

A D E L A I D E F E S T I V A L 2026



AF26 DIGITAL DAYBILL

Re-shaping Identity

GuoGuoHuiHui

Dates: Sat 28 Feb - Mon 2 Mar

Venue: Space Theatre

Duration: 1hr 10mins, no interval

Note: Performed in Mandarin with English surtitles

Credits

Choreography Guo Rui

Dancers Chen Yijie, Wang Huaili, Wu Hui, Gunika Aniwa, Guo Rui

Producer/Tour Manager Ning-dan Zhu

Costumes Wu Hui

Music Assistant Simon Bishop

Lighting Designer and Technician Shee Hoe Low

Sound Technician Qingge Wen

Stage Manager Shiny Yu

Trailer Shuangqi

Images Shenzhen Fringe Festival

Acknowledgements

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About the Show

Re-shaping Identity delves into the profound question of who truly performs folk dance and its connection to contemporary identity. The work redefines "folk dance" as something that belongs to the individual, challenging preconceived notions and cultural conventions.

In this piece, five dancers from diverse ethnic backgrounds—including Tibetan, Uyghur, Mongolian, Yao, and Han—perform re-imagined folk dance forms. The choreography actively intervenes in the "identity" presented by these traditions, liberating both dance and the dancers' sense of self from rigid definitions. Choreographer Guo Rui transcends the simple opposition between the collective and the individual, proposing that the "self" is not a static noun but a verb—a dynamic process that continuously evolves and interacts with its environment.

As a contemporary response to tradition, *Re-shaping Identity* breaks from the imitation of Western dance forms. It instead seeks new meaning by exploring traditional group dance from a fresh perspective, using it as a material and a form to transform movement and identity consciousness. The work invites the audience to consider how a dance form can liberate us from stereotypes and challenge power structures imposed on our bodies. Ultimately, it's an invitation to recognise that dancing is a present-moment action—and that our own folk dance is intimately connected to our lives.

About the Choreographer

Guo Rui

Guo Rui is a cross-disciplinary artist focused on choreography, theoretical research, and curatorial practice.

A graduate of P.A.R.T.S. in Belgium, he previously trained in Chinese folk dance and modern dance at the Beijing Dance Academy and The Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts. His work is deeply influenced by postmodern research from New York's Judson Dance Theater and his encounters with a wide range of international artists, including Thomas Hauert, David Zambrano, Deborah Hay, Trisha Brown, Chrysa Parkinson, Salva Sanchis, Jonathon Burrows, Jérôme Bel, and Xavier Le Roy.

Guo approaches dance as a fluid, ever-evolving art form rather than a fixed system of meaning-making, deliberately avoiding literary, theatrical, or documentary-style narratives. Through **practical and theoretical research, expanded choreographic practice, and an inquiry into the relationship between creation and curation**, Guo aims to rethink and cultivate the intimate ties between dance, daily life, and contemporary China.

In recent years, in response to the impacts of postcolonialism and globalization on Chinese dance, Guo has shifted his focus toward reevaluating his own cultural background and identity, exploring the transformative potential of dance in contemporary China.

Since 2017, he has been a curator at T Theatre in Macau, leading the "Dance Lab Project" and "Next Step" programs, with a particular interest in works and practices that pose questions rather than provide answers.

Guo currently lives in Guangzhou and works as a freelance dance artist. In 2018, he co-founded the artist duo "Guo Guo Hui Hui" with artist Wu Hui, engaging in long-term interdisciplinary collaboration.

A Message from the Creators

We once believed the land shaped its people. But stripped of a legible identity, who are we then? In an era where we can cross borders at will, our internal conflicts over 'belonging' only intensify. *Re-shaping Identity* asks you to abandon the idea of the self as a static noun. Instead, witness five distinct bodies prove that identity is a living, breathing verb—a present-moment action that liberates us from the past. – Guo Rui

About the Artists

Wu Hui

Wu Hui is a cross-disciplinary artist, choreographer, and dancer based in Guangzhou. Her work is deeply rooted in a distinct female perspective, utilizing diverse choreographic approaches to evoke imagination and emotion. In recent years, her artistic inquiry has centred on the concept of the ecological body, drawing from the evolutionary intelligence of plants. She explores the plant body as both a reflection of its environment and a manifestation of survival strategies, proposing an alternative way of sensing, responding to, and engaging with the world.

