

Title of Work: Divine Demoness

Choreographer: Lindsay Gilmour

Costumes: Shredded black and tan fabric with a white and red leotard underneath.

Length: 15-20 minutes

Summary of Concept: This work is a ritual in honor of the female deity, Palden Lhamo (also known as Panden Lhamo), and other wrathful female deities. Palden Lhamo is the protectress of the Dalai Lama and has a very vengeful story. (Image 1) This dance focuses on the strength and power of the female being. There is a complexity in what these deities represent, which I will examine in my design. Women, being characterized as passionate/compassionate beings, are also characterized as weak. Yet, there is the saying, “hell hath no fury like a woman’s scorn”, which suggests that there is a force to be reckoned with within the female’s essence. This work shows how the two sides of a strong female do not contradict, they exist in the same being. It is a work based in ritualistic movement vocabulary, that builds in ferocity and subsides. Lighting will play the role of the ritualistic fire, as well as personifying the presence of the spirits of the deities.



Image 1

The work begins as an earnest and intimate ritual to honor the goddesses. Initially, there are dancers moving through set sections of the house, which will be lit with bold, contrasting colors at the foot of the stairs of the apron. A light from above bathes them in moonlight, while



Image 2

a bold light from an angle across the house warms them with fire light. They stand on the edge of the kingdom of the fire, half warmed from the flame and half cooled from the night. Throughout the course of the work (on the night of this ritual), the fire will ignite from the edge of the apron and proceed to envelope the stage in a bright and fierce frenzy. The dancers can move closer to the edge of the apron, thus getting closer to the source of the fire, and their shadows will grow in size against the upstage scrim. (Image 2) As the ritual progresses, the

frenzy of the ritual, movement, and lighting builds until the dancers begin to feel the presence of the goddesses, personified by the deity light source, emitting from behind them. (Image 3)

The Deity light source will enhance and react to the movements of the dancers, pushing them fiercely forward, further into their ritual with the spirit of the female warrior. (Image 4) The light source will adapt to light specific areas throughout the work, as well as be able to make bold



Image 3

statements by becoming very bright as a dominate visual element. The women will be granted the attention of the goddesses, evoking the light source upstage that represents their presence.

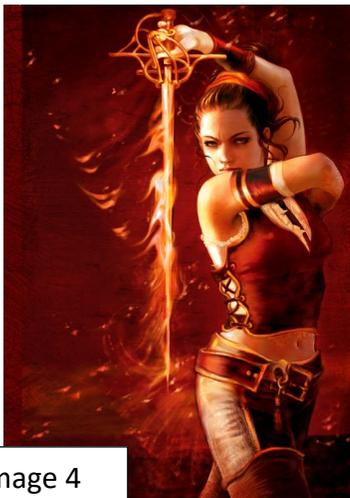


Image 4

The women will also continue interacting with the fire, gaining energy from it. The evolution of this ritual results in the embodiment of these goddesses through the dancers. It is a form of possession, if you will. The dancers will remove the black over layer of their costume, to reveal their white under layer and expose their heart to the deities who have arrived. The dancers are strong women who are channeling the goddesses' energy. Eventually, the ritual winds down and the fire dies to glowing embers. The dancers move smoothly through the moonlight, showing a softer, sensual side of the female, but the strength is still

intact. (Image 5) The dancers slow and calm in their movements, as they feel the spirits of the goddesses withdraw. The deity light source will fade out as well.

Overall, the lighting for this work feels raw and primitive, as well as grand in scale. The space can then shrink to reveal small sections of the stage when needed, like in the beginning and end of the ritual.



Image 5