LIFE





Su Ruixuan teaches Dunhuang dance at Northwest Normal University's Dunhuang College and now serves as director of the college's dance art department. PHOTOS PROVIDED TO CHINA DAILY

Dancing for Dunhuang

Experts pass down a moving art inspired by Mogao Caves murals, **Cheng Yuezhu** and **Ma Jingna** report in Dunhuang, Gansu.

On some of the murals inside the Mogao Caves in Dunhuang, Gansu province, is the iconic image of flying apsaras, celestial beings draped in diaphanous attire and billowing ribbons.

The elegance exuded by these airborne fairies inspired artists to translate their poses into dance moves, particularly in the 1970s when the Gansu Song and Dance Ensemble captivated the Chinese dance scene with the original dance drama *Flower Rains Along the Silk Road*.

Dance experts like Gao Jinrong, a pioneering scholar, have been researching the murals and sculptures, and Dunhuang dance has evolved into an important Chinese classical dance genre.

In Dunhuang, educators are cultivating a new generation of dancers. Northwest Normal University's Dunhuang College, with departments such as dance art, fine arts and tourism, is one school dedicated to researching and promoting Dunhuang culture.

Dunhuang College's dance art department was established in 2014, according to the department's director Su Ruixuan.

"Like other professional dance academies, our curriculum includes courses on ballet, Chinese classical dance, modern dance, choreography and folk dance, along with dance history and theoretical courses," she says.

"However, because of our unique location, a highlight and compulsory course is Dunhuang dance training and performances."

From their first semester, the students are required to study theoretical learning of Dunhuang's history and culture, particularly the murals in the Mogao Caves, to provide a solid foundation for practical Dunhuang dance training from the second semester.

In addition to fundamental technique training, the students learn routines that sequence individual dance moves and poses before rehearsing excerpts from classic dance productions and choreographing original pieces.

Zhao Yuru, a sophomore in the department, says that thanks to the proximity, students often go on trips to the grottoes to view the murals, imitate the original poses, and compare them with today's dance moves.

One of her favorites is Cave 112, which depicts a flying apsara featuring a "reverse *pipa* playing" pose — hands reaching up and plucking the strings of a *pipa* (four-string Chinese lute) on the back, a signature pose in Dunhuang dance.

"Among the caves with 'reverse *pipa* playing' images, Cave 112 is the most classic. The *pipa* player takes the central role with several musicians playing other folk instruments positioned on both sides. I feel a sense of majesty when performing the gesture," Zhao says.

The program has 365 graduates and current students. Around half the graduates joined professional dance troupes while the other half work as dance instructors.

According to Su, teachers in the department work to develop their own curriculum inspired by the characters and stories depicted in the murals.

In this way, they can better guide students to create original works in their junior year.

Along with other teachers, such as Qiao Lei, they have also innovated by combining Dunhuang dance with other genres like modern dance.

Their original productions have won awards at dance contests, and the teachers and students often participate in exchanges and perform at universities and art institutions worldwide.





Dance productions choreographed by Su have been performed at cultural venues and institutions at home and abroad.



The department has been working to introduce Dunhuang dance to local primary and secondary schools.

It has customized exercise routines for students, hosted popularization courses at student societies, and created original dance works for the schools.

Born and raised in Jiayuguan, Gansu, Qiao worked at the Gansu Song and Dance Ensemble and performed in the 2008 edition of *Flower Rains Along the Silk Road* at age 13.

"The main challenge of Dunhuang dance is that students must master the movements and understand the cultural connotations within," Qiao says.

"We, as teachers, are essentially passing down previous generations' work. I hope students will pass down the tradition and promote it to a wider audience so that more people will learn about and study it."

Reflecting on his own learning processes and those of students today, he feels a sense of inheritance across generations.

"When I started learning Dunhuang dance, I studied the movements summarized by Gao Jinrong. They have a relatively gender-neutral style. All the movements are incredibly true to the murals as if they are carved out and brought to life," Qiao says.

In their teaching methods, apart from Gao's system, they also adopt that of Dunhuang dance expert Shi Min, who researched and developed moves for male dancers.

Gao and Shi have visited the department for instructions, along with other renowned dance artists including dancer and choreographer Huang Doudou and head of the National Ballet of China Feng Ying.

Qiao designed his original choreography based on the Four Heavenly Kings (protective deities in Buddhism), which serve as practice material for male students.

"The Four Heavenly Kings are strong and imposing, with a fierce expression. All the moves and gestures, even though our limbs and body might be curved, are full of power and sturdiness," says Zhang Si'an, a sophomore.

When he began learning dancing, as a child, he trained in ballroom dance but later developed a passion for traditional Chinese dance forms.

A native of Gansu, he is familiar with the Dunhuang murals. Dunhuang College, rooted in the home of the grottoes, seemed an ideal institution to learn this unique dance genre.

"I really enjoy Dunhuang culture. Through the courses on Dunhuang history and cave art, I've learned about the grottoes from the earliest to the most elaborate," he says.

