HUANG YI & KUKA

OCTOBER 8 | 7:30 PM | LOEB PLAYHOUSE
Bucking the trend of sound bites, computer-generated news digests, and 140-character chatter, our IMMERSION platform honors the inclination to dig for nuance, participate in discourse, and examine issues more deeply. Few topics lend themselves to tidy summation, and the places where society, technology, and culture intersect are decidedly not the place to skimp on the details. This year, we’ll immerse ourselves in several questions where digging into the issues will yield deeper insights and more powerful experiences.

Distinguished guests, artists-in-residence, and faculty experts will lead dynamic symposia, in-class discussions, lecture-demonstrations, master classes, interdisciplinary panel discussions, and presentations while journaling, digital galleries, and other participant forums will serve as immersive catalysts for students and community alike.

Including: Dawn or Doom 2, Huang Yi & KUKA: Fall Artist-in-Residence, and Meklit: Spring Artist-in-Residence
As a child, Huang Yi longed for a robot companion. As an adult, he created a robot with which he could dance.

Acclaimed Taiwanese choreographer and dancer Huang Yi and his robot companion, KUKA, bring razor-sharp precision and stunning artistry to Purdue University. Harmoniously weaving together the art of dance and the science of mechanical engineering, Huang Yi & KUKA is a poetic work that flawlessly intertwines modern dance and visual arts with the realm of robotics.

Huang Yi & KUKA reveals humanity through a series of vignettes between live dancers and KUKA, a robot conceptualized and programmed by Huang. “Dancing face to face with a robot is like looking at my own face in a mirror ... I think I have found the key to spin human emotions into robots,” Huang says.

Huang Yi and KUKA are joined on stage by dancers Hu Chien and Lin Jou-Wen.
ARTIST STATEMENT

I was born in a wealthy family. When I was 10, my parents went bankrupt due to investment losses. My family of four moved from a luxurious house to a 40-square foot room. As a child who was constantly moving from one tiny room to another and seeing my parents go through suicide attempts, I grew up knowing that I had to be a perfect child. I detached all my emotion—passion, anger, and sadness, to be that perfect child, and to be like a robot: obedient, friendly, outstanding, considerate, never rebellious, perhaps no personality.

As a child, my favorite cartoon was Doraemon, a Japanese animation character and a cat robot who is always there to solve problems for his owner. Apparently I have something with robots since I was little—Is it because they represent a character that is loyal? Or is it because their destiny of being selfless? Thankfully, my parents let me chose to be a professional on stage, which became the best outlet for my compressed emotion. And I wanted to find a way to dance with a robot.

I did my research on the most advanced industrial robots, and KUKA stood out for stability, and the fluid design like the shape of human. In 2010, I called KUKA company in Taiwan. When I told them my idea, they said, “According to the regulation, when the robot is moving, human beings cannot enter the area of its action. If you can find a way, I will lend you a KUKA.”

I have found a way, and now, thanks to Quanta Arts Foundation in Taiwan, I have a KUKA.

For me, HUANG YI & KUKA is a process of beautifying the sorrow and sadness when I grew up. It is the expression of loneliness, self-doubt, self-realization, and self-comfort. I was trying to make a beautiful illusion just to assure others that everything was fine. I wanted to remind us of our simplest hope from the very beginning, that we are all just grown up kids, but still kids.

—Huang Yi
ABOUT

HUANG YI
Taiwanese dancer, choreographer, inventor, and videographer Huang Yi’s pioneering work is steeped in his fascination with the partnership between humans and robots. He interweaves continuous movement with mechanical and multimedia elements to create a form of dance that corresponds with the flow of data, effectively making the performer a dancing instrument. Named by Dance Magazine as one of the “25 to Watch,” Huang immersed himself in the arts at a young age, spending much of his childhood in his parents’ studio watching them teach tango and learning to paint alongside his father. He is widely considered one of Asia’s most prolific choreographers.

