

Together Higher & Robin Becker Dance Vietnam Tour, September 2015

To celebrate the 20th anniversary of the renewed diplomatic relationship between Vietnam and America, and to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the unification of North and South Vietnam, Together Higher Dance Company of Vietnam will create a performance tour with their dance work *A Group of Individuals*. They have invited Robin Becker Dance to co-perform with them, their dance work *Into Sunlight*. The tour will run between September 22nd through September 30th, with performances in Hanoi, Ha Long Bay, and Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon) in Vietnam. This project brings together the unique artistic expression of choreographers Le Vu Long of Vietnam and Robin Becker of the United States, about individual and societal response to the Vietnam War and its aftermath. Through this project, the dance companies hope to facilitate a healing for both sides, enhance mutual understanding, and build a deeper relationship between the people of Vietnam and America.

Together Higher will perform *Group of Individuals* from their project *Vietnam in the 70s* – which is about the historic time of unrest during the late years of the protracted war between North and South Vietnam. It expresses through dance, the joy of reunion, the postwar torment that made people loath to part with their home country, the confusion, separation, and reunion and farewell.

Robin Becker Dance will perform *Into Sunlight*, a dance piece inspired by the non-fiction book, *They Marched Into Sunlight*, written by Pulitzer-Prize winning journalist, David Maraniss. *Into Sunlight* addresses themes of cultural embodiment, the impact of war and violence, and the integrative power of dance to provide a unifying process of reconciliation for those who experience the trauma of battle and for a culture engaged in its own battle of reconciliation.

TOGETHER HIGHER, HANOI, VIETNAM



Together Higher, the first contemporary dance company in Vietnam, which was founded in 2002 and operated under the support of *UNESCO Center for Culture and Sport development* and directly managed by two dancers and choreographers Le Vu Long and Luu Thi Thu Lan. The special feature is that *10 dancers of the company are hearing impaired with more than 12 years of experience in performing contemporary dance locally and internationally*. The target of the troupe is via the art of dance to transmit thoughts and new ideas on issues in the modern society.

After 12 years of experience Together Higher has become the organization for giving the guidance, training and introduction of contemporary dance *through collaboration with a comprehensive network of contemporary dance companies, in both Vietnam, and internationally*. Together Higher have garnered significant public attention as they have sponsored several intensive activities in contemporary art, expanding their approach to audiences. Together Higher organized *contemporary dance festivals in 2012 and 2014* with a mission to introduce and debut the work of the Vietnamese choreographers. Also, Together Higher *regularly performs and collaborates with the international companies*.

Together Higher known and recognized through social activities, art performances inside and outside Vietnam, are considered a special, innovative, and unique art troupe. The Company's work brings to light disability issues in society, through contemporary dance. Together Higher has performed in many countries including, *Cambodia, Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, United States, Italy, and Germany*. The company has performed and *collaborated with dance companies in and outside Vietnam, such as In Mixed Company, from the USA, and Dance Network, from Japan*.

Le Vu Long, Director and Choreographer of Together Higher, graduated from *Vietnam National Dance School* in 1993. From 1993-1998, he danced with the *Vietnam National Opera and Ballet Theatre*. During that time he also worked in contemporary dance with *Company Coline in France*. From 2000 – 2008, Mr. Long was the choreographer for the *Vietnam National Opera and Ballet Theatre*. In 2002 he established Together Higher, a contemporary dance company (for hearing impaired dancers). He was also the Director of the *UNESCO Center for Culture and Sport Development*. Le Vu Long's choreographies have been performed in many countries including; *Cambodia, Thailand, Japan, Hong Kong, United States and Italy*. He is recognized for popularizing the contemporary dance art form in Vietnam.

Mr. Long has led dance workshops all over the world. In 2003 he led dance workshops in *12 high schools and universities in Hanoi, Vietnam, and dance schools in Bangkok and Chiang Mai, Thailand*. In 2004 he led workshops at *3 Arts Colleges, 5 Universities, and 6 special schools for the disabled, orphaned and homeless*. In 2005 Mr. Long led dance workshops in *3 rehabilitation centers for drug users, and at the International Performance Arts Festival in Tokyo, Japan*. In 2007 he led workshops at 28 schools, universities and arts centers in 4 United States cities, and in 2008 at the *Dance Academy in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*. In 2012 and 2014 Mr. Long and Together Higher *organized contemporary dance festivals* with a mission to introduce and debut the work of Vietnamese choreographers. Mr Long was awarded the *Premio Franco Di Francescantonio tai festival Costante Combiamento - Firenze, Italy*.

Dance Work to Present

GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS, is a contemporary dance work created as a part of a project '*70s Vietnam*', by hearing-impaired dancers of Together Higher dance company. The piece portrays

to the audience, the deep emotions of people and society in Vietnam in the 70s. The range of thinking and philosophy of the dance takes the audience not only on a historical journey of the time, but also leads the way to new experiences of those who were torn between and struggled with, being an independent individual, an individual in a group, or merely a group of individuals.

