

thINKingDANCE

Upping the ante on dance coverage and conversation



Photo: Mike Hurwitz

Director's Cut: from the lens of Kun-Yang Lin

by Anito Gavino

Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers' (KYL/D) open studio rehearsals, a preview of the company's home season, gave me a sense of nostalgia for many reasons. As a former member of this nationally acclaimed company, I have spent thousands of hours in the intimate dance space of Chi Movement Arts Center. Also, the format of the open rehearsals reminded me of a director's cut—a second DVD often accompanying the main movie that was popular during my 20-something years in the early 2000s. I was always enthralled by the director's thoughts and processes documented in this second DVD. I'm glad to witness a similar version of this process-to-product demonstration as seen in the KYL/D open rehearsals.

Fish and Girl first premiered in Singapore but never had its US premiere due to the pandemic. Kun-Yang Lin decided to wait, saying that this ensemble work needed a live audience. The work responds to an unfinished poem by renowned Singaporean poet Pan Cheng Lui, concerning contemporary life and climate change. During the open rehearsal, Kun-Yang recited Lui's poetry as the dancers executed their movement phrases. Keila Perez Vega's arm reached in demonstration of a yearning, suddenly shifting across the space to suggest urgency. The dance and poem performed a pas de deux, interweaving and informing each other.

This back-and-forth conversion was also seen in a duet performed by senior dancers Evalina Carbonell and Weiwei Ma. They vocalized the phrase "good morning" interspersed throughout their dance phrases. The use of repetition was far from monotonous, as each time they gave the words a different timing, texture, or breath.

Cory Neale*, a longtime collaborator, made the sound score for Kun-Yang Lin's new work, *OceanWaves*. This new work stemmed from a process of movement generation during the pandemic; a process I took part in briefly. Kun-Yang Lin tasked dancers to create movements in response to words starting with the letters K, Y, L, and D. A simple prompt took an interesting turn and became an amalgamation of rhythmic shapes, rises, and falls in *OceanWaves*. A DIY film presented before the piece, showing Kun-Yang Lin

dancing in solitude alongside the ocean waves, offered another piece in his process puzzle.

After watching this preview, I look forward to witnessing KYL/D's 2022 home season, including the premieres of *Fish and Girl* and *OceanWaves*. *Spring 101*, first shown in 2019, will also be part of the home season program.

**Cory Neale sits on the Board of Directors for thINKingDANCE.*

[KYL/D'S 2022 Spring Home Season](#), Kun-Yang Lin/Dancers, Suzanne Roberts Theater, April 8-9.

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