Huang’s groundbreaking and award-winning work, Huang Yi & KUKA, in which he performs alongside a robot he conceptualized and programmed, opened the 2013 Ars Electronica Festival (Austria), the internationally renowned unique platform for digital art and media culture. Works choreographed by and featuring Huang have received high praise at venues internationally, including Joyce Theater; Engien-Les-Bains Centre des Arts (France); Tasdance and Dancenorth (Australia); Cloud Gate 2 (Taipei); the Indonesian Dance Festival (Jakarta); New York Live Arts; and the American Dance Festival (North Carolina). Huang’s collaboration with Cloud Gate 2 continues to tour internationally and to much acclaim. He has received awards for his work at the Digital Arts Center Taipei (2010 & 2012); and the 3rd Cross Connection Ballet International Choreography Competition in Copenhagen (2010), among many others across Europe and Asia.

HU CHIEN
Taiwan native Hu Chien received his MFA in Performance and Choreography from the School of Dance of Taipei National University of the Arts. Recent performances include Huang Yi’s Special Order, Double Yellow Lines, Second Skin, Sand and Whisper. He was the leading actor for the micro-film Immortelle by Dutch director David Verbeek (nominated for the Spectrum Shorts section at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and Taiwan’s Shortcuts series at the 2013 Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival. Hu was a member of Cloud Gate 2 from 2012 to 2013 and has danced with Huang Yi Studio + since 2010.
Taiwanese dancer Lin Jou-Wen received her BFA in Dance from the Taipei National University of the Arts. Recent performances include Huang Yi’s Special Order, Light, Symphony Project and Spin 2010; Tong Yang-Tze’s Sao at TIFA 2014; leading actress in the micro-film Immortelle by Dutch director David Verbeek (nominated for the Spectrum Shorts section at the International Film Festival Rotterdam and Taiwan’s Shortcuts series at the 2013 Taipei Golden Horse Film Festival); and movement design for Process of Death (first-prize winner of the digital performance competition at the 2nd Taipei Digital Art Festival) among others. Lin received the American Dance Festival Scholarship in 2009. She was a member of Cloud Gate 2 from 2010 to 2014 and has danced with Huang Yi Studio + since January 2014.

Yen-Ku Ou // Technical Director

Hao-Ting Cheng // Technical Specialist

HUANG YI & KUKA is an original production of Huang Yi Studio +, developed at 3LD Art & Technology Center, in association with Sozo Artists. Commissioned by Quanta Arts Foundation.

This performance is made possible through the generous support of the Ministry of Culture (Taiwan) and the Taipei Cultural Center in New York.

Special Thanks to:
KUKA Robot Automation Taiwan Co. Ltd.
KUKA Robotics Corp. (USA)
Quanta Arts Foundation
Cloud Gate Dance Theatre
LMF Dance Fund
National Theater (Taiwan)
Asia Cultural Council
Minister of Culture (Taiwan)
3-Legged Dog
Mr. Wen-Hung Kao
Ms. Kuang-Hui An
iMakr (NYC)
HITACHI
ATOM 3D Printer (Taiwan)
“WHEN I WAS GROWING UP,

I never had the opportunity to be exposed to theatre and art, and I am so hoping that my contribution to the Friends can make a difference in someone’s life and how they perceive themselves or the world around them.”

Through ticket purchases, donations and advocacy, Friends of Convocations help provide access to the arts in our community and keep a wide variety of performances in our schedule each season. Purdue Convocations does not receive state funds, and Friends’ gifts help cover the gap between the revenue from ticket sales and the costs of presenting performances, as well as help provide funding for school matinee performances, in-school residencies, classroom workshops and more. Friends also earn a number of extra perks! Ready to join? To join the Friends or learn more about how Friends gifts support Convocations programming visit convocations.org/support or call the Development Associate at 765-494-9712.

To read more stories like Jan’s visit convocations.org/1belong.
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- We request that children under 6 years of age not be brought to performances, except those labeled “Family” in our brochure or web site.
- Infants on laps are only permitted at family shows. All patrons, including infants on laps, must have a ticket due to fire marshal requirements.

Building emergencies will be announced and directions given from the stage.

Box Office
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