"I've only scratched the surface of this heritage but I'd like to continue learning and deepening my understanding. After graduation, I hope to travel around the country and teach people about the beauty of Dunhuang."

Contact the writers at chengyuezhu@chinadaily.com.cn

Online
See more by scanning the code.

TOWN PLANNING ORDINANCE (Chapter 131)

APPROVAL OF THE DRAFT KWU TUNG SOUTH OUTLINE ZONING PLAN

Pursuant to section 9D(2)(b) of the Town Planning Ordinance, it is hereby notified that, in exercise of the power conferred by section 9(1)(a) of the Town Planning Ordinance, the Chief Executive in Council on 11 February 2025 approved the draft Kwu Tung South Outline Zoning Plan (OZP) (renumbered as S/NE-KTS/22 upon approval). The approved Kwu Tung South OZP No. S/NE-KTS/22 is printed and exhibited for public inspection during normal office hours at the following locations: -

(i) the Secretariat of the Town Planning Board, 15th Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong;

(ii) the Planning Enquiry Counter, 17th Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong;

(iii) the Planning Enquiry Counter, 14th Floor, Sha Tin Government Offices, 1 Sheung Wo Che Road, Sha Tin, New Territories;

(iv) the Fanling, Sheung Shui and Yuen Long East District Planning Office, Unit 2202, 22nd Floor, CDW Building, 388 Castle Peak Road, Tsuen Wan, New Territories;

(v) the North District Office, 3rd Floor, North District Government Offices, 3 Pik Fung Road, Fanling, New Territories; and

(vi) the Sheung Shui District Rural Committee, 3 Po Wan Road, Sheung Shui, New Territories.

Copies of the approved Kwu Tung South OZP No. S/NE-KTS/22 are available on payment of a fee at the Survey and Mapping Office, Map Publications Centre (Hong Kong), 6th Floor, North Point Government Offices, 333 Java Road, North Point, Hong Kong. The electronic version of the plan can be viewed at the Town Planning Board's website (https://www.tpb.gov.hk/).

Carmen KONG, Clerk to the Executive Council

COUNCIL CHAMBER
21 February 2025

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING APPLICATION

Notice is hereby given to the owner(s) of Lot Nos. 410SBss2 and 410SBRP in D.D. 78, Tsung Yuen Ha, Ta Kwu Ling, New Territories that we intend to apply for planning permission under Section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance for the use of "Temporary Shop and Services" for a Period of 3 Years at Lot Nos. 410SBss2 and 410SBRP in D.D. 78, Tsung Yuen Ha, Ta Kwu Ling, New Territories.

Wong Hon Sun

21 March 2025

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING APPLICATION

Notice is hereby given to the owner(s) of *DD93 Lot 3143, 3144, 3145, 3146 and 2320* that we intend to apply for planning permission under section 16 of the Town Planning Ordinance for Proposed Filling of Land for permitted agricultural use, site area 18115.95 sq.m.

Affluent Ally Limited,
Dragon Trillion Limited,
Smart Pathway Limited

21 March 2025

Notice of Appointment of a Liquidator under Section 204 of the BVI Business Company Act.

JIU ZHOU INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT GROUP CO., LTD.
九洲国际投资集团有限公司
(In Voluntary Liquidation)
Company No. 1019704

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 204, subsection (1)(b) of the BVI Business Companies Act, 2004 that the Company is in voluntary liquidation. The voluntary liquidation commenced on 14th March 2025. The Liquidator **is Lambert Marlon Marquis** of **The Alpha-Sphere, 1st Floor, Ellen Skelton Building, Fishers Lane, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands.**

Dated 14th March 2025

(Sgd.) Lambert Marlon Marquis
Voluntary Liquidator(s)

根據英屬維京群島商業公司法第204條，任命清算人的通知。

JIU ZHOU INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT GROUP CO., LTD.
九洲国际投资集团有限公司
（自願清算）
公司編號：1019704

根據英屬維京群島商業公司法2004年第204條第1款第(b)項，特此通知公司正進行自願清算。自願清算始於2025年3月14日。清算人為**Lambert Marlon Marquis**， **The Alpha-Sphere, 1st Floor, Ellen Skelton Building, Fishers Lane, Road Town, Tortola, British Virgin Islands**。

日期：2025年3月14日

（簽名）清算人**Lambert Marlon Marquis**
自願清算人

NOTICE OF FIRST MEETINGS OF CONTRIBUTORIES AND CREDITORS

IN THE HIGH COURT OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION COURT OF FIRST INSTANCE COMPANIES WINDING-UP PROCEEDINGS NO. 547 OF 2024

Name of Company	-	Simbel Holding Limited (In Liquidation)
Date of Meetings	-	15th April 2025 (Tuesday)
Contributories	-	At 3:00 p.m.
Creditors	-	At 3:30 p.m.
Place of Meetings	-	Room 1602, 16/F., Tung Hip Commercial Building, 248 Des Voeux Road Central, Hong Kong

Dated this 21st day of March 2025

Wong Sun Keung
Tsui Mei Yuk, Janice
Joint and Several Provisional Liquidators

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