

Basic Detail Report

About Asian Performing Arts

Asian Performing Arts is a group of dedicated and talented performers with the goal of promoting and retaining Chinese Cultural Arts. They have performed at many events in Connecticut, New York and Massachusetts. The two founders of the troupe, Stephanie Sum and Julie Lai, are also dance instructors at Chinese schools in the area.

Asian Performing Arts is: Stephanie Sum, Julia Lai, Loi Siew Cheah, Yi Guan, Maryanne Barry, and June Liu.

Contact: Stephanie Sum, Executive Director, at asianperformingarts@yahoo.com. Website: www.geocities.com/asianperformingarts.

About the Chinese New Year and Chinese Martial Arts

The Chinese year is based on the movements of the sun and the moon. It falls on the second new moon after the winter solstice (the "shortest" day of the year). For this reason the first day of the Chinese year is different each year. This year is either the year 4707, 4705, or 4645, depending on whom you're asking. The Chinese calendar follows a twelve year zodiac, with a different animal for each year, along with the Five Elements of Chinese philosophy: metal, wood, water, fire, and earth. The year that began on January 26, 2009, is the year of the Earth Ox. Traditionally, the animal of the year you were born is said to predict your personality traits and your life prospects. People born in the year of the Ox are born leaders, hard working, and patient.

The Chinese New Year is the most important traditional Chinese holiday. It is one for families to spend some time together, like Thanksgiving in the United States. Traditional celebrations can be found among Chinese communities throughout the world, such as traditional dragon and lion dances, music, dancing, and other entertainment. Festivities begin on the first day of the month and continue until the full moon, the fifteenth day. This last day of celebrations is called the Lantern Festival, since families will often light candles outside their home in the evening.

Chinese martial arts are collectively known as *wushu*; they include tai chi, kung fu, and other styles. Among our performers today are students who have won many medals in both national and international competition.

Performances 2 to 3:30 pm

Master of Ceremonies: Olivia Luong

Traditional Lion Dance

The lion dance is an ancient and important Chinese tradition. It origins go back to the Tang Dynasty over a thousand years ago.

The lion costume is composed of many symbolic shapes. The bird-shaped horn represents the phoenix. The ears and tail are of the unicorn. The protruding forehead, adorned with a mirror that deflects evil forces, and the long beard are characteristic of Asian dragons. In this dance, the lion walks back and forth, in a zigzag path, in order to confuse evil spirits, which are believed to move in straight lines.

The Chinese lion is a symbol of prosperity, power, and fortune. Today, the Lion will bring prosperity and good luck to all participants and the audience.

Performers: Jim Melo and Danh Nguyen.

About Wushu Kung Fu

Martial arts in China have a long history, dating back over two thousand years. Armies trained in it in preparation for war; families practiced it for self-defense; actors in the Beijing Opera learned it as a performance art.

The word for Chinese martial arts in Mandarin Chinese is *wushu* - *wu* means military or martial, and *shu* means art, so *wushu* literally translates as "martial arts." Kung fu, spelled *gongfu* in modern Mandarin, is the Chinese word for any work or activity taking time and effort, and it is sometimes used as a synonym for *wushu*, especially in Cantonese (the southern Chinese language spoken in Hong Kong and Guangdong province).

Wushu as practiced in China varies widely by style: northern and southern, external and internal. A wide variety of weapons are practiced, including the broadsword or saber, straight sword, staff, spear, nine-section whip, rope dart, two- and three-section staff, etc.

For today's celebration, Master Khaw's kung fu students will demonstrate a wide variety of styles, from traditional routines practiced by monks in the Shaolin temple to the acrobatic jump kicks and tumbling of contemporary sport wushu. Barehand and weapon, basic and advanced routines, and choreographed sparring - all will be on display.



Title Program: 2009 Chinese New Year Celebration

Date 2009

Primary Maker Malee' s School of Tai Chi and Kung Fu

Medium Paper

Description Program for the 2009 Chinese New Year Celebration presented by

Malee Khaw at Malee' s School of Tai Chi & Kung Fu in Manchester, Connecticut

and Asian Performing Arts. Given to Lynne Williamson of CCHAP by folk dance

expert Karin Gottier.