquité culture(s)

"Combining drama, dance, music, drumming, martial arts, and other elements inside and outside, successfully completed a beautiful performance full of spiritual connotations, also fascinating."

~ARTalks Taishin Arts Award, Taiwan.

"A great and complex beauty to the drumming, sounds and silence, simple beats and intricate meshes of precisely articulated rhythms."

~The New York Times, U.S.A.

"A most peaceful heart, a most powerful performance..."

~Volkskrant, the Netherlands

"A prolonged percussive tone poem..."

~Financial Times, London

"Magic rhythms that come from Taiwan. The performance conveys a mystical experience of existence. It is absolutely a perfect performance."

~IL GAZZETTINO, Italy

"A spectacle-ritual with cosmic ambition"

~Danses avec la plume

Artistic Direction



Liu Ruo-Yu Founder and Director

"Art is the presentation of the quality of life after stepping off the stage."

One of the most influential contemporary artists in Taiwan. She studied body training under the Polish theater master Grotowski, which also initiated a journey of exploration into the essence of life.

Not only has she developed the "Contemporary Physical Training Method" for performance texture based on nature and Zen meditation, emphasizing the enhancement of performers' inner qualities, but she has also been committed to grassroots arts education through promotion.

In 2008 Liu was awarded the 12th Annual Taiwan National Award for Arts: Best Art Performer.



Huang Chih-Chun Artistic and Music Director

"Performance is not about projecting outward force, but about the exploration of the inner self."

Born in Malaysia, Mr. Huang has been a drumming and martial arts practitioner for over 30 years. He is known for his mastery in synthesizing these two disciplines into a new form of performing arts.

Mr. Huang unconventional training regime of "meditation before drumming" has both elevated the disposition of the troupe and laid down a solid foundation for a contemporary artistic expression uniquely characteristic of U-Theatre. He excels at using the subtle observations of everyday life's sounds, integrating them into his creations on stage, showcasing diverse musical forms and rich energy.



Integrating elements of martial arts, drumming, meditation, Tai Chi guiding, and sacred dance, U-Theatre extensively works with music, drama, literature, dance, and rituals. Through this fusion of Eastern and Western cultures, they aim to transcend the boundaries of ancient and modern times, crafting a distinctive performance style known as the 'U-Theatre Aesthetics'." U-Theatre's creations and performances are founded upon a profound sense of musicality, intimately intertwined with bodily awareness and the practice methods of "Dao." Its uniqueness has also sparked discussions within the international performing arts community.

U-Theatre continues to adhere to the core principle of “drumming in one’s own tranquility,” engaging with the world through grounded and reassuring strength. By conveying this tranquility to the audience through drumming, U-Theatre fosters a collective cohesion of “living in the moment,” contributing to culture and the environmental sustainability.

Signature Works:

- Sound of the Ocean (premiere, 1998 Avignon Festival)*
- Sword of Wisdom (premiere, 2002 National Theater Taipei)*
- Beyond Time (premiere, 2011 National Theater Taipei, 2012 HK New Vision Arts Festival)*
- River Journey (reproduction, 2020 National Theatre Taipei)*
- Kailash Pilgrimage (premiere, 2022 National Theater Taipei)*
- The Colours (reproduction, 2023 National Theatre Taipei)*
- L'Éveil de la Montagne (reproduction, 2025 Musée du quai Branly)*

International Performance Credits

- 2025 *Le théâtre Claude Lévi-Strauss, Musée du quai Branly- Jacques Chirac*
The National Palace of Culture Congress Centre Sofia (NDK)
Romaeuropa Festival 2025 - Santa Cecilia Hall Auditorium Parco della Musica Ennio Morricone
Marranzano World Fest 2025 - Teatro Romano di Catan
Athens Pallas Theater
- 2024 *Royal Opera House Muscat, Oman 2024-25 Season*
Shanghai Museum East Exhibition Gallery Wallace Chan-Half A Century
Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts 2023-24 Season
- 2023 *Royal Opera House Muscat, Oman 2022-23 Season*
Festival Internacional Santa Lucia 2023, Monterrey, NL, Mexico
- 2019 *XII Winter International Arts Festival in Sochi*
Shanghai Culture Square 2019-20 Season
- 2018 *Perth International Arts Festival, His Majesty's Theatre, Berth*
New Zealand Festival, St James Theatre, Wellington
Chekov Festival, Manezhnaya Square, Moscow, Russia
Beijing Fall Festival, Beijing National Center for the Performing Arts
- 2017 *Oriente-Occidente Festival, Rovereto, Italy*
Brucknerfest, Linz, Austria
- 2016 *Hong Kong Art Festival*
Hua-Yi Festival, Esplanade Art Center, Singapore
- 2015 *Théâtre du Châtelet, Paris, France*
North America Tour - Indianapolis, Next Wave Festival New York City,
National Art Centre, Ottawa, Canada



International Performance Credits

- 2014 *Music-Dance Theatre "LOVER" Premier in Berlin – a co-production with Rundfunkchor Berlin*
- 2013 *OzAsia Festival, Adelaide, Australia*
- 2012 *Dusserdorf Festival, Germany*
 Musica dei Popoli, Firenze, Italy
- 2011 *Auckland Arts Festival, New Zealand*
 Festival Internacional Cervantino, Mexico
- 2010 *Vancouver Performing Arts Center, 2010 Cultural Olympiad, Canada*
 Shanghai EXPO, Shanghai Oriental Art Center
 Octobre en Normandie Festival, Rouen, France
- 2009 *The 10th International Spring Festival in Rishon-Lezion, Israel*
 Birgitta Festival 2009 in Tallinn, Estonia
 International Brussels Music Festival (Klara Festival)
- 2008 *Stichting Muziektheater Festival at the Luxor Theatre, Rotterdam*
 BAM Opera House, Next Wave Festival, New York, USA
- 2007 *Haifa International Children Theatre Festival, Israel*
 Esplanade, Hua-yi Arts Festival, Singapore
- 2006 *Caracas International Theatre Festival, Venezuela*
 Octobre en Normandie Festival, Rouen, France



International Performance Credits

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- 2005 *Chekhov International Theatre Festival in Moscow, Russia*
The 2005 World Exposition, Aichi, Japan
- 2004 *HKCC, Hong Kong New Vision Festival*
- 2003 *Haus der Berliner Festspiele, Germany*
BAM Harvey Theatre, Next Wave Festival, New York, USA
- 2002 *Bergen International Festival, Norway*
Barbican's International Theatre Event 2002 in London, UK
- 2001 *Singapore Arts Festival, Singapore*
Octobre en Normandie Festival, Rouen, France
- 2000 *La Biennale di Venezia, Italy*
Millenium Festival, Santiago de Compostela, Spain
Oriente Occidente Festival in Rovereto, Italy
Auditorium de Lyon, Biennale de La danse de Lyon, France
Theatre Vidy-Lausanne, Switzerland
- 1999 *Macedonian National Theater & Samoil's Fortress*
- 1998 *Festival d'Avignon, France*
International Performing Arts Festival of Sao Paulo, Brazil

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