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## Looking Back, Dancing Forward



East meets West as H.T. Chen & Dancers from New York and Arizona's Desert Dance Theatre, are both celebrating their 25th anniversaries this season. They will perform jointly in an evening of dance titled, "Looking Back, Dancing Forward" at the Chandler Center for the Arts on Friday, April 2, 2004 at 8:00pm. The program includes repertory from each company as well as a featured performance of Chen's "Warriors of Light" with both companies performing together.

H.T. Chen & Dancers is an innovative modern dance company whose style transforms Asian art forms into contemporary dynamic movements. They are also presenting two school matinees of "Journey to Gold Mountain," a retrospective program which traces 150 years of Chinese American history through an innovative presentation, which includes narration, audience participation, video presentation, and dance excerpts. The program reflects a long process of research and interviews conducted with Chinese communities throughout the U.S. This program will be performed on Thursday, April 1, 2004 at Chandler Center for the Arts at 9:45am and 11:30am.

The reason "Looking Back, Dancing Forward" is being presented, is to reunite with past partners and communities, to re-connect with the Phoenix Chinese community members who were involved in Chen's

multi-generational, multi-media, and multi-disciplinary production of "Bian Dan" which was presented and commissioned by ASU Public Events several years ago. "Bian Dan" explores issues confronting immigrant families, from the generational and cultural gap amongst family members to the struggle of assimilation into a new environment. Cast members from the Phoenix community included local performing artists as well as children from valley schools, and senior citizens from the Chinese Senior Center, and ranged from ages 6 to 86.

This collaboration between Desert Dance Theatre and H.T. Chen & Dancers is made possible by co-sponsorship with the Chandler Unified School District and ASU Public Events and with funding provided by the Scottsdale League for the Arts, Arizona Republic, Arizona Commission on the Arts with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts. H.T. Chen & Dancers' 25th Anniversary Tour is sponsored by MetLife Foundation. "Journey to Gold Mountain" was awarded support from the National Endowment for the Arts, NYS Council on the Arts, and the NYC Department of Cultural Affairs. For more information call Desert Dance Theatre, 480-962-4584. For info about H.T. Chen & Dancers, go to [www.hitchendance.org](http://www.hitchendance.org).