GROUP OF INDIVIDUALS

A Group of individuals
The Individuals bet a group
A group bets the individuals
An individual of a group
The groups of an individual

Choreographer: Le Vu Long

Music: Tri Minh

Performers: Together Higher: Nguyen Thi Anh Dao, Tran Anh Dung, Cao Xuan Huy, Thai Tran Lin

ROBIN BECKER DANCE, NEW YORK, NY



Robin Becker Dance's mission is to create, perform, and advance movement as a means to explore our shared humanity, inspire dialogue, and enhance mutual understanding. The Company of seven dancers is distinguished by performances in New York City at the *Joyce Theater's Altogether Different Series*, the inaugural season of the *92nd St. Y, Harkness Playhouse 91*

Series, Florence Gould Hall, St. Marks Church-in-the-Bowery, the Fiorello Festival, the Merce Cunningham Studio Theater, and the opening performance series of The Joyce SoHo. The company's current work, Into Sunlight, premiered in 2011 at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, and Hofstra University, where it was the centerpiece for interdisciplinary conferences. Subsequent performances include Georgetown University, the 92nd Street Y, Stony Brook University's Festival of the Moving Body, Florence Gould Hall, and at Holy Trinity Diocesan High School, as the focal point of an extensive residency.

The Company spent one year as the dance company in residence for the public school system of Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey and was awarded a residency at City College by the CUNY Dance Initiative for Fall 2014. Other highlights include a collaborative work with Roberta Flack for Breast Cancer Research, with costumes created by Nicole Miller. The Company has been in residence at the Omega Institute for Holistic Studies, The Abode in upstate New York, and the Zenith Institute in Olivone, Switzerland. The Company has also participated in numerous educational and performance workshops in public and private schools, as well as residencies in congregations, and community centers.

Robin Becker Dance works with Continuum Movement, as a foundational process underlying technical training, choreographic process, rehearsal, and performance. Continuum Movement is an exploratory study of the body as a fluid system, connected through fluid resonance with all of life. Continuum offers an understanding and experience of the body as movement, rather than form, opening pathways of vital connection. As a consequence, performances have an extraordinary, felt impact for audiences.

Robin Becker, Artistic Director, Choreographer and Teacher, danced with the Martha Graham Ensemble, the Pearl Lang Dance Company and as a principal dancer with the Eleo Pomare Dance Company. She performed as a guest artist with the Denishawn Repertory Dancers at the Biennale Festival in Lyons, France. She trained with Bentley Stone and Walter Camryn and then continued her studies on scholarship at the Martha Graham School in NYC. Bessie Schonberg mentored her in choreography. Her experience includes residencies at Southold Dance Theatre and at The Yard on Martha's Vineyard. She was elected to participate in the Carlisle Project; a residency designed to foster the creation of new ballet choreography.

Ms. Becker was a guest artist at the South Carolina Summer Dance Conservatory, and was also in residence at the Omega Institute with musician Paul Horn. She served on the faculties of American Ballet Theatre, Alvin Ailey American Dance Center, the Fiorello LaGuardia High School of Performing Arts, the Princeton Ballet Society, and the Actor's Studio. She currently serves on the faculty of Hofstra University and is an accredited teacher of the Martha Graham Technique. She is also an Authorized Teacher of the somatic practice Continuum Movement, and leads Continuum Workshops nationally and internationally. She utilizes Continuum Movement as the foundation for her choreographic process.

Dance Work to Present

Robin Becker Dance will perform ***Into Sunlight***, an evening-length dance inspired by Pulitzer Prize winning journalist and best selling author David Maraniss's book, *They Marched Into Sunlight*. The book portrays the tumultuous shift of cultural perspective in the United States, caused by the Vietnam War, through the lens of events on October 1967. *Into Sunlight* premiered

at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and at Hofstra University, New York. At each campus it served as the centerpiece for interdisciplinary conferences examining the effects of war and violence on the individual body and the social body, from Vietnam to our present era. The conferences addressed perspectives of History, Psychology, Political Science, Trauma Studies, Anthropology, Visual Art, and Theater, through the lens of war's impact.

Into Sunlight has received standing ovations from traditional audiences, students and faculty, veterans and their families, and has garnered stories in the Washington Post, the New York Times, National Public Radio, Centerpoint Now, a publication of the World Council of Peoples for the United Nations and the World Policy Institute Arts-Policy blog. Reviews from the Washington Post and Ballet Dance Magazine, among others, have confirmed the reconciling, and healing effects of the dance.

INTO SUNLIGHT

- Meeting the Unknown*
- Leaving/Staying*
- A Dream of Goodbye*
- Gathering Unrest*
- Letters*
- Holleder's Run*
- *Brotherhood*
- Standing*
- Longing*
- Until the Angels Came*

Choreographer: Robin Becker

Dancers: Eduardo Brito, Lisa Clementi, Chazz Fenner-McBride, Oisin Monaghan, Sarah Parker, Nicole Sclafani, and Yoko Sugimoto-Ikezawa

Ensemble Dancers: Ricky Wenthon, Lacey Moore, Joey Loto, Brandon Washington, Julie Seal, Nancy Louigene, Katherine Mayo, and Eileen Klugh

Composer: Chris Lastovicka

Music Direction: Arthur Solari

Costumes: Cheryl McCarron

Lighting Design: Burke Wilmore

TOUR SCHEDULE

Day 1 September 21, 2015- Depart US

Day 2 September 22, 2015- Arrive Hanoi, Vietnam

Day 3 September 23, 2015 - Theater check-in

Day 4 September 24, 2015 - Rehearsal and technical set up

Day 5 September 25, 2015 - Rehearsal at the theater with lighting & sound
Night/1st Show - Hanoi

Day 6 September 26, 2015 - Travel to Ha long Bay

Afternoon/Theater check in

Night/Technical set-up

Day 7 September 27, 2015 - Rehearsal at theater

Night/2nd Show - Ha Long Bay

Day 8 September 28, 2015 - Travel to Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Night/Technical set-up

Day 9 September 29, 2015 - Rehearsal at theater

Night/3rd Show - Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon)

Day 10 September 30, 2015 - Return to the US

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Bac Tu liem, Hanoi

Vietnam