



Lee's Golden Dragon

lion and dragon dance troupee

Houston's Oldest Lion Dance Troupe. For Any and Festive Occasion

Lion Dancing

::History

The lion dance originated in India or China. The lion is traditionally regarded as a guardian creature. It is featured in Buddhist lore, being the mount of Manjusri. There are different variations of the lion dance in other Asian cultures including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Japan, Okinawa, Korea, Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore, with each region possessing their own styles.

Chinese lion dances can be broadly categorised into two styles, Northern and Southern. Northern dance was used as entertainment for the imperial court. The northern lion is usually red, orange, and yellow (sometimes with green fur for the female lion), shaggy in appearance, with a golden head. The northern dance is acrobatic and is mainly performed as entertainment. Sometimes, they perform dangerous stunts.

Southern dance is more symbolic. It is usually performed as a ceremony to exorcise evil spirits and to summon luck and fortune. The southern lion exhibits a wide variety of colour and has a distinctive head with large eyes, a mirror on the forehead, and a single horn at center of the head. The lion dance also symbolises the myth of the Chinese new year

The Lion dance is often confused with the Chinese Dragon Dance, which features a team of around ten or more dancers. The Lion Dance usually consists of two people.

::Northern Style

In the north the lions usually appear in pairs. Northern lions usually have long and shaggy orange and yellow hair with either a red bow, or a green bow on its head to represent a male or female.

During a performance, northern lions resemble a Pekingese or Fu Dogs and movements are very life-like.

Acrobatics are very common, with stunts like lifts or balancing on a giant ball. Northern lions sometimes appear as a family, with two large "adult" lions and a pair of small "young lions". Ninghai, in Ningbo, is called the "Homeland of the Lion Dance" for the northern variety.



::Southern Style

The Cantonese style can be further divided into Fat Shan (Buddha Mountain), Hok Shan (Crane Mountain), Fat-Hok (minor style that exhibits a hybrid of Fat Shan and Hok Shan), Chau Ka (minor style performed by practitioners of Chau family style kung fu), and the Green Lion (Qing1 Shi1 – popular with the Fukien/Hokkien and Taiwanese).

Fat San is the style many Kung Fu schools adopt. It requires powerful moves and strength in stance. The lion becomes the representation of the Kung Fu school and only the most advanced students are allowed to perform.

The Hok San style is more commonly known as a contemporary style. Contemporary Hok Shan style combines a southern lion head with Northern lion movements. Hok Shan style tries to reproduce a more life-like look, realistic movements, and acrobatic stunts. Its shorter tail is also a favorite among the troupes that do pole (jong) jumping. There are three important and the first colors of the lions.



The lion with the white colored fur is considered to be the oldest of the lions. The lion with the goldish yellowish fur is the considered to be the middle child. Not the youngest or the oldest. And the black colored lion is considered to be the youngest lion so when people use this colour lion it should move fast and quick like a young child.

About Us



::The Beginning

The lineage of our troupe traces directly to Chung Ngai Dance Troupe, a Chinese dance company in San Francisco established in 1966. Our director, Sifu Allen Lee, began learning the art of lion dancing -- as well as its history and cultural significance -- from the first generation of Chung Ngai members.

Through the mid-1970's, Chung Ngai was known as the premier lion dance troupe in the Bay Area and, arguably, America. They were so good that they had the privilege of hand-selecting new members after a series of rigorous, invitation-only tryouts. Chung Ngai was and still is known for combining a variety of dance styles into each of their performances, including lion dancing, Chinese folk dancing, kung fu, even drumming exhibitions. Luckily, Chung Ngai selected Allen for membership in 1974.

As a result, Allen got the chance to learn numerous Chinese dance styles from the best troupe around. And through Chung Ngai, he made lifelong friendships with many successful and influential contacts in the San Francisco community, including perennial organizers of the San Francisco Lunar New Year Parade, Miss Chinatown USA Pageant, and other events throughout the year.

::Lion Dancing Arrives in Houston

After finishing college in 1974, Allen returned home to Houston bringing lion dancing and the spirit of Chung Ngai with him. For our troupe, he chose the name 'Lee's Golden Dragon' because the Golden Dragon represents the highest evolution of the Chinese zodiac: the dragon, the highest ranking of the 12 zodiac signs, paired with gold (metal), one of the five Chinese elements.

In Chinese astrology, each element / animal combination occurs only once every 60 years (12 x 5), and many consider the Golden Dragon year to represent an especially significant event. We believe that the power of the Golden Dragon inspires us to perform our best at all times, spreading good luck and joy everywhere we perform.



::Tradition of Excellence

We pride ourselves in having a traditional background but using modern innovations. In addition to our classical training from Chung Ngai, we have studied under the world's best lion dance instructor: Sifu H.P. Siow, whose teams have won numerous world competitions since the early 1990's.

In April 2002, Allen travelled to Malaysia to obtain his official judge's certification through a rigorous 3-day process administered by the

International Dragon and Lion Dance Federation. Taking the exam with other lion dance masters from around the world (Hong Kong, Australia, China, etc), he passed with flying colors, and received the highest score on the written portion to become one of the first-ever traditional freestyle lion dance judges in the United States.



::Our Troupe Today

Our membership is comprised of close friends and relatives who come from all walks of life, each bringing their own unique talents to the group. However, we all share a common passion for pursuing excellence in our training and performances. As followers of Sifu Siow's teachings, we have adopted his 8 Principles of the Spirit of Martial Virtue: loyalty, righteousness, perseverance, courage, wisdom, honesty, harmony, and politeness. We welcome any individuals with the same dedication and interest to join our troupe.

In the tradition of Chung Ngai, our performances include a variety of acts. We perform both southern (Hoc San) and northern (Peking) lion dancing, dragon dancing, and ball walking/acrobatics.

Since 1974, we have never wavered from our high level of commitment to our craft, and we hope to be the leaders in preserving lion and dragon dancing in the Houston community for generations to come.





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12441 Northwest Freeway
Houston, TX USA 77092