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Editors: Images are available upon request.

**NextMove Dance presents
Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company with The Ahn Trio
in the Philadelphia premiere of
A Quest For Freedom
April 19-22**

(Philadelphia, PA) Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, in collaboration with The Ahn Trio, makes its company debut on the NextMove Dance Series in *A Quest for Freedom*, a new collaborative multi-cultural production, featuring live music and dance at the Prince Theater, 1412 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia, PA April 19-22. The Ahn Trio, three Korean sisters, Juilliard trained, have released six albums and are recognized for bringing the 21st century and youthfulness to chamber music. Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company, under the artistic direction of Taiwanese born Nai-Ni Chen, is the recipient of 15 awards from the National Endowment for the Arts. Her movement vocabulary draws from the flowing lines of Chinese calligraphy, to the explosiveness of martial arts, and contemporary western dance.

Performances take place Thursday, April 19 at 7:30pm; Friday, April 20 at 8:00pm; Saturday, April 21 at 2:00pm and 8:00 pm; and Sunday, April 22 at 3pm. Tickets are \$20-\$62 and can be purchased in person at the Prince Theater Box Office, by phone 215-422-4580 or online <http://princetheater.org/next-move>.

A Quest for Freedom, a full-length work, choreographed by artistic director Nai-Ni Chen, explores personal stories of leaving one's country, home and family and emigrating to a new place in search of freedom and dreams. It highlights the current societal, historical, national and international debate regarding immigration. This 12-section work features seven dancers, three world-class musicians, stunning projections and props. Opening the program is *Space Oddity*, a full-company work inspired by the Ahn Trio's adaption of David Bowie's music which reminded Chen of her first visit to New York in 1982. *Concrete Stream* features new music by Kenji Bunch for the Ahn Trio. Chen's choreography for *Concrete Stream* was inspired by Persian poet Latif Nazemi's "A Word for Freedom." Throughout the production the musicians and dancers are interconnected with the dancers relating to musicians and musicians moving alongside of the dancers.

Nai-Ni Chen notes. "*A Quest For Freedom* can be looked at in so many different ways. It is an on-going quest truly for each one of us regardless of gender, race and the country we are living in."

Positioning, a duet section set to music by Ludovico Einaudi, Nuvole Bianche and Antônio Carlos Jobim, examines gender, power and a quest for harmony and resolution. Full-ensemble sections include *Shapes of Water* to music by Pat Metheny, *Path* to music by Zoe Keating, *Tomorrow* to music by Chiel Meijering, *Dreamland* to David Bowie/Pat Metheny and *Arrival* to Kenji Bunch's "Night Flight," created along with "Concert Stream" especially for this production.

The program also features three musical selections performed by Lucia Ahn (piano), Maria Ahn (cello) and Angella Ahn (violin). These include *Heart Asks Pleasure First*, composed by Michael Nyman, *Grooveboxes* by Kenji Bunch and *Skylight* by David Balakrishnan, arranged by Kenji Bunch.

In addition to the performances, Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company with the Ahn Trio will be offering outreach activities. The company will conduct a Student Discovery Program for schools on Friday April 20 at 10:30am and a master class on Friday, April 20 at 1pm, Koresh Dance Center, 2002 Rittenhouse Street. In addition, there will be two post-performance chats that will take place after Friday's 8pm and Saturday's 2pm performances.

Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company

Bringing the dynamic freedom of American modern dance together with the elegant splendor of Asian art, the Nai-Ni Chen Dance Company is one of the most visible Asian American dance companies in America. Ms. Chen's unique choreography transports audiences beyond cultural boundaries to the common ground between tradition and innovation, discipline and freedom, and form and spirit. Visit <http://nainichen.org/>

The Ahn Trio

Hailed as "exacting and exciting musicians" by the LA Times, the three sisters of the Ahn Trio (Lucia on the piano, Angella on the violin, and Maria on the cello) have earned a distinguished reputation for embracing 21st century classical music with their unique style and innovative collaborations. In 2011, President Obama invited the Ahn Trio to perform at the White House for a State Dinner honoring South Korea. Luminary composers as Michael Nyman, Maurice Jarre, Pat Metheny, Paul Schoenfield, Mark O' Connor, Kenji Bunch, Nikolai Kapustin, and Paul Chihara have written works for them. The trio's latest CD, "Lullaby for My Favorite Insomniac" (released by Sony) is a showcase of their fearless creativity, which made No. 8 on the Billboard Charts for 26 weeks in the Classical album category.

Major funding for the 2017/18 season of NextMove Dance is provided by William Penn Foundation. NextMove Dance receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency and from the Philadelphia Cultural Fund. Additional funding is received from BB&T and Dolfinger-McMahon Foundation.

NextMove Dance

Artistic Director Randy Swartz created the first annual dance series in Philadelphia at the Walnut Street Theatre in 1970. In 1983, he launched the Dance Celebration series at the Annenberg Center for a 32-year run and initiated a new annual series at the Prince Theater in October 2015. Dance Affiliates, renamed NextMove Dance, is recognized as one of the nation's finest dance presenters. Known internationally for award-winning presentations for almost four decades, NextMove Dance provides a wealth of opportunities for the Delaware Valley community to interact with the artists through talk-backs, master classes, artistic collaborations, workshops, children's programs and much more. Visit www.nextmovedance.org

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