A former dancer with the Guangdong Modern Dance Company, Wu Hui has presented her works—including *Self-Portrait*, *The Moving Canton Tower*, *Me Here*, *Dance Aerobics*, *Cracks*, and *The Great Wave*—at many international festivals and platforms such as Guangdong Modern Dance Festival, Beijing Dance Festival, China Dance Forward (Hong Kong), Documentaries of Chinese Performance Art (Macau), Shenzhen Fringe Festival, Macau Fringe Festival, and Fabbrica Europa (Italy).

Wu Hui is currently engaged in the research and practice of **Expressive Sight**, a series that includes *Take Root*, *The Sights of Femininity*, *Domestication: Taboo Love*, along with the dance film *Collection of Expressive Sight*. Her work also extends into architectural spaces and residency-based research through projects such as *Seven Small Gardens* and *About to Be Born*.

Through **Expressive Sight**, Wu Hui re-imagines the dancing body as a site of transformation, questioning social norms and reshaping perceptions of the "known" and "real" within contemporary China. Her work proposes dance as a medium for critical inquiry—one that interrogates, disrupts, and redefines how bodies move, interact, and communicate in the world today.

Gunika Aniva

Gunika Aniva Independent Creator / Practitioner of Body and Performance Art.

Born in Urumqi, Xinjiang, currently based in Shanghai, her practice resides at the intersection of body, performance, and the moving image. Driven by intuition and acute observation, her work explores the undercurrents between personal experience and social structures, with particular attention to the act of "watching" itself and the formation—and distortion—of bodily language under the gaze. In recent years, she has participated in numerous cross-disciplinary art projects and theatre productions, working across forms such as physical theatre, performance art, and video. Selected performance credits include: *Sleep No More* (Shanghai), *Nian Hua*, *Twenty-Four Solar Terms*, *Qing Yi*, *Shambhala*, *OVERTURE*, *Dance of the Folk*, *Something Not Right*.

Wang Huaili

Independent Choreographer / Theatre Director / Founder of Sifangguan Body and Dance / Graduate Instructor, School of Dance, Sichuan Normal University

Wang Huaili studied Contemporary Dance and Choreography at SEAD (Salzburg Experimental Academy of Dance) in Austria in 2017. He is currently based in Chengdu. Using the body as his primary medium of expression, Wang's artistic practice focuses on the relationship between individuals and society, as well as between humans and their environment. His work emphasizes interdisciplinary dialogue and collaboration with artists from diverse fields, valuing research and inquiry through practice.

Inspired by his years of study and artistic exploration in Europe, Wang founded Sifangguan Body and Dance after returning to China. Conceived as an open, co-creative platform that embraces diverse perspectives and possibilities, Sifangguan is dedicated to inspiring people to perceive and develop the potential of the body, while fostering organic interactions between individuals, society, and the surrounding environment.

Chen Yijie

Chen Yijie is a transdisciplinary dance artist whose research focuses on subaltern and marginalised communities in China. Born and raised in China and educated in the UK, she has been based in Melbourne since September 2025. Her professional career began as a full-time dancer with the Guangdong Modern Dance Company (2014–2018), the first contemporary dance company in mainland China, and later with the City Contemporary Dance Company in Hong Kong (2019–2020). With these two companies, Yijie collaborated with renowned choreographers both nationally and internationally, touring extensively across Europe, Asia (West, East, and South), South America, and Oceania. Since 2021, she has been working as an independent artist.

Community engagement lies at the heart of her practice. She has collaborated with diverse groups, including ethnic minority dancers, disabled and neurodiverse communities, LGBTQ+ communities, as well as precarious workers and migrants. Her creative output spans live performance, dance film, and interactive projects.

Since 2023, she has participated in *Re-Shaping Identity* as a performer with choreographer Rui Guo, a project exploring Chinese ethnic minority folk dance and street dance. Building on this experience, Yijie has developed her own research into ethnic minorities in relation to Indigenous studies and feminism. Her dance film *The Portrait of Revisiting Disability* (2025) has been featured in several film festivals, including the International Dance Festival New Orleans.

