

Purchase College To Present

*FiReCrAcKeR*<sup>™</sup>

An Innovative New Version Of THE NUTCRACKER

Set Design by Ming Cho Lee

Directed and Conceived by Michael Mao

Narrated By Tony-Award winner B.D. Wong

Three Performances Only! December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm and 6pm, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

The Performing Arts Center at Purchase College will present ***FIRECRACKER***, a new take on Tchaikovsky's NUTCRACKER. Conceived and directed by **Michael Mao** and featuring more than 25 performers, ***FIRECRACKER*** will have sets designed by the legendary **Ming Cho Lee**, and narration by the Broadway and television star **B.D. Wong**. ***FIRECRACKER*** will be performed at the **PepsiCo Theatre at SUNY Purchase College**.

***FIRECRACKER*** is a story about Tiny and Junior, twin sister and brother with a Chinese mother and a Jewish father in International Shanghai, 1937. One evening Tiny is presented with a special firecracker, which she takes to bed, dreaming of bats and rats circling around them. As Tiny and Junior struggle to go free, the firecracker turns into a FirePrince draped in flame. He saves the twins and flies with them into the night to the magical realms of the North, South, East, West and Center of the Middle Kingdom. The twins awake to loud clamor. Guests are still here. Everyone is going on a journey by sea. They set sail to Hawaii, where the Goddess makes mountains from fire. They sail through the high and low waters of the Panama Canal, through lush greens in Venezuela, to the riches of Puerto Rico. A terrible thunderstorm in the Bermuda Sea nearly drowns the weary travelers. At last the ship sails past the Statue of Liberty to arrive in the Land of Dreams. Tiny and Junior, hugging mom and Dad, catch a thousand petals of fire from the sky. Fireworks bring the journey to a happy end on July 4.

Director **Michael Mao** conceived of ***FIRECRACKER*** as a Chinese answer to Tchaikovsky's family classic. In developing the piece over the past 5 years, it has become much more than that, featuring a journey around the world (with scenes that take place in Puerto Rico, Hawaii and Shanghai), using narration, music, and different styles of dance to tell a story of migration with a host of colorful characters and costumes. ***FIRECRACKER*** promises to be a fantastic family event that will delight audiences of all ages.

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**Michael Mao's** works have been seen throughout the United States, including at the Joyce Theater in New York, as well as in Paris, Oslo, Hong Kong and throughout Mexico. In this new work, Mr. Mao has created a piece that combines numerous dance styles, original music, and narration - a magical, highly theatrical family entertainment.

For ***FIRECRACKER***, Mr. Mao has assembled an extremely prestigious creative team, with artists from both the theatrical and the dance worlds. Legendary Broadway designer **Ming Cho Lee** has designed the sets, which include authentic drawings of 1930's Shanghai. Narrating the show will be **B.D. Wong**, who won all five New York theatrical awards for his performance in M. BUTTERFLY, and is currently appearing as a regular on television's "Law And Order: Special Victims Unit". Costumes will be designed by **Linda Cho**, original music will be by **Jonathan Faiman**, and the script was written by **Marcelle Clements**. The music was recorded for this production by **The Prague Radio Symphony Orchestra**.

***FIRECRACKER*** will be performed on Saturday, December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm and 6pm, and Sunday, December 9<sup>th</sup> at 1pm. Tickets will be \$28 - \$35, and may be purchased by calling (914) 251-6200. For more information, visit the Purchase Arts Center website at [www.artscenter.org](http://www.artscenter.org). Pictures will be available for download at [www.brettsinger.com/pics/firecracker.html](http://www.brettsinger.com/pics/firecracker.html).

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## ***FIRECRACKER***

A story told with narration, music and dance

Conceived and Directed by Michael Mao

Set Design by Ming Cho Lee

Narrated by B.D. Wong

Two Days Only!

Saturday December 8<sup>th</sup> at 1pm and 6pm, Sunday December 9<sup>th</sup> at 1pm

Tickets: \$28 - \$35; call (914)251-6200 or visit [www.artscenter.org](http://www.artscenter.org)

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